

Mission Statement:

To support and develop a sustainable, thriving and resilient community through leadership and partnership.

HELD: Tuesday 11 October 2011 at 6.30pm

LOCATION: Centenary Hall Wooragee

NUMBER OF RESIDENTS: 23

Councillors	Council officers	Community members
Mayor Cr Ali Pockley Deputy Mayor Cr Bernard Gaffney Cr Vic Issell Cr Peter Croucher Cr Barbara Murdoch	CEO Brendan McGrath GM Sustainable Communities Mark Florence GM Corporate Services Greg Pinkerton Manager Planning and Sustainability Ian Scholes Manager Operations Ron Sneddon Manager Communications Roberta Baker Director Burke Museum and Historic Precinct Grant Collie Community Strengthening Officer Chris McGorlick	Christine Stewart Bob Bennett Bernard Fanning Margot Hayes Tess & Geoff Lucas Ian Stone Geoffrey Palmer David Trabant James and Kia Komadina Kevin & Sue Ross Christine chigwidden Jane Trabant

WOORAGEE COMMUNITY FORUM MINUTES – 11 OCTOBER 2011

		<p>Don Nevin Ray Henderson Pauline Carson Sue Brunshell Julie Lockley Rod Marshall Pam Nankervis</p>
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ITEM NO	ITEM	ACTION
1.0	Welcome	
2.0	Apologies Cr Peter Graham, Cr Larry Goldsworthy	
3.0	<p>Community Strengthening Project - Chris McGorlick Chris provided a run down of other Community Strengthening projects, ie Yackandandah – first veggie swap and community meal soon, the first in a series of events. At Wooragee ideas so far include use of the land next to the Wooragee Hall, recording local history, the rail trail, Wooragee school’s 150th anniversary next year, mobile reception, planning issues, things to do in hall re fire proofing, acquiring land behind the CFA shed, expanding level of services available to the community in the hall. A Community Planning evening is scheduled for Tuesday 25 October at 7pm. Everyone is invited to attend and put forward new ideas for projects. Attendees will vote on priorities, then start moving forward on those actions.</p>	Chris McGorlick
	<p>Roadside Conservation Management Plan - Mark Florence Brief overview as most of the attendees at the forum were at a CFA meeting recently which addressed the plan. Mark outlined the legislative requirements Council has to respond to including the Municipal Emergency Management Plan, fire prevention plan, road management plan, Indigo planning scheme. It is a balancing act for Council to ensure roads and roadsides are safe, and the natural environment is protected, and to manage all the competing interests of the various Acts we have to deal with. Mark said there is nothing in the Roadside Conservation Management Plan that says ‘you cannot do this’ – it says if you want to do some spraying, come and talk to us and we can work with you. Maybe quarantine a high</p>	

conservation area and you can then spray. Talk to us or DSE. Are there any examples of where council has stopped you or your neighbours from doing something?

Geoff Lucas – we did a burn off on our frontage. Warren (son) was involved in discussions with Council. Has not improved in condition, there is scrub growing on our roads, public roads becoming overgrown. And in fire situations of 2009 a lot of people died on roadsides. Vegetation on roadsides is a major concern to me as a fireman. Adjoining landholder has to be given a higher right in maintaining control over weeds and plants. The rules are probably a deterrent not to do enough. Should be some encouragement rather than discouragement. CFA do an assessment of rural roads and come to Council with a list of works they believe need treatment. Can Council support with traffic management, signs, etc.

Mark Florence - VicRoads, in response to the Bushfire Royal Commission, is developing a tool to rate roads.

Robin McLiesh – commented that the Roadside Management Plan was funded by DSE to make sure roadsides became reserves to protect native flora and fauna. Roadsides are not necessarily seen as part of traffic system, which they are. He believes there is no need for this plan as there are many plans that already deal with this issue. What we were after was a plan to protect road safety, fire safety, cultural safety etc. Current situation presents a risk when people are fleeing from a fire. No management plan from 1m past white posts to fences on adjoining properties. We have constantly pressed for clearance of overgrowth on roads. Most significant spread is from burning embers. Not suggesting we cut all trees down – want to move trees away from roadsides. We are totally unhappy with the plan and are taking our case to head of the CFA.

Bob Bennett – agreed with Robin. He is a CFA member and part of incident management team which looks after all major fires in the area. Referred to Council's allocation of \$100,000 for fuel reduction and removal of dangerous trees, but yet to see some action on that. In most areas grass is up to a huge height which will be a big problem when it dries off. CFA looks at roadsides when fighting fires both for access and evacuation of residents. None of the roads are suitable in Wooragee area. Wooragee is very fire prone. Said he was disappointed at Council not putting clout on VicRoads to look after their roads.

