



Murray Darling Association Inc.

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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 11th March 2016, 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
Mr Joe Burns	Member Leeton
M/s Emma Bradbury	CEO MDA
Cr Geoff Pritchard	Tumut Shire Council
Cr Mason Crane	Gundagai Shire Council
Graeme Haley	
Gary Hiscock	Riverina Water
Cr Greg Verdon	Lockhart Shire Council
GM Bob Stewart	Tumut Shire Council

1.2 Apologies

Cr Greg Conkey	Wagga Wagga City Council
Mr Mark Gooden	Member Wagga Wagga
Cr Austin Evans	Murrumbidgee Shire Council
Cr John Dal Broi	Griffith Shire Council
Bede Spannagle	Riverina Water
Michael McCormack	State MP

Moved that the apologies be accepted - Paul Rossetto/Vince Cashmere
Cr Evans was going to try and get to the meeting but was going to be late.

No Conflicts Noted

2. WELCOME

Mayor Paul Maytom welcomed members to Leeton and acknowledged the Wiradjuri People as the traditional owners of the land. He spoke about how over the last 12 months there has been a lot of changes and we as an organisation need to ensure we are sending right message, positioning ourselves better and that the credibility is there. He introduced Emma Bradbury (CEO MDA) around the table and Emma spoke about the MDA changing its direction and strengthening its position in the region. Paul also thanked Angela Stevens for taking minutes at the meeting.

Emma noted that Angela Stevens was taking minutes and asked whether the group minded if the meeting was also recorded via audio device to make the discussion points easier to minute – There was no objection around the table.

3. MINUTES

Moved that the minutes of the previous meeting held at Leeton Shire Council on Friday 29th May 2015 commencing at 10am be taken as read and confirmed - Joe Burns/Jim Howard

4. BUSINESS ARISING

4.1 Joe Burns again asked what happened to the two motions he moved last meeting. Emma mentioned that correspondence was forwarded regarding the review of Water Act and the preparation of Watering Plans but he was advised that not much progress had been made. Emma suggested maybe Leeton Shire Council may wish to write a brief report regarding the issue as it is worth pursuing.

4.2 Statements regarding Minute Number 6 from last meeting, Cr Paul Rossetto mentioned a media release that came out yesterday (10 March 2016) from the National Irrigators Council (NIC) stating that the focus should be on infrastructure and not on buybacks and there is pressure on the government to not purchase any water. Paul asked that clarification be sought in this regard. Tom Chesan (President NIC) stated that only 1/3 of \$6billion will be allocated for infrastructure. Money being "leaked" to other projects.

Emma Bradbury suggested the quorum move a motion to "fact check" the media release and recommended the MDA gets an understanding of where the money has gone. A member council to write a letter to minister – use an action code with a resolution number, action and recommendation.

Motion – Send Letter to National Irrigators Council seeking clarification of yesterday's statement and also to MDA seeking fact checks - Moved by Paul Rossetto/Jim Howard.

Paul Maytom introduced Jackie Kruger – General Manager of Leeton Shire Council.

4.3 Strategic Planning Workshop – Echuca – Emma Bradbury

Meeting held 3 weeks ago to develop strategy for 2016 – 2019 period. Previously the organisation lacked a structure and framework, clarity, lacking focus, direction. Now financially clear, accountable and sustainable but tight. Aim to build value and capacity the organisation must increase its membership.

Governance arrangements reviewed. Board is now a structured body that meets monthly and operates consistently with the legislation. In December 2015 the plan needed changing to meet the expectations of board members and stakeholders, MDBA, Member Councils, Dept of Agriculture and Water Resources etc. The board will be a lean, clear focused Local Government representative. Getting back to basics, with a core purpose, strengthening regions and empowering and re-engaging people to work better at a council level. Work through the issue at council, bring report to MDA meeting and discuss the issue and what you recommend the MDA to do to solve the issue.

Strategic Plan has been drafted and will go to the board in March for comment and adopted at the April meeting. Emma shared the principles of the plan for endorsement by Region 9 to ensure MDA is on the right track. The key principles of the organisation can be found on the website. Quorum concurred that adoption of the new strategy in April was too early as they wanted to be able to see and read the new strategy fully before adoption. One month prior will be sufficient.

5. STAKEHOLDERS PRESENTATION

- 5.1 Richard McLoughlin, Assistant Secretary – Water Resources, Water Division Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (by remote link) Overview: Agricultural Competiveness Whitepaper: *2 Identifying priority infrastructure projects to underpin the productivity and efficiency of agriculture: 2A Securing Australia's water supplies.*

Paul Maytom introduced Richard McLoughlin. Presentation will be via loud speaker on phone as there is no skype capability at their end.

