



Shire of Victoria Plains

Minutes of an AGM of Electors held

On	Tuesday 17 th January 2012
At	Council Chambers Calingiri
Commencing	5.30pm

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1 DECLARATION OF OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The President declared the meeting open at 5.30pm and thanked everyone for their attendance.

2 ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE GRANTED

President:	Cr G Erickson	South Ward
Councillors:	Cr J Kelly	West Ward
	Cr L Rive	West Ward
	Cr D Holmes	South Ward
	Cr D Lovelock	West Ward
	Cr J Brennan	Central Ward
	Cr S Young	Central Ward

Attendees: Mr G Nixon, Mr G McGill, Mr B Harridge

Apologies: Mrs K Lovelock

Chief Executive Officer: Mr H Hawkins
Finance and Administration Manager: Mr I Graham

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLUTION 8/2012

Moved Cr Young seconded Cr Lovelock that the minutes of the AGM of Electors held 18th January 2011 be accepted as a true and correct record of proceedings.

Motion Put & Carried 10/0

3.1 Matters arising from the Minutes – Tuesday 18th January 2011

Cr Lovelock

Question put regarding Mogumber Refuse Site life.

CEO

There is a good 5 years life left. No need for a transfer station at present.

Mr G Nixon

A good job is being done on that Refuse Site.

Mr G McGill

Some materials are being dumped that should not be. Can the shire place information in the newsletter?

Cr Kelly

Can the CEO advise the fines for illegal dumping.

CEO

The fine for illegal dumping is up to \$20,000. Council has the ability to contact DoEC for prosecution.

4 ANNUAL REPORT

Resolution 9/2012

Moved Mr G McGill seconded Mr B Harridge that the Annual Report for the financial year ended 30th June 2011 be received.

Motion Put & Carried 10/0

4.1 Matters arising from the Annual Report for Financial Year ended June 2011

Mr G McGill

Would like to note the improved financial position of the shire and the clean audit reports.

Resolution 10/2012

Moved Mr G Nixon seconded Mr G McGill that a letter of appreciation be sent to Neil Hamilton for his excellent work from the Electors Committee.

Motion Put & Carried 10/0

Mr B Harridge

Royalties for Regions Grants must be helping keep the rates under control?

CEO

Royalties for Regions must be expended on capital and or infrastructure with limited options.

Mr G McGill

The day-to-day activities of Council must not be affected by Royalties for Regions Grants.

Mr G Nixon

Isn't Royalties for Regions being increasingly tied to Regional distribution?

CEO

Yes. Is now 50% and will increase to 100%.

Mr G Nixon

Can we have an update on Amalgamation?

President

Council has always been against amalgamation. The focus is now on metropolitan councils.

Mr G Nixon

How much did the shire receive in Royalties for Regions grants in 2010/2011?

CEO

Approximately \$370,000.

Mr G Nixon

Is it true that Shire staff have increased from 15 to 18 full time?

CEO

It think that is correct in the way it is in the report, but not all are full time.

Mr G Nixon

How is the building project at the Calingiri oval progressing?

CEO

Generally very good, but some issues arose with rusting steel and the brickwork. Turf specialists looked at the oval and recommended the level be raised by 200mm. This required a lot of sand and some reticulation work which was unbudgeted. A transfer from reserve funds of \$135,000 will cover the increased cost. Perimeter fencing, goal posts etc will be funded by Royalties for Regions funds and not used on the Calingiri Bowling Green.

5 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Nil

6 GENERAL BUSINESS WITHOUT NOTICE

CEO

Regarding the timing of Electors Meetings. Have spoken with the Auditors and they will try to schedule audit earlier. Aim will be to hold Electors Meetings before Christmas.

President

Two councillors retired in October 2011. Michael Anspach and Neil Smith. Would like it recorded that council and electors thank them for their many years of service.

CEO

The Shire's financial ratios have improved markedly over the last few years. This is the second year that the shire has had a clean audit report.

Mr G McGill

Question regarding Housing Reserve.

What is the current staff inventory and future plans? (CEO will follow up and report)

Does Council have any plans for Joint Venture housing with Homeswest?

