

13. BOARD PROCESSES AND 2002 MEETING SCHEDULE

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Corporate Plan Output: Burwood/Pegasus Community Board	

The purpose of this report is to outline a proposed change to the Board's processes and a revised meeting schedule for 2002.

BACKGROUND

At the incoming Board's first meeting on 19 November 2001 it was agreed to hold a seminar to discuss the Board's processes and a proposal for a Board standing committee structure. A summary of the seminar has been circulated separately to Board members.

The Chairperson submitted a proposal for introducing a structure of four standing committees reporting to the Board. This was intended as a response to concerns about the increasing length of Board meetings, particularly with an anticipated expansion of the Board's delegations, and as a means to engage more effectively with the community.

Two other options were considered at the seminar. A structure of two standing committees was suggested as a more manageable option than four committees. As an alternative to a standing committee structure, it was suggested that two ordinary Board meetings be held per month to handle the increasing workload.

Arguments made in favour of the proposal for four standing committees included:

- An opportunity for more in-depth consideration of issues and to hear deputations at length.
- Members able to develop greater subject specialisation and enhanced relationships with the community and officers.
- Shorter ordinary Board meetings.
- Less need for ad hoc committees, working parties and separate seminars.

Concerns raised about the proposal included:

- All members would not be full participants at each standing committee.
- Four standing committee meetings each month would be too onerous for members to attend.
- Issues would be relitigated at Board meetings.
- Board standing committees would be another layer of local government in addition to Board meetings, Council standing committees and the Council, resulting in additional complexity for the community.

PREFERRED OPTION OF TWO ORDINARY BOARD MEETINGS PER MONTH

The outcome of the seminar discussion was support for the option of two ordinary Board meetings for each monthly cycle of meetings reporting to Standing Committees and the Council. The business and deputations are to be divided up into subject areas so Business Unit officers are only required to attend one of the monthly meetings of the Board.

In addition to the two ordinary Board meetings per month, there was support for continuing the practice of holding additional special meetings and seminars as required. Special meetings have been held for business such as the allocation of Project funds in February and the identification of Key Issues and Project Proposals in August. Seminars have been held monthly to hear from agencies and community groups and seminar meetings have also been held twice each year with both local members of Parliament and local Environment Canterbury councillors.

Under this structure, the Board is also to continue to convene committees and working parties for specific purposes, as required.

As a result of dividing the month's business between two meetings, each Board meeting is envisaged to finish at an earlier time than in recent practice. An additional suggestion for streamlining the business of Board meetings is outlined under the Other Issues for Consideration section below.

There was support at the seminar for a review of the revised structure after 12 months. It is suggested that the structure be reviewed after it has been in operation for six months. This would enable any required changes to be implemented from the start of 2003.

TIMING OF TWO ORDINARY MEETINGS

At the seminar it was requested that the timing of the two meetings and the subsequent Council standing committee meetings and the Council meeting be considered. It was suggested that dates in the "third week" of the month, previously used for Board seminars, be used for the additional Board meeting.

The attached draft schedule of meetings for 2002 has been drawn up on the basis of making the "third week" meeting of each month the first meeting of the monthly cycle and the existing meetings the second meeting. This achieves the desired aim of having two ordinary meetings reporting to the next round of standing committee meetings and/or the following Council meeting, as follows:

PROPOSED REPORTING TIMELINE		
Board meetings →	Standing Committees →	Council meeting
20 and 25 March	5-15 April	24 April
17 and 29 April	3-13 May	23 May
15 and 27 May	7-17 June	27 June
19 June and 1 July	5-15 July	25 July
17 and 29 July	2-12 August	22 August
14 Aug and 2 Sept	6-16 September	26 September
18 and 30 September	4-14 October	24 October
16 and 21 October	1-11 November	21 November
13 and 18 November	25 November-2 December	12 December

It is suggested that the change to two ordinary meetings take effect from the March meeting cycle. A special meeting is already scheduled for February and it would be difficult to schedule an additional meeting around councillors' responsibilities on standing committees and the Annual Plan Working Party.

The schedule also incorporates a special Board meeting on 28 August for the consideration of Key Issues and Project Proposals. The date for the ordinary meeting scheduled for Monday 28 October 2002 is changed to Monday 21 October 2002 to avoid Labour Day, as discussed at the seminar.

PROPOSED DIVISION OF BUSINESS BETWEEN TWO ORDINARY MEETINGS

At the seminar it was suggested that the business and deputations to be dealt with be divided into subject areas between the two ordinary meetings on a common basis. This should enable the community and officers to become familiar with the Board's routine and anticipate when items of interest to them will be dealt with.

The suggested division of subject areas is:

- 'First meeting' - Property, Projects and Streets.
- 'Second meeting' - Community Development, Leisure, Parks and Waterways, Environment.

