

3 June 2024

To: Te Horo Hall Society AGM

From: Chairperson, Te Horo Hall Society

The Te Horo Hall Committee: An Extraordinary Year in Review!

This is my first report to the AGM, and it has been quite a year! Using an old rugby cliché, it was very much a year of two halves. The first half was about the Committee rising above several years of frustration and confusion about the Hall's future and committing to a clear path forward. The second half was about making it happen.

The 2023/24 Committee (along with many volunteers and other supporters) has succeeded at both. I have deliberately chosen not to highlight individual committee members, but I congratulate you all. It's worthwhile to document this journey both to show its complexity and the scale of the achievement. A true team success.

Planning for Success

At the start of my term, the Hall Committee had already begun to consider its options for the Hall's future. This ranged from: the status quo (do nothing); do facilities upgrades and temporary fixes; commit to earthquake strengthen the Hall; or even to close the door and gift the site to KCDC. Thankfully the Committee agreed to pursue realistic options for earthquake strengthening. The roller-coaster that followed included:

- We consulted the community on options including earthquake strengthening (which was the Committee's preferred option). From the responses we received, there was strong support to keep the Hall and from this the Committee could fully commit to earthquake strengthening the Hall. This also led to setting up the *Friends of Te Horo Hall* group and a regular newsletter (which initially went to about 80 email addresses, it now goes to over 200).
- A review of the engineering options (prepared earlier by Seajay Engineering) and considering insights from previous cost estimates led to a decision to go for steel portals and bracing as the most cost-effective solution.
- Drawings for pricing were finalised and tenders called from three local builders. By the end of 2023, this process was complete and after a rigorous assessment, a fixed price proposal was agreed with local builders Ross Crowe Construction.
- 2023 concluded on a positive note with a well-attended Twilight Christmas community event enjoyed by over 170 locals.
- Another aspect of the Hall's community success this year has been the renaissance of the Emergency Management Hub. The credit for this must go to Peter Wood, a non-committee member. It soon became clear that others thought this was a good idea too, as was demonstrated by two successful exercises – including the Tsunami drill with Te Horo Beach. WREMO have since rated the Te Horo hub as one of the most successful in the Kapiti region.

Making it Happen

2024 was going to be all about fundraising and so the Committee developed a three-pronged funding plan, as follows:

- The Committee agreed to start the ball rolling with \$120,000 in seed funding. This money came from past years of fundraising, careful stewardship and income.
- The Committee would have to appeal to additional donors and began preparing funding applications to several high-profile funders, e.g., Lotteries Commission, Nikau Foundation, Wellington Community Trust, and Pub Charity. The quality of our applications was only made possible due to the careful planning over the previous six months and the clear project plan, timeline and other governance documents we had developed.
- Community fundraising was the third and most important arm of the funding plan. Not just because it could generate funds but more importantly because it would engage directly with the community the Hall serves. If successful, this would also show other potential donors how much the community values the Hall. On both counts this proved to be a very successful approach.

To further improve our community engagement and to support the fundraising efforts, the Committee developed a communications plan - including its first ever website (www.tehorohall.org.nz) with the help of Nikki Lundie at Nel Design. Nikki also developed a new logo for the Hall as well as the fundraising posters. *Property Brokers Otaki* kindly sponsored the advertising and later engaged with *Stuff* and *NME* to push our message further afield. *Coast Access Radio*, *Beach FM* and *Otaki Today* have been a great help too in spreading our story and promoting events.

Enthralling and Exhausting Fundrai\$ing

A period of submissions writing began in the New Year along with approaches to several companies and “high-end” philanthropic donors that might be able to help us. This was an exacting process but has proven most worthwhile.

Given that the Committee wanted to start the strengthening work in the Third Quarter of 2024, we agreed to set in motion an intensive three-month period of community fund raising. And so, it was!

By far the most widely visible of the Committee’s fundraising efforts was the *Great Te Horo Road Rai\$e*. The Committee put its full weight behind the campaign, however, the real measure of success was the response from the Te Horo community itself. There were many leaders and even more followers, all generating ideas and willing to try them. The magic was in the energy and commitment of everyone involved and trying to keep tabs on it all! It was full-on and almost exhausting at times. There were so many successes, as well as a few setbacks. We learned by doing and were often lifted by the energy and imagination of others – as it should be. But the reward was a buzz in the community the likes of which few could remember seeing before. Thank you, Te Horo!

