

General Meeting Minutes 13 April 2024

Chairperson: Natalie Lawler **Minute Taker:** Mairead Shorten

Chairperson signature:

Commenced: 9.00am

Acknowledgement of Country and of Gratitude to the Community

Announcement: Roger Ball sadly passed away, meeting sat in reflective silence



Attendance

- **Members:** Lee Albert, Erika C Schuster, Sam Odermatt, Alby Hunter, Gerard Shea, Craig Singleman, Kevin Harper, Callum Lawson, Anne Tennock, Ralph Van Hulst, Christina Meyer, Elizabeth Locke, Peter O'Hara, Natalie Lawler, Mairead Shorten, John Tennock, Marty Cole.
- **Directors:** Leah Skinner, Wayne Skinner, Jac Larsen, Julica Jungehulsing
- **Proxies:** Anna du Chesne, Nick Reid, Denise Coburn, Bronwyn Little
- **Apologies:** Justine Shaw (D), Marc Rosenstein (D), Anna du Chesne (D), Nick Reid, Jenny Skinner, Denise Coburn, Ric Marie, Rebekah Gorline, Alicia Fox, James Galetty,
- **Visitors/Guests:** Mim Fluhrer

Documents for tabling (all posted on Website):

- Treasurer Report & Work Claims
- By-laws (proposed revision)
- Membership Policy and associated documents (proposed revision)
- Draft Administration and Infrastructure Budgets 2024-2025
- Delegation Manual for Directors and Office Holders (proposed revision)
- Work Levy and Work Claims (New Proposal by Peter O'Hara for Discussion by Meeting)
- Last Resort Infrastructure Plan and Site Diagram

Confirmation of 10.2.24 General Meeting Minutes

Proposal: To accept the General Meeting (GM) minutes from 10.2.24

Proposed: Natalie Lawler *Seconded: Wayne Skinner*

Vote: Passed with 2 abstentions

Approval of Treasurer's Report & Work Claims

Proposal: To approve the Treasurer's Report and Work Claims

Proposed: Natalie Lawler *Seconded: Wayne Skinner*

Vote: Passed Unanimously

Discussion Points

- Payments to be made to Coastline Credit Union, members update your payment details
- We have moved away from term deposits to two on-call saving accounts as we are still getting good interest and we can have money on call if we need it. The money is spread across two institutions to ensure we qualify for the government guarantee if the institution was to fail.
- Turnover in this financial year will be under GST threshold of \$150,000 a year
- We need to monitor how many new members are approved each year as that could impact our ability to stay under the GST threshold.
- Re: Sam's claim for slashing Issac's block. Meeting discussed deviations in charging/claiming process for slashing/mowing different type of blocks – blank sites versus sites with lot of infrastructure and heavier vegetation (e.g. Lomandra), using community slasher versus using own mower / whipper sniper. Notifying people of deviations in advance would be ideal. Issues of poor communication and non-payment for work done when private arrangements were made were highlighted.
- A work claim from Anna for secretarial work was submitted on time but John missed it, this was added to work claim list for voting.

Director's Meeting Minutes of 19/2/24:

Posted on website. No questions. Not a voting item.

Business arising from previous General Meeting:

Discussion of 2024-2025 Draft Admin and Infrastructure Budgets – (Wayne S)

Not a voting item.

- The budgets will be voted on at June meeting
- Budgets are working documents that change regularly.
- Quote received for property/business insurance has doubled and is not offering cover for liability. This is being questioned and alternative quotes with another broker are being investigated.
- Discussion of whether we should have a sinking fund for dam repairs and piping given the majority of dams are installed and maintained by members rather than the community. As property owners the co-op has a liability towards dams on the property.
- Wayne noted the budget needs a notation for the machinery shed
- Budget items marked as closed due to non spending are not precluded from future re-activation.
- Explanation of sinking fund to meeting - this is money we are putting aside for future use, e.g. to replace aging equipment such as the tractor.

ORDINARY RESOLUTIONS:

1. ByLaw Revisions

Resolution: To approve 2024 revisions to Goolawah Co-operative By-laws as per the table attached – i.e. By-Laws 1, 2, 3, 6, 9 through 22. (By-law numbering will be altered to reflect these amendments)

Proposed: Wayne Skinner

Seconded: Julica Jungehuelsing

Resolution Withdrawn by Wayne following feedback from members and further discussion by directors. New changes introduced since last GM were not part of the previous community discussion, e.g. toilets and herbicides. To be discussed further at the end of the meeting.

Rationale: By-Laws were last revised in 2016 and 2019. The need for further revisions to reflect current practices was raised at the April 2023 GM, and draft ideas were discussed at a community meeting in November 2023. Subsequently, a single motion was put to a GM in Dec 2023 to alter 21 of the 22 By-laws, which was not carried, as four important by-laws needed further discussion. Refer to motion and by-laws posted on the web on 28.2.24.

