



Murray Darling Association Inc.

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REGION 8 – GENERAL MEETING MINUTES 11 December 2020

1. ATTENDANCE

1.1. Present:

Cr Brian Lockyer, Barunga West Council
Maree Wauchope, Barunga West Council
Geoff Brock MP Member for Frome
Cr Ruth Whittle, The District Council of Peterborough
Cr Denis Clark, Northern Areas Council
Helen Macdonald, Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council
Cr John Campbell, Gunnedah Shire Council
Cr Melissa Rebbek, Alexandrina Council
Gavin Helgeland, Balranald Shire Council
Amy Czura, SA Water
Steve Kotz, SA Water
Michelle Irvine, SA Water
John O'Neill, SA Water

1.2. Apologies

Cr Wayne Thomas, Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council
Cr Leonie Kerley, Barunga West Council

2. WELCOME

B Lockyer opened the meeting and noted that it was wonderful to see this meeting so well-attended.

Geoff Brock MP Member for Frome provided welcome remarks to the Region 8 meeting.

G Brock welcomed all those in attendance and emphasised the importance of the Murray-Darling Basin for regional South Australia. G Brock also noted the great work that everyone at the association does for water security, not only for South Australia but for regional South Australians.

G Brock noted that he is often asked “Why are you concerned?” about the Murray-Darling Basin. In response, G Brock noted that our communities rely on the security and the wellbeing of the river itself. G Brock noted that it was important to raise awareness and educate people further up the river and share our experiences. He noted his past experiences with the MDA and said that the organisation has 100% of his support.

B Lockyer thanked Geoff, and noted his support of the MDA. B Lockyer noted the impressive line-up of presenters at this region meeting.

B Lockyer noted that region 8 is one of the driest regions, and that there are challenges in education and awareness as although the communities rely on water from the Murray, they don't live on the Murray itself. B Lockyer noted that the presentations from various speakers would give additional perspectives and awareness to Region 8.

3. MINUTES

3.1. Minutes of the previous meeting on 25th September 2020 via Zoom

Motion: That the minutes of the previous meeting on 25th September 2020 via Zoom are noted.

B Lockyer / E Bradbury

Carried

4. REPORTS

CEO's report

E Bradbury provided a CEO's Report, noting that following recent discussions with B Lockyer, the MDA has commenced planning for a visit to the region in early February.

E Bradbury noted the extensive engagement with federal government following the national conference including:

- the signing of the **CSIRO / MDA Relationship Agreement** with key representatives from the CSIRO, and included discussions of future key projects to undertake which would benefit Basin communities.
- Meeting with **MDBA chair Sir Angus Houston and Chief Executive Phillip Glyde** with discussions regarding the MDA/MDBA commitment to work together on matters of shared objectives under the Memorandum of Understanding
- Meeting with **Ramzi Jabbour, Office of the Inspector General**, to discuss Office's role in auditing and compliance, as well as the future of the Office of the Inspector General
- Met with **Will Howard, Department of Agriculture**, who presented to the MDA's AGM in Tumut in 2014. Will is now with the department of Agriculture and is very focussed on climate change adaptation and mitigation. Opportunities to collaborate in the future.
- Met with **The Hon. Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment**, and discussed the need for a consistent consultation standard and workplan, local government's role in the decision-making framework and the launch of the MDA's Vision 2025.
- Met with **The Hon. Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government**, and **The Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development**, with discussions focussed on the proposed MDA name-change and the launch of Vision 2025.

- Met with the **Bureau of Meteorology** who sought MDA input in terms of consultation and better understanding what our members are seeking in terms of water information for the development of an app.
- Met with **Department of Agriculture Water and Environment Ms Lyn O’Connell (Deputy Secretary)** and **Ms Rachel Connell (First Assistant Secretary)** to discuss the inclusion of local government in decision making processes, including at the BOC and Ministerial Council. E Bradbury has also been asked to contribute to the Community Investments Package (MDBEDP Round 3) Guidelines and sought feedback from the board.
- Met with **Jody Swirepik, Commonwealth Environment Water Holder**, and discussed the Basin Communities Leadership Program, Macquarie Marshes – Burrima and MDA 2020 National Conference motions. E Bradbury commended the CEWO on how it understands regional communities and its willingness to identify solutions.
- Met with **Shadow Minister Terri Butler**, for a broad ranging briefing and background about what’s happening around the Basin.
- Met with **Senator Perin Davey** and discussed the role of local government in representing the diversity of interests and values within their local communities.
- Met with **Rene Woods** and **Grant Rigney from MLDRIN** informally and discussed values and strategic alignment.

In all meetings with our external stakeholders, we have emphasised the key points of:

- Launch of [Vision 2025](#)
- The need for an agreed consultation standard and workplan to support communities and government through to 2024 and beyond
- The need for a role for local government in decision making framework

E Bradbury also discussed the Future Drought Fund’s Innovation Hubs, of which four are located within the Murray-Darling Basin. E Bradbury noted that all four of those bids involve the MDA, ensuring that local government is represented.

Additionally, E Bradbury noted that the relationship agreement with CSIRO as well as the MDA’s involvement in the One Basin CRC is reflective of a strong focus within the organization and Vision 2025 to ensure that some of these wicked challenges around changing water availability are tackled through education, science and collaboration.

E Bradbury provided an update on One Basin CRC. The MDA is a senior partner in that bid which has progressed to the second round. E Bradbury noted that as part of the second round, there will be a panel of interviewees, which will include the MDA.

4.1. Chairs Report

In addition to the Chairmans welcome, B Lockyer noted that Legatus/Simon Millcock will no longer be the secretariat for Region 8. B Lockyer noted that on behalf of Region 8 he wanted to thank Simon for the work and effort he’s put in.

5. STAKEHOLDER PRESENTATION

5.1. **Amy Czura: Stakeholder Engagement Advisor (Local Government Liaison) SA Water**

5.2. **Gavin Helgeland – Balranald Council**

Yanga Lake – Murrumbidgee River e-Water Optimisation Project: Improving Connectivity

5.3. **Cr Melissa Rebbeck – Vice President MDA – Southern Basin**

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

6.1. Collaboration with Legatus: Climate Change Sector Agreement, Future Drought Fund and Water Security, Climate Ready Communities

E Bradbury noted that the MDA is looking forward to continuing to collaborate with Legatus on issues of common objectives and priorities providing added value so the MDA is not duplicating the value of Legatus and their councils.

6.2. MDA Consultation Process update

6.3. Core deliverables – Current Issues

B Lockyer noted the importance of education and knowledge-sharing on issues not only within Region 8, but across the Murray-Darling Basin.

R Whittle noted that Region 8 and the District Council of Peterborough is one of the driest places in Australia. R Whittle spoke about the lack of water availability and security for individuals within her own community and noted, *“When somebody does not have water to drink, it really hits home,”* showing how vulnerable we can all be without the precious resource.

G Helgeland thanked R Whittle for sharing and noted a similar experience in Balranald where forecasting implied a possible day 0 and running out of water. He noted that this was at a time when other towns in NSW had already run out of water. G Helgeland noted that this goes to show how fragile everything is.

6.4. National Conference 2021 – Connecting Councils and Catchments: Putting communities at the heart of the Basin Plan.

E Bradbury noted that she will provide a more detailed update at the next Region 8 meeting.

B Lockyer also thanked J Campbell for his attendance at the meeting.

J Campbell thanked B Lockyer for the opportunity to sit in and highly commended the SA Water presentation.

7. NEXT MEETING

8. CLOSE