Motion passed by Bob Stewart and seconded by Joe Burns for member councils to draft a letter to Minister Blair asking for the funding decision process and asking what projects had been submitted and supported under the \$25million feasibility study.

Motion was passed by Paul Rossetto and Mason Crane for letter to be sent to Minister Blair asking what the \$450million in capital funding was being used for.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

- 6.1 Region 9 AGM – Date and Election Process

Election Kits have been distributed. Nomination Forms handed out and elections held at 10 June 2016 meeting of Region 9. All this information can be found on MDA website.

Delegate nominations for regions must go through council and criteria must be completed which requires a resolution of council. Nominations must go through head office for compliance purposes.

Membership Categories as agreed in Echuca –

Local Government Member

Life Member

Associate Member – Individual, Not for Profit, Business Entities

According to Constitution - Voting at Regions - 1 vote per delegate region or up to 5 per region council in attendance. Associate Members 1 vote and Life Members 1 Vote.

Consensus around the table was 2 per council per region (1 vote per delegate). Mason Crane asked about amalgamated councils (eg Tumba and Tumut) and voting numbers. Bob said population is irrelevant it is still 2 votes per council.

According to Constitution, Voting at AGM – Local Government Member 1 vote + 1 per 20,000 population capped at 3 votes.

Entitled to vote at Regions and AGM if hold one of the delegate positions. Delegates can hold up 2 cards for voting if only 1 delegate attends.

Action - Emma Bradbury to send out the voting rights to members and the draft strategy plan in the next few days to each council.

Paul Rossetto suggested Emma take a look at the Flood Management Association and other organisations for voting structure for ideas.

Region 9 agreed to keep the existing structure of 12 regions. This will align the AGMs and the National Executive in February and all projects will be shelved until self-funding options are aligned.

Jim Howard suggested clarifying and possibly increasing membership fees and the income from membership fees.

Emma Bradbury mentioned that all AGM submissions by regions and councils must be prepared and endorsed by the region first. Motion moved that all member councils submit motions for AGM by the July Meeting to be endorsed by the Region 9.

6.2 Build More Dams Committee Engagement

Action - Paul Rossetto to see Minister Niall Blair at next meeting on 18 March 2016 at Griffith City Council Chambers regarding NSW Water Sharing Plans and the Feasibility Study. Where has the money gone? Where has it been allocated and is it being returned to irrigation or infrastructure?

6.3 Motions/Actions/Correspondence from Meetings

Jackie Kruger discussed that contact information needed to be generated to members to ensure coordination of events such as these can be smoother. Jackie also proposed that wherever the meeting is to be held, that Council is responsible for the organisational and administrative support. Jim Howard questioned whether that was already the process? Emma Bradbury went on to say that some do and some don't. The expectation from the board is 4 meetings per year which Region 9 discussed could be done around the table.

Bob said that it may cause some inconsistency as people take minutes differently. It was decided that as long as there is an action an endorsement and a responsible officer in each motion carried that it would be fine.

How should motions work/actions work? Bob Stewart asked whether a designated region member could do all correspondence for action to Emma Bradbury while liaising with the proposing council who will provide the background - Around the table agreed.

All communications from MDA currently go to General Managers, Mayors and their delegates via email. Bob Stewart suggested an attendance list for meetings so that contact details can be updated.

Action – all members of Region 9 to email Emma so she can comprise a list of current details for all members.

6.4 Other

- Action - Paul Maytom to contact MDA for Annual Report as nobody had seen it.
- Joe Burns – What say does EWAG have on the Environmental Watering Plan??
- Jackie Kruger read a media release that had been release (11 March 2016) today from MDBA - http://www.mdba.gov.au/about-us/governance/ministerial-council/murray-darling-basin-ministers-meet-melbourne-11-mar-2016?utm_source=MinisterialCommunique11March2016_Murray-Darling-&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=MDBAMedia
- Paul Rossetto mentioned that he attended a presentation regarding Coorong by Darren DeBortoli which was very good – Paul to send to Emma so can be attached to the minutes and can be found on YouTube.
- Gundagai Water Storage Proposal – Mason Crane – needing more clarification
- Bob Stewart suggested there be a “Local Round Up” on the Agenda for each meeting - Around the table agreed.

7. **NEXT MEETING** - to be held on 10 JUNE 2016 at Narrandera – Moved by Joe Burns/Jim Howard

8. CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 1:15pm.