An analysis of the Board's business in 2001 shows that this division should result in an even spread of business and deputations between the two meetings. However, the Board may wish to consider whether including Parks and Waterways reports in the first meeting rather than the second may spread the workload more effectively.

While it is desirable to maintain a regular division of business, it is suggested flexibility be retained to juggle items between the two meetings if necessary, at the discretion of the Board Chairperson and the Community Advocate.

The subject areas can be stated on the Board's schedule of meetings and agendas to clarify the division. Items falling outside of the stated subject areas can be allocated to meetings at the discretion of the Chairperson and the Community Advocate.

It is noted that there may be Community Development aspects to matters dealt with under the Property and Projects areas. This is likely to result in the relevant Advocacy Team staff being required to attend both of the monthly meetings but the division should not require Business Unit officers to attend more than one of the Board meetings.

At an administrative level, it is desirable to maintain a simple process to limit the additional work involved in dealing with two meetings instead of one. It is proposed to continue with a single deadline for officers to submit reports for the Board each month. As this deadline will fall ahead of the first monthly meeting, it will be significantly different from the monthly deadline for other community boards. However, this should not cause difficulties provided the monthly deadline is well publicised to officers. Similarly it is proposed that a single agenda meeting be held with the Chairperson prior to the agendas being circulated; any timing or allocation issues with the division of business between the meetings can be resolved at that time.

Deputations are to be scheduled for the meeting dealing with the relevant subject area. Requests to make deputations will be dealt with in accordance with the time frames specified in Standing Orders in relation to the relevant meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF PREFERRED OPTION

The draft budget for 2002/03 contains provision of \$127,000 for Board members' salary and meeting allowances. This figure is based on the current year's provision of \$110,000 with the addition of a month of meetings (as there is no election) and a five percent increase.

The comparison below of the estimated costs of the preferred option of two ordinary meetings and the current practice shows an anticipated increase in the total costs. A slight reduction in the number of ad hoc committees and working parties is assumed.

The estimated cost of the proposal for four standing committees was \$122,450, assuming that no Board seminars would be held and fewer ad hoc committees and working parties would be required.

COMPARISON OF COSTS			
Current Practice		Preferred Option	
Salaries:	\$71, 610	Salaries:	\$71,610
Meeting fees:		Meeting fees:	
11 Ordinary meetings	15,345	22 Ordinary meetings	30,690
3 Special/11 Seminars	19,530	2 Special/9 Seminars	12,555
Committees/other (14x9x155)	19,530	Committees/other (11x9x155)	15,345
Total	\$126,015	Total	\$130,200

OTHER ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Board Seminars

The attached schedule shows proposed dates for seminars to be held monthly, except in February and August where special meetings are required. The seminars are scheduled for weeks free of Board meetings or meetings of the Council where possible or on the Wednesday following the second monthly Board meeting.

The Board may wish to give further consideration to options for enhancing community participation in decision-making. While the seminars provide an opportunity to hear from the community in a less formal setting than an ordinary Board meeting, the Chairperson's proposal for standing committees was partly an attempt to engage with the community more effectively. Options for engaging the community in a proactive way and at an earlier stage in the process include site visits and networking, e-consultation, and citizen panels. The suggestion was made at the seminar on 5 December that the Board identify theme groupings such as community development, social disparity and relationships with Maori and use these as a focus for prioritising interactions with the community.

Board Reports for Information Only

It may be possible to change the practice for dealing with "for information" reports as a small way of streamlining the ordinary Board meetings. These reports are not often discussed at length but there may be an inclination to discuss them "because they are there".

Rather than include all of these reports directly into the meeting agendas, the reports could be circulated to Board members in memorandum form when they are received. If a member wished to have any report included in an agenda the Chairperson or Community Advocate could be contacted prior to the agenda meeting with the Chairperson held a week prior to the first monthly meeting.

These reports could continue to be copied to Residents' Associations and other groups and individuals on the standard distribution list.

Start Time of Meetings

At the seminar members supported a 4.00 pm start for all ordinary Board meetings. This was considered to be the most convenient time for enabling community attendance at the meetings. The Board may also wish to commence Board seminars at this time.

- Recommendations:**
1. That the schedule of ordinary meetings, special meetings and seminars outlined in the Board agenda be adopted.
 2. That all ordinary meetings, special meetings and seminars commence at 4.00 pm.
 3. That the agendas of the Board's two ordinary meetings each month be divided between Property, Projects and Streets items and Community Development, Leisure, Parks and Waterways and Environment items, subject to the discretion of the Chairperson and the Community Advocate.
 4. That the structure of two ordinary Board meetings each month be reviewed after it has been in operation for six months and any subsequent changes be implemented for 2003.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the abovementioned recommendations be adopted.