

Dave Hume Swimming Pool Trust  
Chairperson's Report  
8 October 2024

Welcome to the Annual General Meeting of the Dave Hume Swimming Pool Trust, covering the spring to autumn season from September 2023 to April 2024. We are underway once again, with the pool opening a little earlier for the coming season on Saturday 14 September, albeit for limited hours. Now that daylight saving is underway, the pool is fully operational and, although darker in the mornings (for a short time anyway), it is certainly great to be back in the pool.

For the swimmers amongst us, it was business as usual last season in our delightful pool, with the slightly mottled look. The pool has run as smoothly as ever, and Dan has done a great job of making that happen, seeing the total number of pool users increase from 18,000 to almost 19,000. Splash continues to go ahead in leaps and bounds and there were more than 4500 lessons and sessions for Splash and Aquafit. There were more school swimmers being active in the pool but the greatest part of this increase was attributed to more public attendees which was great to see.

However, it was a mixed bag this past season, to say the very least. It would be rather nice to present the same type of chairperson's report that I have for the last eight years. To be fair, last season ran as efficiently as it always does and, apart from the surface of the pool, the swimming was as enjoyable as ever.

If you visit the website or are a member of our email database, you may have read some of the following. I make no apology for being repetitive in this report.

The Dave Hume Swimming Pool is a facility owned by the Western Bay of Plenty District Council. It has operated under the management of the Dave Hume Swimming Pool Trust since 1995 and is part funded each season by Council via a legal Service Level Agreement (SLA). This SLA is a finite budget to allow the pool to operate for an approved number of weeks each season. This can vary depending on circumstances, often beyond the Trust's control. Any major expenditure is subject to the approval of the council.

The Trust consists of volunteers supported by our Facility Manager. Volunteers are members of the community along with representatives appointed by user groups. A small band working with council towards common goals.

One of these common goals was a roof over the pool and the journey towards this began back in September 2015. The WBOPDC Long Term Plan results at that time? And I quote...

*In summary, council support in principle the provision of a pool roof for the pool. Staff are to work with sub-committee to investigate options and costings.*

If only we were considering today, the cost that it would have been nine years ago....

We all know that this time last year, optimism was high with plans on the table, and on the whiteboard in front of us, outlining exciting new developments for covering the pool. The Trust was looking forward to work beginning at the end of the season, and to seeing the hours of voluntary work finally reaching fruition.

In early August, WBOPDC councillors took part in a series of workshops, where councillors were presented with four options with regard to the Roof Project, one of these preferred by the Trust and presented as the best option by WBOPDC's Janine Field. As a late addition, the CEO (John Holyoake) presented a 5th option - to defer any decision on the Roof Project, until the 2025 Annual Plan process.

In late August, WBOPDC held its Annual Plan and Long-Term Plan committee meeting, where councillors voted on the options for the Roof Project. Much to the disappointment of the Trust, council chose the 5th option. The Trust is now working with council on a 6th option, which still requires a council vote. They have approved in principle the second part of the original project which includes the bulkhead, liner along with associated infrastructure, a disability hoist and new pool covers.

As a result of the deferral though, it became necessary for the Trust to request a change of purpose for the funds already approved by TECT and Bay Trust. Such a request has been made to TECT, to change from the roof project to the bulkhead project alone. They regretfully advised us in late September that our request has been declined and that the original grant has now lapsed. Although we are welcomed to reapply in the future, this does not guarantee that any future funding applications will be approved. So, we say goodbye to \$650K. Although such a request is yet to be made of Bay Trust (a further \$200K), we are very aware that these organisations work hand in hand and that a response from them will most likely be the same.

We are now uncertain as to the future of this new project in light of our loss of funding. However, although previously the lining of the pool has been tied in with the roof project, now that the latter is deferred, the lining must proceed. We have waited long enough for an improvement to the surface of the pool.

Our aims do not change - for swim training & coaching, for recreation & leisure, for water safety & other health related activities, enabling all ages and abilities to undertake safe water-based activity at some level.

It appears that we are not alone in our challenges to make improvements to our aquatic facilities. Other pools in the area are also experiencing their own...

- The Whangamata Real Estate Community Swimming Pool closed on 3 April for what they hoped was a period of just ten weeks. They now hope to open in early November, having overcome significant issues of increased time and cost and that was just to paint their pool and make minor improvements!
- Back in April, four options were tabled for a new swimming pool in Thames. Irrespective of the option chosen, the Centennial Pool will be removed from the current site by 2027. Three options for a new pool vary in cost from \$36.5m to \$77m. The fourth option is for no investment in aquatic provision, that is no new pool, just the removal of the pool and restoration of the park on which it stands.
- In December of 2023, Tauranga City Council commissioners approved a \$153m upgrade to Tauranga's Memorial Park, including a new aquatic centre at a cost of \$122m. The new aquatic facility is expected to open in late 2027 and the cost has been budgeted into the 2021-31 LTP. I hope TCC stand by their decision.

The figure our council were considering to enable the Dave Hume Swimming Pool to be covered and allow year-round swimming for the next 20+ years seems paltry in comparison. I sincerely hope they do not regret their decision.

Despite all of the above, life goes on and so does the Dave Hume Swimming Pool, thank goodness. We have a pool to run and I am sure that our Facility Manager Dan and WBOPDC's Janine will continue to work closely to ensure another superb season. Thanks to all hard-working members of the Trust. Your voluntary hours are often undervalued but greatly appreciated by those of us who know what you have contributed.

Let's all enjoy the pool for the coming season but, although you may do very well in the pool, don't hold your breath otherwise.

Barbara Martin  
CHAIRPERSON