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Minutes of a Meeting of Murrumbidgee Region (9) of the Murray Darling Association held at the Leeton Shire Council on Friday 29th May 2015, commencing at 10am

MINUTES

1. ATTENDANCE

1.1 Present

Cr Paul Maytom	Leeton Shire Council
Cr Paul Rossetto	Griffith City Council
Cr Russell Campbell	Carrathool Shire Council
Cr Vince Cashmere	Carrathool Shire Council
Cr Jim Howard	Narrandera Shire Council
Cr Mick Rutledge	Hay Shire Council
Cr John Seymour	Coolamon Shire Council
Mr Mark Gooden	Member Wagga Wagga
Mr Joe Burns	Member Leeton
M/s Emma Bradbury	CEO MDA
Mr James Dyer	OEH
Mr Paul Doyle	MDBA
M/s Madeline Gorham	MDBA
Mr Tony Donoghue	Coolamon Shire Council
Mr Bede Mecham	Life Member Wagga Wagga

1.2 Apologies

Cr Greg Conkey	Wagga Wagga City Council
Cr Mason Crane	Gundagai Shire Council
Cr Geoff Pritchard	Tumut Shire Council
Cr Greg Toll	National President MDA
Mr Heinz Kausche	Wagga Wagga City Council
Mr Adrian Wells	Manager Upper Catchment MDA

Moved that the apologies be accepted Joe Burns/Paul Rossetto Cr
Adrian in listng his apology requested that it be mentioned his thanks to all that have given their
support and best wishes during his illness,

2. WELCOME

Mayor Paul Maytom welcomed members to Leeton and acknowledged the Wiradjuri People as the traditional owners of the land. Paul also welcomed James Dyer OEH, and Paul Doyle and Madeline Gorham from the MDBA. Paul mentioned the tragedy that happened at Easter and said the town was moving on since the tradegy. He advised that the Council had spent \$1/3M on the Community Centre and \$1.6m on a roads programme (Local Infrastructure Renewal Funding). The Council continued to take a positive outlook on the Basin Plan.

Paul acknowledged Bede Mecham and also thanked him for taking the minutes of this meeting.

3. MINUTES

Moved that the minutes of the meeting held at Wagga Wagga City Council on Friday 15th August 2014 commencing at 10am be taken as read and confirmed.

Paul Rossetto/Jim Howard Cr

4. BUSINESS ARISING

- 4.1 Joe Burns ask what happened to the two motions he moved at the Wagga Wagga meeting for the AGM. The CEO replied that they were not presented at the AGM, but were being dealt with.
- 4.2 Cr Russell Campbell ask did the MDA and MDBA still have a MOU. The CEO replied that the National President and herself had met with the MDBA CEO Rhondda Dickson to discuss the matter.

5. MOTIONS-AGM

The CEO advised that 6 motions had been presented to the AGM and were passed. Action on all motions had now been actioned as per the Summary of AGM Resolutions 2014.

6. REPORTS

- 6.1 Cr Paul Maytom Chairman Murrumbidgee Region: reported that he tries to attend all meetings associated with water and the Basin Plan so that he is well informed as to what is happening. Paul mentioned that he attended a meeting at Wentworth on Healthy Rivers which was about the Plan and the process. It also dealt with how the Plan would be monitored. Paul stressed the importance of the Murray Darling Association being represented at forums of this type. Cr Russell Campbell mentioned that Phil Townsend had carried out a social/economic study of the Carrathool Shire and when they received the report it was quite different to their own notes as to what happened. Consequently they informed Phil and the report was amended. Russell advised all to carefully check their reports. Paul reported that the MDBA Reports advised of the funds spent on Water, 90% was spent on construction and only 10% was spent on buyback. Over 10,000 irrigators have benefited from the works.
- 6.2 CEO Emma Bradbury reported that she had attended meetings at Regions 1,2,3,5,7,8,@9. Emma gave an outline of the MDA and details of each Region as to what Councils were members and Councils that were not. Emma thought that the Council supplying the Regional Chair could also supply a minute secretary. Emma spoke about the following:
 - Review of the Constitution
 - Governance Model
 - Organisational re-structure
 - Financial Review
 - Ongoing compliance audit and update
 - New Website and social media platform
 - Benchmarking against best practise
 - Constant engagement with our membersAdvised that legislation was in place to cap buybacks at 1500Gl. Cr Russell Campbell commented that there should a slow down to the buyback as farmers were doing it tough. Also the need for greater flexibility with trade of environmental water and balanced weighting for social economic and environmental outcomes under the Act.
- 6.3 Adrian Wells Upper Catchment Manager tended a written report which covered his illness and what is happening with the Creative Catchment Kids programme for 2014-2015. Book-writing program in Griffith on Pests in Irrigation Crops, Promoting Agriculture as a career, Up and Doing Publication Professor Holger Meinke, head of the Institute of Agriculture at the

