



Murray Darling Association Inc.

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463 High Street
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Region 11 Meeting
12.00pm, Thursday 20 February 2020
Warialda Shire Council

MINUTES – February 2020

1. ATTENDANCE

1.1 Present

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Cr John Campbell - Chair | Gunnedah Shire Council |
| Annabelle Guest* | REO, MDBA (Via Zoom) |
| Andrew Johns | Gunnedah Shire Council |
| Cr David Coulton | Gwydir Shire Council |
| Cr John Coulton | Gwydir Shire Council |
| Emma Bradbury | CEO MDA (Via Zoom) |
| #Cr Greg Sauer | Tenterfield Shire Council (Via teleconference) |

* Non-member– attendance by invitation

Attendance by teleconference/Zoom

1.2 Apologies

| | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Cr Frances Young | Gwydir Shire Council |
| Cr Max Eastcott | Gwydir Shire Council |

Action: That the apologies be accepted **Move J Campbell/Greg Sauer** **Carried**

2. WELCOME – Meeting commenced at 12:00pm

- 2.1 Acknowledgment of Country – Cr John Coulton, Mayor Gwydir Shire Council
 - 2.2 Cr John Coulton welcomed delegates and thanked them for their attendance.
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3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil received

4. MINUTES

Motion: The minutes of the meeting held at Gunnedah on 7 November 2019 as circulated were accepted as a true and correct record of that meeting.

Action: **Move J Coulton/ J Campbell** **Carried**

5. REPORTS

5.1 Chief Executive Officer

Grants and Policy Officer

In line with MDA's Strategic Plan, MDA have now employed a dedicated Grants and Policy Officer. Gemma Wilson commenced with the MDA in December 2019.

After success in obtaining funding through the MDBEDP (Round 1) for the Basin Communities Leadership Program in 2019, the following grant applications have been submitted for Round 2:

- Basin Communities Leadership Program 2.0
Delivery of a high-level leadership program delivered across 15 of the 31 eligible and identified MDBED (Round 2) communities.
- Regional Economic Diversification Program
Establishment of a network of 6 place-based Regional Development Officers who will draw on local knowledge and experience to develop Regional Economic Diversification Plans across the identified MDBED (Round 2) communities.
- Next Generation Mental Health First Aid Program
Delivery of a Mental Health First Aid Course to Basin youth, via a nationally accredited provider, across 10 specified MDBEDP (Round 2) communities.

The MDA is pleased to have received written support for the above projects from the following organisations, councils and individuals:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| CSIRO | Moree Plains Shire Council (NSW) |
| NRM Regions Queensland | Narromine Shire Council |
| Balonne Shire Council (QLD) | Rural City of Murray Bridge (SA) |
| Berri Barmera Council | Wentworth Shire Council (NSW) |
| Brewarrina Shire Council (NSW) | Senator Senator Perin Davey (NSW) |
| Coorong Council (SA) | Tony Pasin MP (SA) |
| Mid Murray Council (SA) | |

MDA Letter to Minister Pavey regarding first flush

In response to concerns raised by councils in the far west NSW the MDA has written to Minister Pavey to encourage her continuing protection of first flush flows by maintaining the embargo on pumping for sufficient time to ensure the effective recharge of the Barwon Darling system, and to urge for completion of the WRPs to inter alia provide certainty and regulation of provisions for floodplain harvesting.

MDA Letter to Ministerial Council

MDA has written to the Ministerial Council and to BOC to encourage their immediate attention to ensuring sound strategic leadership of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority by filling the vacancies on the board, particularly the Chair at their earliest opportunity.

National President and CEO to travel to Canberra

National President David Thurley and CEO Emma Bradbury will be in Canberra next week for a range of meetings. Report to follow.