CEO Brendan McGrath responded that Council had talked to Vicroads and that Council shared his frustrations. Council has done a fair bit of work at regional and state level on general issues and specific issues that people raise with us. Sometime we get success, sometimes not. More recently we have taken our frustrations through local MPs to Vicroads which included the need for more resources for VicRoads. If you have specific issues you want us to take up with VicRoads, we are more than happy to do that.

	<p>getting federal funding to aid state funding. More chance if we work on a regional basis, so we are talking to Apine, Wodonga and Wangaratta re possibilities for funding.</p> <p>Christine Stewart – commented on lack of consultation. In May she said a new landowner lodged a planning application for a tourism accommodation business and the applicant wanted to open up an unused government road on her property and join the old railway line/potential rail trail. She said the applicant wanted to run a business showing how horses and bicycles can share the trail. This section of the old railway line is part of a 2km section that her partner manages on behalf of DSE, there are insurance ramifications for the partner etc because of this, the continuing railway line is owned freehold.</p> <p>CEO Brendan McGrath – said Council was not actively progressing the project, that’s why there has not been a lot of consultation.</p> <p>Christine Stewart – said she has seen a plan for the proposed Beechworth-Yackandandah rail trail. Ray Henderson said only one trail project had been funded out of Regional Development Victoria - for Barossa Valley. Next funding round coming out later this year.</p>	
	<p>Indigo 2030 project – Mark Florence</p> <p>This project is to gather high level ideas about what Indigo Shire might be like in the year 2030. Project has gathered some momentum since it began a couple of months ago. 70 community champions across shire helping to gather data. Everyone involved will come together on November 14 to organise the data and determine themes. The other exciting part involves a whole range of artistic, creative expressions of a vision – writing competition, art competition, a song and film. Young kids from primary schools are involved, Yackandandah’s Peter Denahy will be working with young people to create the song. DVD being commissioned with young people to work with a film director. Everyone encouraged to take part - contact council to see how you can put your views forward. All details are on Council’s website.</p>	<p>Mark Florence</p>
	<p>Mayor – tell us your ideas</p> <p>Cr Pockley referred to questions that had been sent to Council the day before on a number of issues - Baarmutha Park multipurpose centre in Beechworth, Trust for Nature in draft rating strategy, Burke Museum, rates for farmers, a proposed Wooragee subdivision, heritage officer hours of employment and Council office accommodation. She circulated Council’s responses to the questions to all in attendance. (See attached)</p> <p>Christine Stewart and others queried who pays for the cost of roadworks in a proposed subdivision?</p>	

Planning Manager Ian Scholes - in general when a development proceeds involving a subdivision and change in road use we try and capture that road cost and put it on to the planning permit. Not always possible but in general that's what we do. In relation to advertising, most applications will be advertised to adjoining and adjacent properties. In some cases, on a wider basis. In some cases, a development plan is needed and as yet State Government has not indicated how to advertise these development plans. We try and notify people in affected areas before we deal with it.

Question – who will foot the bill for Star Lane and other roads in the proposal?

Ian Scholes - Developer has to pay costs associated with that. I don't know if developer will proceed, or lodge a new planning application – if he does there will be a different set of conditions.

Ray Henderson – will all us local residents be notified again if it changes.

Ian Scholes - we haven't yet seen it. If it does occur, and it is in accordance with the approved development plan then we would not notify adjoining or adjacent landowners.

Mayor Cr Pockley – can people not directly affected contact planning department and have a look?

Ian Scholes – yes.

Ray Henderson - this area is zoned for rural living but has no master plan, no community input into that. This is the first really big one, so it would be really good to have that on display.

Ian Scholes - of course it is possible to do.

Comment - no thought about services, facilities.

Ian Scholes – for other areas we do have that. To be fair, this is a small area, a rural living zone in Wooragee, and the need for extensive infrastructure is quite limited. I can only guess in the past that Council has directed resources to other more complicated areas. I am more than happy to put material on display.

Christine Stewart (in reference to the proposed subdivision) – I have a copy of a letter to a neighbour offering an opportunity to comment. Basically it is saying we don't have to consult with you because the development complies with requirements of rural living zone.

Ian Scholes – for all councils looking at development plans there are no advertising requirements. There is for planning permits, but not for development plans but we do advertise anyway.

Mayor Cr Pockley – anyone wishing to see the plans can contact planning department.

Bernard Fanning – endorsed Ray's comments on future of Wooragee. What about bigger picture in 20 years time? Wooragee will be subdivided. Need to put some plans together now.