University of Tasmania in Hobart believes that the book has the potential to be developed into a PhD. On question the CEO advise that the Budget did not have any funds for this project but it could happen in the future. Adrian also mentioned the Water Cycle DVD.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL WATERING MURRUMBIDGEE VALLEY

Mr James Dyer, Junior Environmental Watering Manager, Office Environment and Heritage gave an update on how environment water had been used in the valley and what the results had been to the watering. James advised that the OEH is planning an environmental water release in the Murrumbidgee River in late Winter/Spring 2015, to achieve a number of environmental outcomes.

The intent is to release environmental water into the Murrumbidgee River from the two major water storages, Burrinjack and Blowering Dams, to allow water to reach low-lying wetlands right along the main river and Yanco Creek system.

Releases would be made when there are significant unregulated inflows from tributary streams, downstream of the major water storages. By “piggybacking” onto these natural inflows the storage release requirements can be reduced and this can make the limited environmental water allocation last longer and create a more effective watering event.

James advised that all Councils should be aware of this event. Also he advised that the Environmental Watering Plan was on the OEH Website.

8. STAKEHOLDERS PRESENTATION

Mr Paul Doyle-Constraints Management – Paul spoke about what are constraints and how they impact on flows. Paul restricted his talk to the Murrumbidgee Valley. One example is the Mundarlo Bridge, this a low level bridge and cannot be inundated because of it’s need for transport movements. So this bridge is a constraint as it puts a limit on the flow releases. In the period 2013-2023 the Authority has \$200m to spend on removing constraints.

Paul referred to the document “Constraints Management Strategy annual progress report 2013-2014.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

9.1 Tin Mine Ardlethan Disposal of Waste

Mr Tony Donoghue GM Coolamon Shire Council gave an update as to what has happened so far, as no official DA has been received, information is only hear say. It was mentioned that disposing of waste at the mine was last raised in 1995 and was ruled out because of problems. It was pointed out that was 20 years ago and lots of changes in waste management had occurred since then.

It was resolved that we wait until the Shire receives an DA and the matter can be considered at that time as to whether we support the application.

There was a break for lunch.

9.2 Motions for 2015 AGM-Cr Paul Rossetto raised the matter of the difference in

terminology used by the states to describe water resources issues and this makes it difficult to have informed debate between states. It was considered that this could form a motion to the AGM.

Joe Burns was not satisfied with the outcome of the motions he moved at the August meeting last year. Listed as Clause 10 in the August 2014 minutes, he suggested that they could be resubmitted to the 2015 AGM

9.3 Review of the Constitution and Governance Model-Discussion Paper

The discussion raised more questions than answers, it was not understood how the Board of Directors and the CoRC will interact. The main point of discussion was how Councillors on the

Board and CoRC would be funded for costs and would their Councils support them by reimbursing the costs of attending meetings.

Members also questioned the makeup of the Board and why were there representatives from outside bodies as members consider that we have the necessary expertise in our own organisation. We are an Organisation which supports Local Government. Also if we have outside representatives what will be the procedure for their appointment.

The proposal that we have a Board of Director, CoRC and Regions which will meet individually makes the organisation top heavy.

From the discussion it would appear that more work needs to be carried out on the Management Structure. This needs to be settled prior to the Constitution being finalised.

10. NEXT MEETING-

To be advised.

11. CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 2.20pm.

*The Murray Darling Association acknowledges and thanks
Leeton Shire Council for arranging and hosting this meeting of Region 9.*