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**Murray Darling Association Inc.**

**Ordinary Meeting of the Board**

**12.45pm – Sunday 21 February 2016**

**463 High St, Echuca, Vic**

**MINUTES - MEETING No. 355**

1. **ATTENDANCE**
   1. Present

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Cr David Thurley | Region 1 | Des Bilske | Region 2 |
| Cr Kevin Myers | Region 5 | Cr Barry Featherston\* | Region 6 |
| Cr Peter Jamieson | Region 7 | Cr Paul Maytom | Region 9 |
| Emma Bradbury | Chief Executive Officer | Peter Gray | Finance Manager |

\* Via skype

* 1. Apologies

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Murray Wood | Region 10 |  |  |

1. **PREVIOUS MINUTES**
   1. Meeting held Monday 21 December 2015, Skype.

**Motion:** That the minutes be accepted as an accurate record.

K Myers/D Bilske ***Carried***

1. **BUSINESS ARISING**
   1. Code of Conduct and Duty Statement

**Motion:** That all current and future serving board members be required to complete and sign their acceptance of the Code of Conduct and Duty Statement, as amended from time to time, as a responsibility of the role, and that a signed copy be held on file at the MDA office

P Jamieson/D Bilske ***Carried***

* 1. Meeting with Dept Ag and Water Resources *an ors*

Chief Executive Officer and A/National President Cr David Thurley travelled to Canberra and met with

i. Matthew Coulton, Senior Advisor to the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources,

ii. Phillip Glyde, Chief Executive Officer of the Murray Darling Basin Authority

iii. David Papps, and snr staff, CEWO

Cr Thurley provided a brief report. All meetings were very positive. Common theme reflecting the need for the MDA to be a strong, credible entity that can provide informed contributions on the continuing development of Basin management policy, and be a two-way conduit for between local government and the responsible authorities.

**Motion:** That the report be noted.

D Bilske/P Maytom ***Carried***

* 1. Election of the National President

Nominations for the position of National President were received from Cr David Thurley, Albury City Council and Cr Kevin Myers, Mid-Murray Council.

Both nominations met the eligibility criteria, and both nominees demonstrated they had strong support from their council and their region. Both nominees presented to the Board.

The vote was conducted in accordance with the rules of the Association. Cr David Thurley was duly elected to the position of National President.

* 1. Election of the National Vice President

Nominations for the position of National Vice President were received from Cr Kevin Myers, Mid-Murray Council and Cr Barry Featherston, Alexandrina Council.

Both nominations met the eligibility criteria, and the nominees each demonstrated they had strong support from their respective councils and from their region. Both nominees presented to the Board.

The vote was conducted in accordance with the rules of the Association. Cr Barry Featherston was duly elected to the position of National President.

**Motion:** That the board

1. Note the election of Cr David Thurley, Albury City Council - Chair of Region 1 to the position of National President, and
2. Note the election of Cr Barry Featherston, Alexandrina Council - Chair of Region 6 to the position of National Vice President.

K Myers/P Maytom ***Carried***

1. **REPORTS**
   1. Region Reports – not submitted. Regional issues and perspectives discussed and shared in detail at the Strategic Planning workshop.
   2. Chief Executive Officer’s report

Update – Constitution draft

Social and economic impacts assessment framework – project and advocacy update

Scheduled meetings

Media and Comms

* 1. Finance Report – see attached

**Motion:** That the reports be accepted

D Bilske/K Myers ***Carried***

1. **GENERAL BUSINESS**
   1. Adoption of the banner line *“It’s in the Balance”*

In 2015, the theme “It’s in the Balance” was adopted for the annual national conference, conveying both a sense of urgency and need to pursue social, economic and environmental benefits in the management of basin resources and the implementation of the Basin Plan. As a banner line, this tag ensures that all triple bottom line priorities are valued and prioritized according to the need and capacity at the time, in relation to all others.

**Motion:**  That the Board adopt *“It’s in the Balance”* as the MDA banner line.

K Myers/D Bilske ***Carried***

* 1. Authority to accept/appoint interim/inaugural Regional Chairs

With vacancies existing in the Chair of several regions, a mechanism is required to ensure the vacancies can be filled and an interim or an inaugural chairing council engaged.

**Motion:**  That the board

1. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to engage an appropriate council to the position of interim Chair of a region, in consultation with the National President, where an extraordinary vacancy exists.
2. Notes that the council must meet all required nomination criteria
3. Will ratify the appointment at the next meeting of the Board
   1. Dual memberships

The board considered whether a serving Councillor of a member council can be permitted to hold membership with the MDA in a private capacity – effectively a dual membership. Dual memberships may create confusion, undermine the primacy of the council’s membership, and expose the MDA, the member council, and the Councillor to the risk of conflicting interests.

The item was withdrawn and the matter laid on the table – to allow chairs the opportunity to consult with their regions.

* 1. Position on the *Water Act 2007 – Basin Plan 2012* (the Basin Plan)

It was noted that a policy position in regards to the Plan is imperative in providing an express position from which the MDA can provide advocacy and direction for policy changes and management practices.

Was discussed that a clear position on the Plan will further provide stakeholders and partners, including the MDBA and the CEWO, with a clear understanding of the association’s position, and will mitigate the confusion and damage that can be caused by individual advocates who may purport to represent the Murray Darling Association.

**Motion:**  That the MDA

1. Supports the Purpose of the Basin Plan (Water Act 2007, s20)
2. Acknowledges that the Basin Plan 2012 is an adopted strategy agreed by all states and the Commonwealth
3. Acknowledges that elements of the Basin Plan will always benefit from the application of adaptive management principals
4. Commits to work constructively with the MDBA, and other stakeholders using our collective engagement and influence for the overall benefit of the Murray Darling Basin and the communities reliant upon its resources, via the implementation of the Basin Plan.

B Featherston/K Myers ***Carried\****

\*It will be noted that this motion was carried unanimously

* 1. Murray Darling Foundation

Several letters have been received by donors to the Foundation, requesting redirection of funds gifted.

**Motion**: That the Chief Executive Officer respond to such correcpondence with a request for supporting documentation to substantiate the requests, and that a full report be prepared for the board on the current status of the Foundation.

D Bilske/K Myers ***Carried***

* 1. The board noted that the strategic planning workshop held 19-21 Feb, 2016 had been constructive and productive. The chair thanked all board members and staff for their hard work, open and honest contributions, their commitment and their work at the reginal levels. The board is excited by the direction and objectives articulated, and values the hard work of the facilitators, staff, chairs, guests and contributors in bringing the material together.

1. **CLOSE** – 1.30pm