

N Z Grey Power Federation – Zone 4 Report to the GP Federation Board - May 2025

Zone Meeting Attendance:

Over recent months the attendance at Zone Meetings has continued to fall away. Numbers have declined due to a range of factors. (i) Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak many of our older members have been concerned about gathering in larger groups, meaning that members were not prepared to come together in Palmerston North, (ii) the plethora of minor road repairs and major road works has added to the times needed to attend zone meetings. This is particularly true for those coming from Hawkes Bay and beyond with the Manawatu Gorge Road being closed, (iii) a degree of unhappiness with those attending who believe that despite their best efforts the actions or lack thereof at Board level are leaving a state of stagnation with Grey Power at the national level, (iv) the rising costs of fuel for those who have to travel some distance.

It has again been suggested that we consider holding Zoom Meetings. This has not found favour with some Associations, several, being our stronger Association who have “flat out” refused to engage. The other issue is that many of our older attendees struggle with the intricacies of Zoom Meetings, when previously they have simply chosen to interject or have cross-table discussion whenever it suited them. Two Association in particular come to mind, yet they are the most active when asking for Zoom Meetings.

A further thought going into 2025 is that we might move our meetings around the Zone. The suggestions put forward are that we hold our February and August Meetings in Palmerston North, the May Meeting in Taranaki (possibly) Hawera and the November Meeting somewhere in the Hawkes Bay.

This idea was put to the Associations at our first Zone Meeting, in Palmerston North in February, but so far has found little favour. We will continue to look at this option and will keep the Board advised.

The Association Constitution:

All Associations are making progress on making the necessary changes to the template provided and most hope to have their Constitutions ready for adoption at their AGM's later in the year, if they have not already done so.

To date, I have not had any requests from Associations for assistance with submitting their Constitution for acceptance or adoption. However, there does seem to be some confusion about whether or not to complete Associations Constitutions before the GPNZF AGM, with all of the changes that will be coming through when the GPNZF Constitution is considered at the AGM.

It was explained to 'those' Associations their Constitution was for them to consider and, if there were any anomalies then Associations would be informed by the GPNZF Legal Advisor. In the meantime, they should move on with getting their Constitutions finalised.

Capitation – A vexing question:

I have been concerned by the large amounts being paid to the IRD because we use the terminology “Capitation” when referring to the levy that members through their various Associations pay to the Federation.

With the support of the Zone Associations, Horowhenua Grey Power has put forward a remit to the AGM asking for the wording in the Constitution to be changed from **Capitation** to **Membership Subscription**.

We would be asking the GPNZF Treasurer to tell us what that 15% from so called Capitation Fees equates to in dollar terms annually.

Delivery of the Magazine:

The concept of asking members to pay \$10.00 per annum for the delivery of their national magazine has not found favour across the membership. Some members are paying for this service, albeit reluctantly. Many more are receiving their magazine electronically, and would appear that this option is being well received, for those who have this tech capability.

A recent email has suggested that we can also receive 'bundles' of magazines to a central address in each association's area for distribution by hand or by 'bundle drops' within their catchment. This idea has found favour with some and needs to be further examined.

Proxy Voting at the AGM:

We all understand what has happened here. It is perhaps "unfortunate", getting advice on this matter (No Proxy Voting at the AGM) so close to the AGM. It is something that will have to be worked through.

Already we are hearing the plaintive 'bleats' about being unable to have a proxy vote. One such comment is that Associations find attendance at the AGM expensive. While there may be a degree of truth in that statement it should be remembered that we have known for a year or more that we will be holding an AGM in June and that obviously there are costs associated with this. Associations should have been budgeting accordingly or doing some fund-raising to cover expenses.

Treasurer Lew Findlay is to be congratulated for easing the burden a little bit by arranging Grants of \$500.00 to those Association who attend in person.

Changes to the Board:

The proposed dis-establishment of the 7 Zone Representatives to be replaced by 5 Board Members elected at large is being much discussed across the Zone.

Given that there are some Zone Reps who have not fulfilled their obligations to the Board (for a variety of reasons), it is perhaps timely for the Board to be looking at a better model that will provide the advice and guidance that we so desperately need when approaching Ministers and Government Departments. Those skills seem to have been missing during our lobbying visits, of late.

Again, these changes are providing for some angst in some quarters and will need to be very carefully managed at the AGM.

Terry Hemmingsen

Director – Zone 4