



TAIRUA NZ

TAIRUA INFORMATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES SOCIETY INC

223 Main Road • PO Box 76 • Tairua 3508 • New Zealand

TEL: (07) 864 7575 • FAX: (07) 864 7580

Website: www.tairua.info E-mail: info.tairua@xtra.co.nz

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Thank you for allowing us this time to speak in support of our request to the Community Board for a grant of \$16,500 from the discretionary fund for rent relief. Our initial request by email was for \$10,000 but after considerable debate at committee level, it was decided to increase this to the full amount of our annual lease payment. If our application is successful these monies would be tagged solely for this purpose.

It is interesting to note that when I first became involved with our Information Centre (early 2008), TCDC's practice was to set aside a total dollar amount for I-SITE/Information Centre funding. Lease or rental costs for all premises were deducted from this total and paid by council to the various property owners. The remainder was then divided amongst the 6 I-SITE/Information Centres using a TCDC formula of indeterminate origin.

Shortly thereafter, the Information Centres Chairpersons Group renegotiated the formula, basing the division on such things as door counter numbers into centres, local populations and traffic flows. However, lease/rental costs were now to be paid by each centre out of their share of the total grant. It is fairly obvious that this arrangement favoured those centres owning their own premises, or those using TCDC owned premises with peppercorn rentals.

We see a grant of community-based funding as putting us on a level playing field with the other Information Centres on the peninsula and we believe this is a fair and equitable request. This will allow us to devote more of our time and energy into pursuing the possible options for alternate premises and increased self-sustainability. We believe that the ethos of our organisation is to provide two distinctly different functions as reinforced in our Society's title, that being the Tairua Information & Community Services Society Inc.

The first is to serve as an information base for visitors to our area, promoting the Coromandel and its many attractions, encouraging visitors to stay and participate in the various activities that the peninsula can provide. This function has obviously been recognised by the Council in its latest TYP (10 year plan), in which they reversed their previous decision to devolve Information Centre funding to local communities, and thereby continue district funding direct from Council.

The second function of our centre is that of a community hub, coordinating with local businesses, organisations, and community groups to support and help organise their various activities. It is this part of our business that leads us to believe that Information Centres should also be able to derive local or community funding.

At present we have a SLA (Service Level Agreement) with council which provides funding of \$33500 per annum for the next 3 years (1st July 2015 -30th June 2018). This is slightly less than the \$34500 per annum for the previous 3 year period. To put this in perspective, nearly 50% of this (\$16500) goes directly in payment of the annual leasing cost of our present premises.

Our yearly financial statements over the past 3 years show on average a total annual budget of around \$90000, with lease costs being our second largest expenditure after wages. We have recently negotiated a 2 year extension to our lease at the current figure which expires in June 2017, and we have been warned to expect this to increase by around 10% at this time.

Although we are in an ideal location, in a purpose built premise, we believe that we need to continue to seriously pursue the option of securing our own premises. Disregarding Thames and Whitianga as these are now the responsibility of Destination Coromandel, we believe that we are the only one of the 4 remaining centres paying commercial rental for our premises.

Finally, we believe we fit perfectly into TCDC's description in their recent letter, of organisations worthy of receipt of a community grant. Namely "Community Grants help local organisations pay for specific projects or maintenance of facilities that benefit our community, support not-for-profit community organisations which have a positive impact on the community and recognise, support and enhance volunteer effort in the community."

Thank you for your time.

Dave Dodd Past Chairperson – Current Committee Member
Tairua Information and Community Services Society Inc.