



MINUTES

of the

Annual Electors' Meeting

held

Tuesday 24 May, 2022

in the

Council Chambers
11-13 Waldeck Street, Dongara

I certify that this copy of the Minutes is a true and correct record of the meeting held on Tuesday 24 May 2022

Signed:
Presiding Elected Member

Date: 28/06/22

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ANNUAL ELECTORS’ MEETING

held

Tuesday 24 May, 2022

at 5.00pm

MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING / ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Deputy Shire President welcomed Councillors, Staff and Electors and opened the meeting at 5.00pm.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES / LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Members

Councillor I M Scott	Deputy Shire President
Councillor A J Gillam	
Councillor H M Palmer	
Councillor E Tunbridge	
Councillor B Wyse	

Staff

Mr S D Ivers	Chief Executive Officer
Mrs D K Chandler	Acting Manager Corporate & Community
Mr B Jeans	Manager Development
Ms N A M’Leane	Development & Executive Officer
Ms F Boksmati	Community Development Officer
Mr G Nadarajah	ICT Supervisor

Electors and Members of the Public (Non electors)

J Arden, Premier Circle, Dongara
I West, Bygrave Drive, Port Denison

Approved Leave of Absence

Councillor M T Smith	Shire President
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Apologies

Councillor G Eva
Councillor M Leonard

3. 2020/21 ANNUAL REPORT

S Ivers, CEO provided an overview of the 2020/21 Annual Report highlighting the following:

2020/21 was a year of significant challenges but also considerable delivery thanks to a dedicated team, strong leadership from Councillors and great community support.

Uncertainty of the COVID-19 Pandemic led to a delayed start to the execution of the 2020/21 Budget, the opportunity was used to focus on completing delayed 2019/20 projects including the Pump Track, Container Deposit Scheme, Henry Road Stage 1 and commencement of Stage 2.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Government released two Local Roads & Community Infrastructure (LRCI) stimulus packages, which were allocated as follows:

- LRCI Phase 1 \$250,934 – cemetery revitalisation, Foreshore rehabilitation (Fisherman’s Hall site) and the road signage renewal project
- LRCI Phase 2 \$261,054 – Additional 150 metres of the Surf Beach stabilisation works

Moreton Terrace between the roundabouts scheduled to be resurfaced under the Regional Road Group (RRG) program, Council approved the allocation of the \$1M Drought Communities Programme grant to upgrade the street lighting and footpaths at the same time. Significant surveying works and engineering designs were undertaken in preparation to execute the project. Funding sources all had strict completion dates, plus contractor availability had begun to emerge as a significant challenge.

Despite all the challenges, the project was tendered, and contracts awarded early 2021 for a scheduled start in April 2021. Due to contractor availability issues, the project commenced in May 2021, and encountered further delays due to the very wet winter. However, the Moreton Terrace upgrade project was underway and whilst proving to be one of the most complex undertaken by the Shire in a very long time, it was on its way to delivering a pleasing result.

Whilst not directly impacted by Tropical Cyclone (TC) Seroja, secondary impacts such loss of power and communications were manageable when compared to the physical devastation to many parts of the Midwest region. It was great to see that we were able to offer some support to neighbouring towns to clean up the debris left behind.

Surf Beach stabilisation work was seriously tested during a severe winter storm during May 2021 and, as per the design exposing the stabilisation work. The stabilisation work held up well and within a few weeks the stabilisation work was covered with beach sand again. The success of the stabilisation work is significant, as the Surf Beach carpark and Ocean Drive are now protected where the stabilisation work exists.

The Medical Centre proved to be critical during the COVID-19 pandemic, having only reopened a few weeks before the COVID-19 pandemic proving to be a critical service to the community under Five Gums Family Medical Practices’ management. The Shire thanks Five Gums Family Medical Practice for their significant contribution to our community, now supported by the management of First Health.

Local development saw quite a resurgence late in the financial year due to the Home Builder Grant and Building Bonus Grant housing stimulus packages released by both Federal and State Governments. The number of Building Permit Applications for new dwellings almost exceed all the activity for the past 4 years peaking from February through to June 2021.

The Shire assisted the Denison Bowling & Recreation Club (DB&RC) with their Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund (CSRFF) funding application for the artificial bowling green surface project with a self-supporting loan, receiving confirmation in January 2021 that they were successful with their CSRFF funding application.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to the temporary closure of the Shire’s Overnight and Cliff Head free camping facilities. At the 23 June 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting, Council adopted to introduce a paid camping operating model for the Southern Coastal Nodes (Cliff Head, Knobby Head and Freshwater Point). On 22 March 2021, the Shire commenced the paid camping system for the Southern Coastal Nodes. Council also resolved at its 23 June 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting to temporarily close the free 24-hour RV Overnight Stay at the Dongara Town Oval and the Seven Mile Beach site for a 12-month period in response to COVID-19 and to enable a review for the future use of these sites.

As part of reforming the Strategic Community Plan, the Shire undertook an ambitious community consultation program including a Drop-in Session at the Irwin Recreational Centre. We saw great participation by the community in the consultation process. While aspiring towards some population

growth, the dominant themes voiced to the Shire by the community included coastal protection, Foreshore enhancement, economic development and tourism growth.

The Dongara Public Library transitioned into a dynamic hub within the community being operated by volunteers.

The Shire saw an increase in tourist visitation which was largely made up of domestic travellers as a result of the ‘hard border’ introduced by the State Government. This was a refreshing change to see local businesses once again thriving.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions led to the cancelation of a number of community events including the Denison Foreshore Sprint and Midwest Show and Shine.

As per the audited financials, it was great to see a surplus in the Rate Setting Statement after imposition of general rates, reduced material and contracts expenditure and significant improvement in the Asset Sustainability Ratio from 0.26 to 0.71. Overall, a pleasing result financially despite the backdrop of the unprecedented challenges due to the declared global pandemic.

We are pleased with the 2020/21 annual financial result where the Net Result deficit in the Statement of Comprehensive income of \$1.9M in 2019/20 significantly improved to a deficit of \$460,000.

Acknowledgement was made to the Shire President, Mike Smith and all the Councillors for their strategic oversight guiding the Shire into a strong position during unprecedented challenges. Shane sincerely thanked all staff for their hard work and dedication to the Shire and our community during this very challenging year.

Cr Hayley Palmer joined the meeting at 5.13pm.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

The Deputy Shire President invited any questions from the gallery.

Mr Ian West, Bygrave Drive, Port Denison:

Question: Does the \$926,103 surplus indicated on page 57 of the Annual Financial Report include the early payment of the Financial Assistance Grants and unspent grants?

The Deputy Shire President invited Mrs Danika Chandler, A/Manager Corporate & Community to respond.

Response: Danika outlined the following points relating to the \$926,103 surplus:

- The surplus includes \$293,142 advance payment of the Financials Assistance Grant funds.
- The closing position was increased by \$140,508 when it was identified that the developer contributions had been included twice as a negative. This correction also affected the prior year.

The main contributor to the surplus is capital projects not completed that were budgeted for and thus remain funded in the closing position.

Question: Does the \$926,103 surplus indicated in the Rate Setting Statement factor in the \$1,139,630 sundry creditors on page 41 of the Annual Report?

Response: Yes, this figure is contained in the calculation of the Shire’s Net Current Assets used in the Rate Setting Statement with the surplus result.

5. CLOSURE

There being no further business, the Shire President closed the meeting at 5.19pm.