The new Committee needs to capture this community energy and keep responding to it. This topic is already programmed for Committee discussion in late June.

The Results are In

The initial quake-strengthening budget was set at \$335,000. Additional regulatory costs have seen budget estimates now increase to \$355,000.

At the time of writing, the cash-in-hand situation (as detailed in the Treasurer's report) is around \$216,500. This includes some modest fundraising expenses to do with events and website support.

Some \$95,000 is expected to come in as grants and further fundraising revenue later in June. Combined, this means that our projected "money in the bank" situation by the end of June 2024 is projected to be around \$310,000. This is close to 90% of the budgeted amount required for quake-strengthening! WOW!

Looking at the results against our original funding plan we can see that:

- The Te Horo community wanted to save Te Horo Hall and was prepared put its money down to show it. The events and fundraising initiatives run through *Road Rai\$e* over the last three months are too numerous to detail here, and it's not quite over yet. Through events, raffles, and donations, by the end of June the Te Horo community is forecast to raise over \$80,000 for the Hall. This outcome was greatly assisted by donations received from many local businesses in supporting events with food and prizes, for which Hall Committee is most grateful.
- The institutional and larger donors have also delivered. The standout so far has been \$90,000 from the Lotteries Commission (due on 12 June 2024). Pub Charity has also kindly donated \$20,000. None of this funding from major donors would have been achieved without quality submissions based on the work done in the first part of the year to build a compelling case for investment in this taonga. However, we were turned down by: Nikau Foundation, WCT, and Transpower.
- I also note the generous sponsorship we are still receiving from *Kelly and Co. Realty* which when completed will have delivered \$20,000. I was disappointed that more local businesses did not follow this excellent sponsorship example, however, we are certainly not done with funding to further upgrading Te Horo Hall so there are plenty of opportunities left!
- The original seed funding from the Hall Society's previous fundraising over many years is not insignificant. It set the baseline, and when we put the big sign up outside the Hall the "thermometer" already had a splash of red in the bottom!

The result of all this effort is simply amazing! None of it was luck – though we did seem to have a remarkable run of good weather for most events! Rather, it was a product of two things: the 2023/24 Hall Committee's commitment to creating the narrative of a credible future for the Hall, and that becoming the centrepiece of our fundraising efforts. The personal commitment to that by Committee members only encouraged others to contribute, and that's exactly what happened.

As Chairman of the Committee, I could not be prouder of what has been achieved over such a relatively short timeframe given the size of the task and the fact that we had to work in ways that were quite different to what had gone before.

It's also important to note too that in amongst all of that, the Hall also enjoyed some its highest usage rates with over 265 Hall bookings over the last twelve months.

But Wait, There's Still More to Do

Despite this incredible achievement, we are not there yet. Against the quake-strengthening budget, the Committee is still some \$40,000 short, at the time of writing. We need to continue engaging with potential donors. There may also be opportunities to reduce construction costs, e.g. through supplier negotiations and sponsorship.

The next big funding opportunity lies with an application to the Waikanae Community Board Capital Fund for its meeting on June 16th. In its submission, the Hall Society will make the strong point that Te Horo Hall is the only such community facility in Te Horo and there has been no KCDC contribution to the building's upkeep since the last major work in 2012 (which was also generously supported by the *Philipp Family Foundation*). The Society will be asking the Community Board to recognise the significant contribution already made by local residents and businesses and to show their likeminded support.

When the Committee made earthquake-strengthening its number one priority for the Hall, it was also noted that years of deferred maintenance meant there was quite a list of things needed to fully upgrade the Hall, but that strengthening it had to be the first priority. Therefore, fundraising will continue to be a big part of the Committee's work as costings for other items become clearer, e.g., an upgraded and remodelled kitchen area (for which \$27,000 is already ring-fenced from previous dedicated fundraising), recladding and painting, the tennis courts and the proposed carpark.

The lessons from this most recent exercise will be invaluable to that, but hopefully fundraising will never need to be at quite the pace of this year 😊

Next Steps

The Hall Committee has a "project review" and "next steps" meeting booked for 23 June, and I firmly believe that the Committee now has sufficient funds and other things in place to give a green light to commencing earthquake strengthening in the third quarter of 2024 as planned this time last year.

What an amazing achievement that would be!

Andrew Annakin

Chairperson, Te Horo Hall Society Inc