



Murray Darling Association Inc.

Region 5

www.mda.asn.au ABN: 64 636 490 493

Chairperson:
Peter Hunter

Hosting Council:
Renmark Paringa Council

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Minutes

Region 5 – Murray Darling Association

Morgan & Districts Community Hub

Monday, 9th September, 2019

Meeting commenced at 10:00am

1. ATTENDANCE

1.1 Present:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| • Cr Peter Raison | Mid Murray Council |
| • Cr Jeff Hall | Mid Murray Council |
| • Ian Mann | Mid Murray Council (Private Member) |
| • Ben Scales | CEO, Mid Murray Council |
| • Yvonne Smith | District Council of Karoonda East Murray |
| • Cr Andrew Kassebaum | Berri Barmera Council |
| • Cr Mike Fuller | Berri Barmera Council |
| • Malcom Wilksch | Berri Barmera Council (Private Member) |
| • Cr Kym Webber | Loxton Waikerie Council |
| • Cr Allan Maddocks | Renmark Paringa Council |
| • Cr Margaret Howie | Renmark Paringa Council |
| • Cr Peter Hunter | Renmark Paringa Council |
| • Neil Martinson | Mayor, Renmark Paringa Council |
| • Ashleigh Baker | EA - Renmark Paringa Council |
| • Emma Bradbury | CEO, MDA via Zoom Online Conference |

1.2 Apologies:

- Cr Peter Walker - Loxton Waikerie Council

1.3 Conflict of Interest Declaration – Material / Actual / Perceived

- Nil

2. WELCOME

All members are welcomed to our September Meeting - with a special welcome to Malcolm Wilksch (Private Member - Region 5), Ben Scales, CEO of Mid Murray Council and Cr Yvonne Smith from Karoonda East Murray.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Moved: Cr Margaret Howie

That the Minutes of the meeting of MDA Region 5 held in Berri, on the 3rd June, 2019 are a true & accurate record of the meeting.

Seconded: Ian Mann

Agreed

4. BUSINESS ARISING

- 4.1 National Conference – Toowoomba – 22nd to 24th October
- Hopeful of attendance from all councils within Region 5
 - Voting Representatives - 1 per council & Region Chair
 - One vote per council, larger councils to have two to three votes depending on size.
 - One vote from private members
 - Motions from Region 5
 - Motion 1 – only one fully supported, others not fully supported will be covered by other region's motions
 - How we make decisions on the run, water market revolving so fast – **ACTION:** Chair asked for quick turn around in response to email request.
 - Discussion re motions (from all regions)
 - Draft Motions from MDA were individually discussed & endorsed / not endorsed, as per attachment
 - **ACTION:** Members to take to councils for support / endorsement prior to MDA AGM. Acknowledged that some flexibility needs to be maintained for delegates, who may receive compelling arguments, not considered prior to the AGM.

We paused normal meeting procedures 10:50am to welcome Emma Bradbury, CEO MDA – via video link.

(6.0) MDA CEO / NATIONAL AGM

- Emma highlighted the CEO report from the past month:
 - Recently held the second session of Connecting Catchments and Communities. Topics consisted of constraints and balance of water availability and deliverability. Local Governments role in creating a holistic approach. Where to go from here – growing processes and concern, we do not just want to end the conversation here, we want to deliver outcomes and discussions with the Prime Minister and Water Minister.
 - Have since wrote letters to the Ministers of the concerns raised.
 - Met with Michael McCormick and discussed the National Conference, which will ideally create a tremendous amount of opportunities. Minister McCormick is keen to follow and will present at the conference in increasing agriculture productivity. The importance of the Federal Government making financial commitment with the MDA, not only do they have the obligation to rely on use but continue to support us.
 - Ha recently met with the Water Minister, Victoria in regards to the water policy.
 - Emma and the MDA team presented at the Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia (SEGRA) conference at Barooga in late August.
 - Very pleased to announce and confirm the opening of the National Conference will be by Mick Keelty – Basin Commissioner.
 - Annual Report memberships have had a 6% growth from last year, however, retaining the growth is challenging.
 - Continuing to emphasise to fellow councilors and colleagues the important of participating in the MDA.
 - Has been busy with the Annual Conference organisation.
 - There was a nice piece in the CEO reports of a reflection on where the organisation is heading and evolving with new staff and developing the capabilities of Executive. It is very encouraging when reflecting to this time six months ago.

Cont....

- The National Conference will be in Toowoomba, which is situated in the heart of cotton country, Emma has engaged with Paul Brimblecombe the CEO of Cubbie Station. Paul will present at the National Conference.
- An invitation to the delegates for a tour of Cubbie Station. Cost: \$250 per head in addition to the conference cost.

- *Questions to Emma –*
- Is there an update on the 500 billion drought infrastructure fund? The fund may need to be circulated more as currently not all aware of it;
 - **ACTION:** Emma will chase information and promote across MDA
- Is there information about the recently announced Research funding (20 million dollars)? How will this help the basin?
 - There is a lot going on in that area, loss of identity in Goulburn.
 - **ACTION:** Emma talk to David McKenzie re further information for distribution.
- Emma wanted to flag with Region 5 MDA at a broader level- Local Government must really take a view of compassion. International scale water challenges exist in drought conditions in some areas.

- Need to recognise these divisions amongst other regions. As much as we are compassionate for other areas, but also need to understand everyone's views. How do we provide agency and raise concerns on these legitimate problems? They have come out.