Ian Scholes

Mayor Cr Pockley – referred to the questions sent in the day before. Re Council’s draft rating strategy - one issue we are looking at is farm rates. Australia and New Zealand are the only countries that rate the whole land not just the house. Draft rating strategy will be looked at again in April 2012.

Robin McLiesh – this is most discriminatory, currently rural ratepayers subsidise urban ratepayers. Rural people are subjected to double taxation, we pay tax on income from our land, and then pay rates based on the value of our land.

Mayor Cr Pockley – the Victorian Farmers Federation has put a case forward and I intend to bring this to Council in the next few months for discussion. I was certainly very much in favour of reducing rates for our farmers, they have done it very tough in recent years.

Cr Vic Issell – asked where in the VFF paper would the offset be put.

Mayor Cr Pockley – they are saying local ratepayers will carry the offset. Mayor will circulate the VFF paper to all councillors.

Trust for Nature – this is no longer part of the draft rating strategy.

Comment made about rural living zone in Wooragee, have there been other rural living zones in other areas?

Ian Scholes – a few rural living zones in the shire, not aware of reason behind Wooragee one. Back in 1994 the Commissioners may have been interested in increasing population. This is one of the strategies the Indigo 2030 project will look at – is the strategy from back then the one we want in 2030.

Question – what’s Council’s vision for 2030 for areas like this?

Ian Scholes – this is captured in municipal strategic statement in the Indigo planning scheme – reviewed every 3-4 years. But for a major change of direction we need to have a big think tank – that’s the process we are going through at the moment. At the moment, rules will stay as they are – as this 2030 vision roles out and if any changes are made, the planning scheme may change.

Special Charge scheme for Edmonson Lane –

A group of residents have met with Andre Kompler, General Manager Major Projects and Programs, to determine interest in the scheme, which is a contributory scheme and under Council’s current policy sets a maximum of 65% of the roadworks to be funded by ratepayers. Residents were asked to write to Council expressing their willingness to get the scheme going. For example, for a \$100,000 project, council would seek \$65,000 from residents and this would be split evenly between them. A commitment was made to provide feedback on costs to the residents by January.

CEO Brendan McGrath – if residents can get an indication from others in Edmonson Lane about their

Ron Sneddon

	<p>willingness to participate, this will help the process. Special Charge schemes are for those willing to be contributors, rather than something that is imposed on people. The part Council has to look at is where Edmonson Lane fits into our Capital Works priorities.</p>	
	<p>Baarmutha Park Multipurpose Community Centre - Questions on whether this facility is an emergency relief centre, the make-up of the Committee of Management, whether sporting groups pay rent, repayment of a \$50,000 loan.</p> <p>CEO Brendan McGrath – the application for Federal Government funding was for Baarmutha Park, the Yackandandah Public Hall and Stanley Recreation Reserve and was pitched at two levels, ie. Here is some community infrastructure that needs developing for community use and which could play a role to supplement emergency relief centres in an emergency. Got funding on that basis. There is no reason why Baarmutha Park can't be used as an emergency relief centre to supplement what is already in place if the need arises. User groups are all represented on the Committee of Management, they all pay rent. The Committee of Management is required to repay the loan.</p> <p>Christine Stewart – referred to the Minister's media release of 2 years ago with the heading "\$3.5 million to upgrade three community and emergency relief centres in Indigo Shire". At the opening of the Baarmutha Park facility in May media articles mentioned that most of the funds for the facility were from a Federal grant so the building could be used as a relief centre in an emergency such as a bushfire. The Indigo Informer of August-September said Baarmutha Park Function Centre was not a relief centre.</p> <p>Cr Vic Issell – said his understanding was that Council submitted an application for a dual purpose. Enhanced recreation facilities for three communities, but when there is an emergency those buildings could be activated as centres to deal with emergencies. Normal everyday activities would have to cease so that the emergency could be dealt with by those community resources.</p> <p>CEO – said this was correct. Beechworth Memorial Hall is the official relief centre, but it does not mean Baarmutha Park can't also be used.</p> <p>Mark Florence – said the deed of delegation says in the event of emergency all activity ceases at these centres, and all focus is on the emergency. Baarmutha Park could be a staging area. He said the primary use of the grant was for the community, for sporting purposes. He was involved in discussions with government and they were under no illusion – the primary use of Baarmutha Park is as a sporting facility, and secondary as a relief centre for emergency purposes.</p>	



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	Gwen Gray – from Red Cross said they had done an assessment of the Baarmutha Park multipurpose centre and it did not meet all the standards for being a relief centre. She said the layout of the kitchen made catering difficult.	