

Community Meeting 5th August 2017

Minutes



Minute Taker: Denise Cobourn

Chair/Facilitator: Louise Roberts

Commenced: 9.05am

Attendance: Denise Cobourn (D), Roger Ball (D), Kevin Harper (D), Louise Roberts (D), Craig Singleman (D), Ralph Erthel (D), Dennis Cobourn, Wayne Ellis, Rob Hewitt, Michael Clancy, Lexie Gonzalez, Tony Roberts, Ralph Van Hulst, Nityama Martin, Mohini Brownedge, Sattwa Horn, Daniel Rose, Belinda Ball, Justin and Cynthia Fitzpatrick

Apologies: Bronwyn, Peter and Julica, Alby, Frank, Rose

Visitors:

Confirmation of Previous minutes:

Proposed – Roger Ball

Seconded – Ralph Erthel

Approved Unanimously

Business arising from Previous Meeting(s):

- Cemetery - alternative sites (John T).

ACTION: Carry forward to September CM.

- Fire & access trails - Wayne Skinner, Roger, Dave Launt, Tony Roberts & Justin Fitzpatrick offered to look into access trails marked on the map (some have been moved) & how they are used in reality.

ACTION: Carry forward to September CM.

Secretary's Report:

Land Services bill received; rates unchanged from last year; Insurances – marginal increase; letter from Chris Robbins (tabled and read) – thanks for reimbursement of survey costs (\$800 cheque to be forwarded), currently overseeing tree removal for building site, offered to contribute to Road Levy, road repairs will be carried out if required; burn pile behind Justin and Leah – can it be held over to next season as it is on Crown Road reserve (need permit from Crown Roads to burn). Fire restrictions may come in early.

Proposed Secretary's Report - Tony

Seconded – Wayne

Approved unanimously

DA Report:

Council and Mike Dutton contacted – no news. Should we go back to councillors to discuss no action? Northshore Progress Association – submission being put forward to seal Maria River Road – members to contact NSPA if they have any incidents to report, including trades, deliveries to use the road. Both councils are involved. Will this impact on our DA issues?

ACTION: Ask Mike Dutton for his opinion on Maria River Rd developments. Contact Robert Pitt for some feedback.

Road Report:

Nothing to report

Membership Report:

Dharma completing Guest Application. Discussion regarding targeted advertising for attracting new members eg. Earth Garden. We have done this in the past. Cindy advertised on Gumtree and realestate.com. Marion Arent share sale still not finalised. 2 or 3 shares are currently available for sale. One enquiry from a Kempsey person. We need to be mindful of all kinds of discrimination, including age.

ACTION: Nityama to do some research.

Machinery Report:

Minor problem with hydraulics from jammed stick – seems to have rectified itself.

Fire Squad:

Now is the time to burn – early fire restrictions are anticipated. Mark would like a small triangle burn near his share. Pile near Dan's share needs burning. Lower North Coast Community Engagement Brigade have written report (post on website). The following need attention; all shares require a number, some shares need slashing and mowing of long grass, some shares have a lot of 'stuff' with long grass close to buildings, dam walls need slashing, one share with plies of gum leaves will cause ember attack if ignited, meshing under houses recommended, low intensity burns of leaf litter recommended (will not impact flora and fauna), some properties considered 'undefendable' given the condition. They have offered to talk to groups / individuals regarding Fire Survival Plans. Will complete a post check after we have acted on recommendations. Need some way of putting out small spot fires – Roger recommends buckets, water cans, start small and add to your Plan.

Treasurer's Report:

3 members have now been contacted by debt collectors.

Proposed – Roger

Seconded – Lexie

Approved Unanimously

Work and Expenses Claims:

Work Claims for approval - Gemma and Todd \$150, Peter and Julica \$500.

Proposed – Dan

Seconded – Lexie

Approved Unanimously

General Business Agenda Items:**1. Code of Conduct - complaints and concerns received by Directors after the July GM regarding Paul's behaviour.**

Directors gave an overview – Following the July GM Directors received a number of complaints regarding Paul and Anne's behaviour. A letter was sent inviting them to attend a meeting with Directors on the 29th July. Only Anne attended – she was encouraged to bring a support person. 5 Directors attended. The recent logging issue and the writing of the proposal triggered singling out of Directors and inappropriate, disrespectful and abusive behaviour. Paul's chairing of the July GM and 'waving' of the Code of Conduct upset a number of members who'd been bullied and intimidated by Paul both in the past and up to present day. These complaints have been coming for years. Being a Director is a difficult

enough job, without having to deal with such serious behaviour complaints. Paul went into Craig's space and was very disrespectful in front of his family (since apologised). Given Paul didn't attend the meeting, an email was sent to him advising his behaviour would be discussed at today's meeting. He has singled out Ralph E, by lodging a referral form with the Community Justice Centre requesting Ralph attend mediation with him sighting the main issues as continued harassment and abuse of an office position.

Members have taken out AVOs against each out in the past.

