



## Region 4 ORDINARY MEETING MINUTES

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Location:</b> | Midway Centre, 6 Midway Drive, Buronga, NSW |
| <b>Time:</b>     | 11:30am EST                                 |
| <b>Date:</b>     | Friday 28 June 2019                         |

### 1. ATTENDANCE

#### 1.1. Present:

| In Person                                     | By Videoconference                           |
|---|--|
| Cr Jane MacAllister (Wentworth Shire Council) | Cr Darriea Turley (Broken Hill City Council) |
| Ken Ross (Wentworth Shire Council)            | Cr Marion Browne (Broken Hill City Council)  |
| Cr Steve O'Halloran (Balranald Shire Council) | James Roncon (Broken Hill City Council)      |
| Cr Trevor Joliffe (Balranald Shire Council)   | Greg Hill (Central Darling Shire Council)    |
| Cr Jason Modica (Mildura Rural City Council)  | Emma Bradbury (MDA) joined 12.15pm           |

#### 1.2. Apologies:

Cr Melisa Hederics (Wentworth Shire Council); Cr Tim Elstone (Wentworth Shire Council); Cr Steve Heywood (Wentworth Shire Council)

### 2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting on 22 November 2018 were declared as read and accepted as a true record.

Moved by Cr Modica and seconded by Greg Hill

CARRIED

### 3. BUSINESS ARISING

Cr MacAllister noted that there was a subsequent meeting for strategic planning, which was overshadowed by the first of three fish kills at Menindee.

### 4. REPORTS

#### 5.1 Central Darling Shire

Greg Hill reported that:

- WaterNSW had made a presentation to the community and provided increased consultation with particularly the Aboriginal community, especially around potential employment;

- The new weir for Wilcannia has been promised, to be positioned 5.2km downstream from the existing weir, which should increase capacity by 175%, with additional height of 1.2 metres, including new fish ladder, to be completed by 2022;
- Salinity levels at weir pool remain high (3200 ppm), quality not good, so bores are providing town supply;
- Carting potable water still available on request;
- Fish kill clean up procedure to be referred to Joint Organisation for further discussion;

## **5.2 Broken Hill City Council**

Mayor Darriea Turley advised that Broken Hill has endorsed motion to investigate listing Menindee on RAMSAR convention.

Greg Hill said Central Darling Shire also endorsed and that RAMSAR listing for Menindee would be Moved at the Western Division Group Of Councils

Cr MacAllister noted that along with Broken Hill and Central Darling, Wentworth and Balranald Shire Councils had also endorsed RAMSAR listing for Menindee Lakes.

Cr Modica said a Report was due to be put before Mildura Rural City Council at a future meeting.

Greg Hill Moved That Region 4 of the Murray Darling Association endorse RAMSAR listing for Menindee Lakes and further, bring the motion to MDA Annual Conference for consideration. Seconded by Cr Marion Browne. CARRIED

Broken Hill mentioned IPart Determination around water pricing: specifically that the pipeline cost would be not included in pricing for the next four years, no more than the CPI, but that it had been put into the political cycle, without consultation. Letter requesting further consideration and clarification had been sent.

## **5.3 Balranald Shire Council**

Cr Steve O'Halloran said on the back of a fish kill in 2010, the Murrumbidgee was again expecting water supply issues to impact by Oct / Nov this year, if no substantial rains, they would have hoped someone would have got the message.

Rain is needed urgently. Environmental water is needed for the river. The quality of water in the Murrumbidgee is very poor. They are currently carting water and don't know where water is going to come from.

## **5.4 Mildura Rural City Council**

Cr Modica said the 4,500 established almond trees will combine with the proposed expansion of another 15,000 to total around 80,000 in the "Golden Triangle", which Almond Board Of Australia called for a moratorium on development of greenfield sites, until water supply can be quantified and constraints managed.

Cr Darriea Turley said that Hazel nuts are also a concern.

Cr Trevor Joliffe said the development on the Hay plains - turkey nest dams - big concern, 6-8,000 ha around Balranald, but also table and wine grapes (400megs goes to grapes & almonds). Council wants to have input re CEWH flow schedule.

Cr Steve O'Halloran said desilting the river needs to be done.

## **5.5 MDA Report**

Emma Bradbury explained that the Board should comprise at least 2 and not more than 5 Executive Committee. A Secretariat role was also required to support the Chair with arranging meetings, sending out agendas, producing minutes and recording action items. This was not an elected position but a required position, supported through the Chair's relevant Council.

Emma also discussed:

- Entering into an MOU between MDBA and MDA which would provide clear recognition of need for community representation. Aim to map out an annual plan and report on plan annually;
- Connecting Catchments and Communities next session “from Moira to Mildura” to be held in Euston. It will feature MDBA & CEWH, constraints management team, RiverOps, and hopefully the states - Barham Choke: Asset or impediment? Regional growth and water markets, water broker, collaboration required (cf Tooleybuc managing risks and opportunities).
- Annual conference in Toowoomba 22-24 October public/private, hub n spoke engagement “Regenerative Agriculture”

## **5. OTHER BUSINESS**

Greg Hill said Menindee had set up a focus group which DOI Water were engaging with re SDL Project. About 10 representatives, from Menindee Water Users Group, Progress Association, Tourism, Aboriginal Community, Irrigators. They are seeking community input into ideas other than what has been proposed.

Meeting with someone called Erin, monthly, also a facilitator. The meetings are closed and they hope to have a decision by April / May 2020.

Also discussed plans for Fish Hatchery at Menindee. Dept Ag Education / Research / Cultural Centre, focussed on the Lakes and fish habitats, will take a couple of years to get established.

He said there was some negativity re fish hatchery - some see it as a “cop out”.

## **6. Next Meeting - tba**

## **7. Meeting closed - 12.35pm**