



## Region 4 Ordinary Meeting

### MINUTES

<b>Location:</b>	Midway Centre 6 Midway Drive, Buronga, NSW
<b>Time/date:</b>	Thursday 22 November 2018 – 2:00pm EST
<b>Presenters:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

#### 1. ATTENDANCE

##### 1.1 Present:

Councillor Jane MacAllister	Councillor Tim Elstone
Councillor Jason Modica	Greg Hill
Razija Nu'man (Acting General Manager)	Terry Litchfield (Minute taker)
Councillor Ron Page	

##### 1.2 Apologies:

Gerard Jose	Councillor Melisa Hederics
Ken Ross	Councillor Steve Heywood
James Roncon	Emma Bradbury

#### 2. WELCOME

2.1 Councillor MacAllister welcomed attendees

#### 3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Nil

#### 4. MINUTES

4.1 Recommended that the Minutes of the previous meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018 in Wentworth were accepted as a correct record

**Motion:** THAT the Minutes of the previous meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018 in Wentworth were accepted as a correct record

**Moved:** Councillor Tim Elstone

**Seconded:** Councillor Jane MacAllister

#### 5. BUSINESS ARISING

5.1 Motion Region 4 host 2020 MDA Conference – Cr Elstone proposed Wentworth to host Submission to be made by Wentworth to host on behalf of Region 4 for the 2020 Conference – MDA Board meeting is on Monday and will be discussed then.

5.2 Effective Consultation Strategy with Department of Industry – By way of background, Councillor MacAllister advised that this suggestions came from Mildura and Wentworth’s GM at the time . As we were pushing back about Lower Darling Options, it was agreed that we would let them know how we want to be consulted. Consultation previously has been mixed between Councils and Community, causing mixed messaging and division. This perpetuated a lot of uncertainty and reduced confidence in the process.

Councillor Elstone suggested a push from MDA for representation on advisory panels / water panels. Councillor MacAllister suggested that a letter is sent by Region 4 to different water departments and agents, copied to the Minister, requesting that any consultations that they intend to hold in our Region should first include direct consultation with Region 4 representatives.

Councillor Page suggested that Region 4 send correspondence to the Prime Minister and Premier and make it clear that unless they make a commitment to make changes to ensure the survival of the lakes and rivers, we will campaign against you. There has been no progress over 25 years on promises made by Federal and State government.

**Motion:** THAT a letter is sent to the Prime Minister, Premier and Opposition Leaders of all four States, as well as the Hon David Littleproud, stating that commitment is required from them to making the necessary changes that will ensure the survival of the lakes and river systems, failing which, the Region will launch a public campaign against government.

**Moved: Councillor Ron Page**

**Seconded: Councillor Jason Modica**

5.3 Proposal for Swan Hill Rural City Council to join Region 4 – Councillor Elstone commented that the focus of the group should be on the Lower Darling and the lack of knowledge in Victoria regarding the importance of Menindee Lake and what Menindee Lake does for the water system is an issue. Therefore, there may be benefit to having wider influence. Councillor Modica proposed that Swan Hill Rural City Council be given an opportunity to understand Region 4 activities and the importance of giving them an opportunity to feed the information back into their region.

Councillor MacAllister to action previous motion to write to Swan Hill. Councillor MacAllister requested a copy of the letter from MDA encouraging neighbouring regions or councils to join.

## 6. REPORTS

6.1 Chairman’s Report – Verbal report from Councillor MacAllister

- The Day of Action protest march held in Broken Hill was well attended. Cr MacAllister and Councillor Nichols from Wentworth Shire Council. They were amazed at the number of people who attended and level of support. The information provided as good and solidarity from people outside our region very supportive
- The MDA newsletter contribution is due today

6.2 Murray Darling Association CEO Report – Emma Bradbury

Taken as read in Emma Bradbury’s absence. Councillor MacAllister suggest that it would be beneficial to have more information on the Echuca Consultations.

## 7. GENERAL BUSINESS

7.1 Strategic Planning Workshop – Councillor MacAllister

The Murray Darling Association’s 2019 Strategic Planning Workshop will be held at Echuca/Moama from Friday, February 1 to Monday, February 4, 2019.

Councillor MacAllister said that this will be a good opportunity for influencing MDA into the future. Last strategic plan was for 4 years ago. Attendees were urged to get back to Councils and encourage as many Councillors as possible to attend the workshop ensure maximum

influence for our Region's priorities.

Councillor Modica stated that all questions at the National Conference were historically biased to agriculture and horticultural interests. The Conference needs to highlight the importance of increasing the health of the river and water flows. The Darling has been sacrificed, the Murray is next. A review of past Motions will reveal the bias.

- 7.2 Day of Action Protest March Broken Hill - Councillor Page attended the rally with 4 other Councillors from Broken Hill Rural City Council. Councillor Page noted that the water issue is a disgrace and worse is yet to come and it was all due to poor management. There are demands on the Murray which the Murray can't deliver, which is putting stress on the Darling. No change in the future means the systems and people living along the water supplies will suffer greatly, not to mention animals, flora and fauna. Politicians need to come on board. MDA has to take a strong stand in regards to pressuring politicians.

Councillor MacAllister agreed that the time had come to apply pressure on government. A meeting will be held with Regions 5, 6 and 7 next year to discuss what is happening in Region 4 and how this will affect them in the future. Councillor MacAllister requested that any items to be added to Agenda for that meeting to be submitted to Emma Bradbury.

### 7.3 W2BH Pipeline

Councillor Page reported that it is virtually completed. The promise to feed water back to Menindee has been broken. Nothing is being done about the supply back to Menindee to the graziers

- 7.4 IPART Hearing about water pricing – Councillor MacAllister reported that the State government will give a commitment to fund it for the next 4 years. Razija Nu'man advised that Broken Hill's position was that any cost to Broken Hill residents can't be any higher than CPI.

### 7.5 Australian Floodplain Association Update – Councillor MacAllister

Councillor MacAllister advised that Terry Korn's email had been included in the minutes because he has good information and was a good contact, specifically around what's happened upstream that will affect us.

Councillor MacAllister urged the attendees to read through the items included in the email.

The Lower Darling SAPS to meet with Barwon SAPS and address the river issue as a whole instead of as silos as has previously been the case. Also note that AFA is agitating against the Floodplain harvesting and the Menindee SDL project

- 7.6 High Salinity in the Darling - Greg Hill reported high Salinity in the Darling in Central Darling. It was above World Health Standards. A decent flush was needed. 2016 was last time it was fully connected from Pooncarie to Bourke.

- 7.7 MDA Newsletter – Greg Hill from Central Darling to contribute to next month's newsletter article re Wilcannia Weir. Also, Councillor Turley to contribute regarding the Day of Action Protest March that was held in Broken Hill.

## 8. PRESENTATION

8.1 Nil

## 9. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

The next MDA Region 4 meeting will be held on Thursday 20 December

## 10. CLOSE 3:05pm

In closing, Councillor MacAllister noted that the key outcome from the meeting was to spread information on the issues beyond the Region, to get the attention needed to obtain a solution to the plight of the Murray Darling.

*The Murray Darling Association acknowledges and thanks Wentworth Shire Council for its support in hosting this meeting of Region 4.*