NOTE: For full information, please see Attachment

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1 Annabelle Guest - MDBA

- Rainfall in January and February has eased drought conditions over parts of the Northern Basin, none of the irrigation storages in NSW Border Rivers, Gwydir and Namoi have reached 10% capacity yet. Angst from irrigators over floodplain harvesting compliance and reaction from those downstream that the embargo was lifted for a short period. All want to achieve best value from flows.
- WRP's – none of the NSW water resource plans have been submitted to the MDBA for accreditation as yet, more consultation may be needed on some issues. Due 31 Dec 19. Flood Plain Harvesting and Metering Projects have also been extended and NSW government has a lot of work to do to get these projects to fit in the timelines. Appointment of The Hon Keith Pitt to water portfolio sees a change in the federal water minister.
- Basin Community Committee (BCC) has appointed a new chair Phil Duncan who is from Moree. He is the first Aboriginal BCC chair. Northern Basin tour will occur in July and may be a chance to meet BCC members
- Independent Socio Economic Panel (ISEP) draft report in socio-economic conditions across the basin to be in the next week followed by a period of public exhibition. An opportunity to provide feedback will then be provided and the final report submitted by the end of April to Minister Pitt.
- MDA Rural leadership program – I have sent information about this project onto the communities in my region (Collarenebri)
- The Local Government NSW Water Management Conference is on in Narrabri from 15-17 July <https://www.lgnsw.org.au/events-training/lgnsw-water-management-conference>
- The Country Mayor's Association is hosting a water management workshop Q and A on the 6th March in Sydney after the meeting with the MDBA, NSW water and CEWO (Commonwealth Environmental Water Office).
- More Information from Katrina Humphries, Mayor of Moree Plains SC.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

7.1 Murray Darling Association Name Change

- Will be further discussed at the SPW in Moama

7.2 Workshop – “Climate Change Position Statement and Action Plan”

- Due to the limited number of attendees we could not do much. Gunnedah Shire and Gwydir Shire had input and Tenterfield Shire will be sending feed back on the three items through to John so a region “draft” can be done. Will be sent out in due course.

8. NEXT MEETING

Aligned with BROCC Meeting in May.

9. CLOSE

The meeting closed at 1:05pm



Chief Executive Officer's Report

February 2020

Emma Bradbury
ceo@mda.asn.au

1. Appointments

| Date | Event/meeting | Location |
|------------|---|------------|
| 20/01/2020 | Board Meeting 394 | |
| 20/01/2020 | Meeting with Chris Bilkey – Mayor Murray Rivers Council | Echuca |
| 21/01/2020 | Malcolm Thompson – Discussions MDBA Chair | Telephone |
| 23/01/2020 | Town Hall Session with the Inspector General | Deniliquin |
| 24/01/2020 | Regional Diversification discussions – Brewarrina | Via Zoom |
| 28/01/2020 | Strategic Advisory Committee Meeting | Via Zoom |
| 29/01/2020 | National Indigenous Australian Agency | Echuca |
| 29/01/2020 | Region 4 Ordinary Meeting | Via Zoom |
| 30/01/2020 | Regional Diversification discussions – Wentworth | Via Zoom |
| 30/01/2020 | Regional Diversification discussions – Shepparton | Via Zoom |
| 04/02/2020 | Celine Steinfield - Wentworth Group – MDBA Roundtable | Via Zoom |
| 05/02/2020 | BCLP Discussions: Paul Childs, Jarrod Eaton and Iain Ellis | Via Zoom |
| 06/02/2020 | Mike Stewardson – One Basin CRC discussions | Telephone |
| 07/02/2020 | Angus Mackie – Minister Pavey’s Office | Via Zoom |
| 10/02/2020 | Adam O’Bied Advisor to Water Minister Anthony Lynham QLD | Telephone |
| 10/02/2020 | MDB roundtable discussions | Via Zoom |
| 11/02/2020 | Regional diversification discussions – Moree Regional Council | Via Zoom |
| 13/02/2020 | 76 th National Conference Committee Meeting | Via Zoom |
| 14/02/2020 | Region 6 – AGM and Ordinary Meeting | Via Zoom |