Both Michael and Rob wanted to know how to make a written complaint against Paul. At the meeting attended by Chris Robbins, Paul referenced a study by David Lindameyer?. Michael was familiar with the study and felt the community was being misled. Craig confirmed reference to this study was removed from the logging issue proposal as it was irrelevant. Rob spoke about Paul's aggressive and rude behaviour towards him over the years, and was deeply offended regarding his chairing of the July GM. He also spoke about the meeting when John Harkin was publicly humiliated by Paul. Denise and Dennis have been singled out and experienced inappropriate emails, unwanted and unwelcome visits from Paul and Anne in the past related to expressing opinions over the extension of the camp kitchen and the Red Hill Fire Shelter. Denise put these complaints into an email to Directors at the time. She suggested this is a pattern of behaviour that occurs when others disagree or express a differing opinion. Lexie commented we have no process for lodging complaints, and asked if members would be interested in training a team in conflict resolution. Nityama felt a process was essential, and it wasn't useful to drag up issues from the past. She reminded members Paul and Anne were separate people with separate interests. Dan was very concerned regarding fracturing in the community. Russell mentioned psychological insights into bullying, and in the past he'd taken action against a member by going to the police (member is no longer at Goolawah). Kevin felt acts of past bullying remained very relevant and should be raised. Need a process to raise specific incidents.

NOTE: *As minute taker I wouldn't normally be so specific, but given the seriousness of the issue, I tried to capture what each member said. If there are any inaccuracies they can be amended at the September CM.*

2. Code of Conduct - proposal for implementation.

Round the circle comments on how to move forward:

"Tension has made me withdraw, need to listen to each other; everyone has a right to be heard; we need volunteers to be trained as mediators; take responsibility for your actions; KISS principal, formulate a simple process; training could help; being listened to is very important; keep to the speed limit – this is simple thing, and some can't even do that; safe and neutral environments are important to express concerns; I would volunteer time and energy to help develop a fair process; written complaints are important; need members to be trained in conflict resolution; need to stick to our processes and agreed strategies; need simple steps for implementing a process for breaches of the Code of Conduct; By-laws mean nothing if we don't have consequences; need a mandatory process with consequences; any action needs to happen quickly; stay conciliatory; identify behaviour problems; since dawn of time individuals have been breaching codes; enforcement is needed; be mindful of a kangaroo court; Board has really struggled to deal with this; need consequences for bad behaviour; fines may be an issue for some".

ACTION:

Form a committee to discuss the draft proposal/process for implementation of the Code of Conduct (Denise has already drafted a proposal for Implementation of the Code of Conduct and circulated to Directors). Denise, Mohini, Dan, Ralph, Nityama, Roger. Committee is open to all and meeting will be put on phone tree.

Question – Are all committees open to members, including Directors meetings. Some commented they should be.

3. Complaints to Directors regarding breaches of By-Laws - speeding and dogs.

ACTION: Code of Conduct Implementation committee to discuss this.

4. Membership Application Process - feedback.

New member complained to Craig regarding inappropriate comments from a committee person (verbal). Need to be careful not to allow personal biases and judgements to be voiced to prospective members. Entire community sets these protocols, not the committee person. We have a Feedback form – it is difficult for new members to give negative feedback if it is about a particular committee member. As a Director members come to you in trust with all kinds of issues, and we can't reveal their name without consent. They concerned regarding some kind of backlash.

ACTION: Nityama wanted further information regarding feedback from new members. Denise and Craig are open to further discussion.

5. Rehabilitation of the dam behind Paul and Anne's share.

Rob has given a written statement to Directors. An area of approximately 1 acre behind the dam has been planted with giant structural bamboo. Clay piled up around mature trees has resulted in the trees dying from collar rot. Swamp mahogany and other generating natives are being slashed. Mahogany is a vital food source and is important to the ecosystem. This planting is clearly a commercial quantity of giant bamboo for personal gain, and has been planted by the very people who claim to be conservationists. Rob has successfully rehabilitated on clay around his dam. Bamboo should only be planted on shares, not on community land. Our Code of Conduct states 'Respect the environment including land, fauna and flora'.

ACTION: Site to be inspected by Justin, Ralph E, Denise, Rob, Mohini. Report on at September CM.

6. Decision making processes – Louise has drafted a suggested idea. Mairead has previously compiled 'Our Rules on Decision Making at Meetings'

ACTION: Code of Conduct Implementation committee to discuss this.

7. Beehives – Peter's proposal (the Bee Man). Peter's proposal to be posted on website. He has the required insurances, specialising in bioactive ingredients (like Manuka), willing to pay an annual fee of \$1000 for sites, suggested 3 sites away from residences, discount honey for residents.

Comment - we need to be sure there is no impact on environment.

Proposed – Roger. We allow a trial site at North gate for 6 months.

Seconded – Kevin.

Abstained - 2

8. AGM Chair / Facilitator

Craig volunteered

9. Adult of a Child Agreement and slight amendment to Membership Policy

ACTION: Post on website for voting on at the September CM.

10. Director resignation – Stuart.

Sighted personal reasons and challenges associated with recent issues.

11. PIGS - clarification of what's happening?

Rose took over coordination some time ago when Jake was involved. There were some communication issues with Jake. Bernard has indicated he is willing to help – he uses dogs and guns. Need to sight insurance. Bernard has a good reputation in the broader community and contracts with National Parks as a pig eradicator. Traps didn't work last year.

ACTION: Ralph Van Hulst to contact Bernard and coordinate.

12. Camp Kitchen Door

Men's Shed are replacing the door in a couple of weeks.

13. Director nomination for AGM.

Kevin will be away for the AGM – would like to nominate for Director.

14. Bonfire and pizza night – Friday 11th August (instead of Bonobo Bar).

Gratitude Round: Thank you

Meeting Closed: 11.30am