

AUCKLAND, SATURDAY, 6TH MAY, 1911.

The Commission met at 10 a.m.

Present : All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

64. Eric Charles Gold Smith, Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor, Auckland, attended and gave evidence.

The Minister of Public Works telegraphed sanctioning the survey of the proposed alternative route through Waikiekie, and joining western route at Tauraroa Valley, provided it could be completed before 10th May.

The Commission adjourned at 10.45 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Monday, 8th May.

AUCKLAND, MONDAY, 8TH MAY, 1911.

The Commission met at 10 a.m.

Present : All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Under-Secretary of Public Works forwarded returns supplied by the Government Statistician showing the population, approximately, according to the recent census within a seven-mile radius on either side of the proposed eastern and western routes, as follows : west, 1,798 ; east, 1,928. (See Exhibit No. 1.)

The officer in charge, Valuation Department, Auckland, forwarded, by instruction of the Valuer-General, a return showing the capital value and number of holdings for a distance of two miles on each side of the proposed eastern and western routes to be as follows : west—holdings, 385 ; capital value, £153,721 : east—holdings, 459 ; capital value, £154,482.

The following witnesses attended and gave evidence :—

Mr. J. A. Wilson, District Engineer, Public Works Department, Auckland—examination resumed.

65. Mr. R. W. Holmes, Engineer-in-Chief, Public Works Department.

66. Mr. W. F. Thompson, District Valuer, Whangarei.

67. Mr. F. C. Ewen, Crown Lands Ranger, Auckland.

68. Mr. E. Mitchelson, timber-merchant, Auckland.

69. Mr. A. H. O'Loughlen, Railway Goods Agent, Auckland.

The latter put in some tables of freights and fares between Auckland and the Port of the Kaipara, and between Auckland and stations on the Whangarei Section New Zealand Railways. (See Exhibit No. 4.)

The taking of evidence then closed.

The Commission adjourned at 4.20 p.m., and resolved to meet at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, 10th May, to consider its report.

AUCKLAND, WEDNESDAY, 10TH MAY, 1911.

The Commission met at 10.15 a.m.

Present : All the Commissioners.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

A report was received from Mr. J. J. Wilson, Assistant Engineer, Public Works Department, Whangarei, on the survey of the suggested alternative line near Waikiekie. (See Exhibit No. 3.)

The Department of Lands forwarded maps—(1) showing the areas of lands lying along certain strips of the eastern and western routes, divided into Native land, reserves, grazing-runs, freehold, lease in perpetuity, perpetual leases, pastoral runs, and occupation with right to purchase ; (2) timber on Crown lands and State forests on lands north of McCarroll's Gap.

The District Engineer, Public Works Department, Auckland, forwarded estimates of distances and cost of eastern and western routes : Eastern route—McCarroll's to Parakao, 38 miles 56 chains 62 links ; cost, £456,152. Parakao to Junction, south of Kaikohe, 22 miles 67 chains ; cost, £261,600. Total, 61 miles 43 chains 62 links ; cost, £717,752. *Via* western route—McCarroll's to Parakao, distance 38 miles 16 chains 38 links ; cost, £444,142. Parakao to Junction, south of Kaikohe, 22 miles 67 chains ; cost, £261,600. Total, 61 miles 3 chains 38 links ; cost £705,742.

The Commission then proceeded to consider the draft report.

The report was agreed to, with minor amendments, down to clause 16.

Clause 17 : (1.) We are of opinion that the North of Auckland Railway should be expeditiously constructed to its northern objective, through Kaikohe to the far north, before any branch lines are undertaken, as we consider the Main Trunk line of primary importance. We have investigated three routes that the said railway could take between McCarroll's Gap and Mangakahia Valley—that is to say, a proposed route to the west of Waikiekie and the Tangihua Range ; a proposed route to the east of Waikiekie and the Tangihua Range ; and a suggested middle route lying between the aforesaid western and eastern routes through Waikiekie to the west of the Tangihua Range, joining the first-named western route about nineteen miles from McCarroll's Gap.

Mr. Coom moved, That the words " a junction with a section of the Kawakawa-Hokianga Railway, now in course of construction between Kawakawa and Kaikohe," be inserted after the words " expeditiously constructed to."

Amendment agreed to.