CEO

No. The Department of Housing has changed its policy and the Shire of Victoria Plains is now considered to be too small. The DoH may look at it if a group of Councils wanted to build say 30 houses. VP will not get funding for 1 or 2 houses.

Mr G McGill

Not disappointed to hear the DoH policy. There are different categories – aged etc. I am aware of public housing issues in a neighbouring town that have caused major issues for private homeowners. I think Council should be very wary of clamour for public housing. It must involve public consultation.

CEO

I was referring to Victoria Plains' arrangement which is Community Housing, where the shire has control over the tenants.

Mr G McGill

Staff salaries are a significant cost. Can we (ratepayers) have an analysis of the position, tasks and responsibilities for each position?

CEO

Refer to page lvii in the Annual Report. This page lists all positions.

Mr G McGill

Yes, but can we have details on the tasks and responsibilities?

CEO

Yes

Mr G McGill

Does council get involved in a rigorous process in determining if a role is required?

CEO

No – it is not in Councils realm. The CEO makes that decision.

Mr G McGill

What would be the position if Council was not happy?

CEO

Council would discuss it with me.

Mr G McGill

Who determines if external contractors should be used at any given time?

CEO

Senior staff makes the decision on operational matters as included in the approved budget. Council does not have input.

Mr G McGill

I think it is right that council does not have direct control, but some contractors may be cheaper so Council does have an interest.

CEO

Yes. Council can always question if they are not happy.

Mr G McGill

I understand that suppliers and contractors available to the shire have been asked to supply a list of services they provide – correct?

CEO

Yes. It was done some years ago. If we are likely to expend more than \$100,000 it must go to tender. This year we do not have any major expenditure (over \$100,000) and I also did not want to lock in prices for up to 2 years.

Mr G McGill

I think it was a folly to ask contractors to price 2 years in advance. There are also issues around security of competitive information. You have alleviated my concerns.

Question regarding councils decision to purchase major plant – graders etc.

I understand that it was stated in the newsletter that a local contractor was unable to supply within a certain timeframe. I was alarmed by this. Will a retraction be published in the newsletter?

CEO

Yes. I have spoken to the contractor and it will appear in the next Shire newsletter.

Mr G McGill

What is the procedure when a recommendation for a major plant purchase is made?

CEO

Considered in the Annual Budget process. Anything other than light vehicles must go to the Works Committee. They make the recommendation to full Council for approval.

President

I can assure you Mr McGill, Council debate these major purchases vigorously.

Mr G McGill

Do you accept the advice of your Council officers or seek external advice?

President

I personally have sought external advice – e.g. from other Council's or external users.

Mr G McGill

That gives me some confidence. I was concerned that if you were relying on your own staff that is fraught with problems.

I am aware of a higher level of discontent amongst the Shire's outside staff. What is the process for staff if they are not happy?

President

Is this a very recent change?

Mr G McGill

No it is longer term.

CEO

I am the first point of contact. Mr door is always open. If an employee is still unhappy they are entitled to approach a Councillor.

Mr G McGill

I would suggest that all shire staff should be advised of this process.

CEO

Yes. However they must come through me first.

Mr G Nixon

I think the CEO needs to be allowed to manage. He must have support and respect of Council.

Mr G McGill

I suggest a formal objective process that includes elected member representatives and the CEO.

President

The CEO is also able to utilise external HR professionals if required. We could have a workshop to train our staff on the correct procedures.

Cr Kelly

The previous Works Manager seemed to provide limited information. This has improved markedly under the new Works Manager. Also the reinstatement of the Works Committee is a major step forward.

Mr G McGill

I suggest that Council should arrange a meeting with all local suppliers and contractors and ask them questions and give them an opportunity to ask questions.

CEO

Plant and Works Committee Meetings are open to the public and they are advertised in the newsletter.

Mr G McGill

I am sure that is the case, but I think a formal invitation would be preferred. It should happen once or twice a year.

Mr B Harridge

The rodeo's in Mogumber have been a great success and I thank Council for their support.

Resolution 11/2012

Moved Mr G Nixon seconded Mr B Harridge that a vote of thanks is extended to Council for their excellent work.

Motion Put & Carried 10/0

7 DECLARATION OF CLOSURE

There being no further business the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 7.17pm.

Signed this day of 2013

Presiding Member