- Conference registration: Lot of interest and registrations on target - but still aiming for 250-280 and not quite there yet.

We resumed the meeting agenda at 11:30am.

Ben Scales left the Meeting at 11.35am.

4.2 Other items not currently listed - to be dealt with in this agenda

- **Nil**

5. MDA Region 5

5.1 Membership

- 100% - We warmly welcome Yvonne Smith (DC KEM)
- Malcolm Wilksch membership introduction: Malcolm represented the Riverland Fisherman's Association when he lived in Cadell on a fruit block and Vine Rootstock Nursery. He has helped SARDI Research since 1957 and collected Fish Osolith from Murray Cod for ageing etc. He has so far enjoyed coming to the MDA meetings to hear the speakers and looks forward to hearing practices to help benefit native fish recruitment.

Moved: Cr Peter Raison

Malcolm Wilksch membership be formally approved.

Seconded: Ian Mann

Agreed

5.2 Mayor Martinson re Basin Communities Committee

- Appointed in July 2018 and is a three year term. The committee consists of 15 members, three from SA. One of five committees under the MDBA.
- The function of the committee is to engage the community in the plan itself, primarily there to listen to the community and relay this information back to the MDBA.
- Meetings aim to be four times a year, in addition to two teleconferences.
- Neil handed out copies of the communique for June & August.
- **ACTION:** Region 5 to be put on the email distribution list for regular updates

- 5.3 Cr Kassebaum re Independent Social & Economic Conditions Assessment Panel:
- Been on the panel since June 2019.
 - The Terms of Reference have just been finalised.
 - Seven people on the committee, one from each state, an indigenous/first nations representative plus the Chair.
 - They have recently identified gaps in the research and reporting.
 - The Community Roadshow is commencing shortly, Cr Kassebaum is responsible from the Murray Mouth up to Mildura. Andrew will distribute an invitation once the dates have been finalised, expected to be in the first week of October.
 - Aiming to report in May 2020, however, this may be pushed out again.
 - MDA flagged the potential conflict of interest with the current chair – Cr Kassebaum identified there is no current conflict of interest.
- 5.4 Discussion & Initial Drafting of Region 5 Position Papers – what can we agree on & have available as our stance?
- Buybacks / Cap –
 - We support voluntarily buybacks with no targets (caps)
 - Intervalley Trading
 - We support
 - Constraints
 - Acknowledge these constraints and support improvements, so long as there is thorough research into further alternative solutions.
 - National Water Trading
 - Support open & transparent trades with detailed information available & accessible re all transactions.
 - Support the ACCC Investigation
 - Build more Dams
 - In principle, we support, however we haven't filled the ones we currently do have. Research to be done on where they will be located and how they will operate.
 - National Royal Commission
 - Time for this has passed with numerous enquiries & basin commissioner in place to target issues. Acknowledge that national investigations with necessary powers are needed, rather than individual state investigations.
 - 450gig & Impact on Local Growers
 - Support implementation of the plan, in full & on time but emphasise that the recovery of the 450gig up-water needs to meet the neutrality test - for neutral impact on social & economic grounds
 - Bradfield Scheme / alternatives & revival
 - In principle support the continual investigation, however, not full support until the finer details are confirmed.
- 5.5 Correspondence to Members – (since Meeting of 3rd June, 2019):
- Summary received
- 5.6 Planning beyond 2020
- Next Council & Leadership, Cr Peter Hunter will not be continuing as Region 5 Chair beyond the next Region 5 AGM, after a three year term. **ACTION:** Other members asked to consider leadership post Region 5 AGM, to be held on 16th March 2020.

7. PLANNING & COORDINATION

7.1 Frequency / Location / Timing of Region 5 Meetings

- Current Schedule:
 - National AGM – Toowoomba – 22nd to 24th October, 2019
 - **ACTION:** Members to consider attendance & support of MDA through attendance.
 - Karoonda East Murray – 9th December, 2019 @ Karoonda
 - **ACTION:** Further planning details for full year to be finalised at December Meeting – consideration re topics of interest to Chair.
 - **ACTION:** Topics for December Meeting to Chair
 - Renmark Paringa – 16th March, 2020 – Region 5 AGM
- Future Topics / Guest Speakers:
 - CEO Phone Link & MDA Board Activities
 - Guest Speakers / Combined Sessions on next meetings Agendas
 - Meetings / links with SA Regions
 - Fisheries & PIRSA
 - MDBA Representative – Monique White – Dec?
 - CEWO – Michelle Campbell – Dec?
 - Carp Update/s – timeline for decision / Nat Gov Position
 - Mike Young
 - Michael Cutting (DEW) re irrigation efficiencies – Dec?

7.3 Future MDA Dates:

- September 26th & combined SA Regions – In Adelaide
 - **ACTION:** Circulate details as available
- National AGM – Toowoomba – 22nd to 24th October, 2019
- Potential Canberra based AGM in 2020 – to be finalised

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 Communication: Nil

8.5 Any Other General Business

- Nil

9. NEXT MEETING

Date: Monday, 9th December, 2019

Time: 9:30 for 10am

Location: Karoonda – most likely @ Council Chambers - tbc

Room Booking / Morning Tea / Set Up & Preparation Responsibilities:

10. CLOSE 12:15 pm

*The Murray Darling Association acknowledges and thanks
Mid Murray Council for hosting this meeting of Region 5*