2. Basin Communities Leadership Project – BCLP

Project Stages / Current status:

- Stage 1) Program Design and Development *[Underway – Progressing]*
- Stage 1a) Participant / Candidate Recruitment *[Underway – Progressing]*
- Stage 2) Leadership Program Delivery *[Awaiting completion of stage 1 / 1a]*
- Stage 3) Community Project Delivery Support *[Awaiting completion of stage 2]*
- Stage 4) Consolidation / Refurbishment / OILLS *[Awaiting completion of stage 3]*

Progress Comments:

- A mature advertising and recruitment campaign has commenced with applications being made.
- Coordination of the venue bookings and support arrangements are underway.
- Some Councils have responded with their support – following up with those who have not yet responded.
- Training / Business Support Officer recruitment due FEB / MAR.

Risks / Opportunities:

- Risks – successfully aligning all the guest presenters and support networks to synchronise / support dates across the 15 x locations.
- Risks – external support arrangements and requested materials / services meeting project timelines.

3. Discussions with Angus Mackie – Minister Pavey’s Office

- Invitation extended to Minister Pavey to attend the next Region 10 Meeting in late February.
- The MDA invited the Minister to support the funding application for the Regional Economic Diversification program
- The MDA notified the Department that the Board considered Minister Pavey’s request that we facilitate or host community level meetings with key councils and community leaders across South Australia. Board recommended that the Minister establish a joint approach with Minister Spiers, and that the MDA would be pleased to identify key personnel and community leaders.
- The MDA also enquired as to what the NSW Department is asking of Queensland in relation to the “First Flush Flows”.

4. Discussions with Adam O’Bied – Advisor – Minister Anthony Lynham Water Minister for QLD

- Adam O’Bied will be emailing a zoom calendar invite to discuss preparations of the written response to the letter sent to the Minister in relation to National Water Infrastructure – feasibility investment
- The MDA also discussed NSW section 324 orders and whether QLD have the same.

5. Memberships

The MDA have reached out to the [Cowra Council](#) to investigate the Council’s position in their consideration of joining the MDA as members.

A presentation to Council was conducted by Cr Phyllis Miller (R10) Chair and CEO.

Paul Devery has advised that a report to the Council will be completed by the end of the month

6. 2020 76th National Conference – Shepparton – Victoria

Venues have been secured for the [Conference](#) and [Gala Dinner Event](#).

Logistics for the Study Tour to Barmah are currently underway with the committee meeting monthly to further discuss such topics as Theme, Presenters, sponsors and exhibitors.

7. ONE Basin Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) Roadshow

The ONE Basin CRC is a focused collaboration bid to develop policy, technical and financial solutions that support Basin communities, business and governments to understand and reduce their exposure to climate, water and environmental threats. The Australian Government’s Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) program supports industry-led collaborations between industry, researchers and the community.

8. Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists

The MDB Roundtable presents an opportunity for communities, businesses and scientists to come together to address the serious water problems. Options for addressing many of the immediate and long-term water security and river health challenges, with fundamental actions could be readily implemented with widespread benefits.

9. First Nation Peoples

The MDA reached out to the newly formed National Indigenous Australian Agency based in Shepparton to establish and re-connect with the local Indigenous groups in the region. NIAA, previously known as the Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet, Indigenous Affairs group, welcomed the MDA executive and have subsequently provided contact details for the Yorta Yorta Nations, as well as names to assist with the logistical preparations for the 2020 76th National Conference.

NIAA, have indicated their support of the BCLP program and will disseminate details and correspondences throughout their networks.

10. Employee Entitlements

The future cost to the MDA of employee entitlements is increasing steadily. A separate bank account has been initiated to hold all accrued entitlements. The account “Employee Entitlements” will be managed in accordance with standard practices.



Emma Bradbury

Chief Executive Officer