2. Membership Policy & Associated Documents Resolution

Resolution: To adopt the revised Membership Policy and associated documents.

Proposed: Justine Shaw

Seconded: Leah Skinner

Vote: Passed (1 abstain, 0 Against).

Rationale: The documents have been revised to include Infrastructure Shares which were incorporated into the Rules approved by NSW Fair Trading in November 2023 and new steps in the process to achieve membership.

Discussion Points

- Wording has been adjusted across all relevant membership application and share transfer documents by Justine and Denise to reflect the introduction of the infrastructure share. The membership policy has been re-written so it is easier to understand and to reflect the current best practices that the membership committee already uses. This resolution is the formal ratification of this wording/approach. Revisions are on the website with changes highlighted in red.
- Clarification was provided to the meeting on the changes and to explain the review meetings process. There are three meetings to give community members ample opportunity to review and discuss each application. Firstly there is a progress review meeting advertised on the phone tree which members are invited to attend. Secondly there is a review of the application at a GM or Special GM (the applicant is not present). Thirdly the application is voted on at a subsequent GM or Special GM (again the applicant is not present). A share transfer can also be ratified at this meeting if the applicant's membership is approved.
- Thank you and well-done to membership committee

3. Delegation Manual for Directors and Office Holders

Resolution: To adopt the revised Delegation Manual for Directors and Office Holders. **Rationale:** The Manual has been revised to reflect current policies and practices.

Proposed: Wayne Skinner

Seconded: Leah Skinner

Vote: Passed (2 abstain, 0 Against).

4. Meeting Protocol/Procedures: Presence of Members at GMs for Some Agenda Items

Resolution: Members to be present at a GM when they propose a project, a plan or an unusual work claim to be discussed and/or voted for. If they are not present, the topic will be deferred to the next GM.

Proposed: Julica Jungehülsing

Seconded: Anna Du Chesne

Resolution Amended to: Members to be present at a General Meeting when they propose a project, a plan or an unusual work claim to be discussed and/or voted for. If they are not present, the topic **maybe** deferred to the next GM **at the meeting's discretion**.

Vote: Passed Unanimously.

Rationale: In the past the community tried to discuss proposals like dam projects or animal issues whilst the member(s) who made the proposal were absent. This often led to guessing and speculations since questions of members couldn't be answered. Often lots of time was wasted and then the topic referred to the next GM anyway - hoping the member might be available then. If members are asked to be present for their proposals this situation would be avoided, and a quicker solution would be achieved.

Discussion:

- Proposal amended to allow the meeting the discretion to go ahead or postpone the agenda item as suits, while still highlighting there is an expectation that member's be present to speak to their agenda items

Governance Training - (Wayne S)

- Conference at the Slim Dusty Centre (\$145 per head) with other Land-sharing Cooperatives – 07 June.
- Governance Workshop at Wauchope (\$185 per head) on 06 June
- Previously Sam Byrne was going to come out here for a workshop (\$1,000), but not enough participants
- Denise has offered to provide training at zero cost
- Any interested members please contact the Secretary or Wayne
- Approval for \$1000 from Admin budget to subsidise ticket costs for representatives. Please share learning and info with community afterwards. **Straw vote:** Unanimous.

Assistance Animal Review - (Marc Rosenstein).

Survey to review and capture learning after visiting Assistance Dog by Tarrik in Red Hill. Marc not at meeting. Deferred to next meeting.

Progress of review on Phone Tree Guidelines - (Marc and AL).

No updated guidelines provided

Finance Report – (Wayne S)

- Update on Signatories on Coastline Credit Union and Regional Bank Australia – see treasurer's report
- Two members remain inactive with over-due for more than 12 months
- **Proposal by Peter O'Hara discussed by meeting: to increase work claim hourly rate from \$10 to \$15 per hour and to increase the annual work levy from \$180 to \$300 (20 hours @ \$15 per hour).**
Straw vote to see if this proposal is worth carrying forward for a formal vote at next GM: 9 For, 7 Abstain/ Needs more Work. **Discussion points:** We need more people to do more work for the community. Proposal is designed to motivate people to work - what will it take to incentivise people to work for the community, will \$5 more do it? Either members do the work or else we pay external contractors. Preference to not outsource work at external \$\$\$ rates unless we have to. Proposal will increase work levies (for those who do not work) and our income, bringing us closer to GST limit. It is designed to result in more work claims. Work claims come out of allocated budgets so will need to monitor how many work claims are approved. As always, work claims will be reviewed by members/meetings and only approved if we are happy with them. A raise from \$10 was discussed a number of years ago but did not proceed. Some people don't claim for work done. People already do a lot of work for the community and contribute in various ways. Men's shed and "work for the dole" people do a lot of work. Some people don't do any work. Discussion about different types of work and how to value work, e.g. difficult/ /skilled// physical work versus other types of work e.g. paperwork. Consideration of work involving member's equipment. Importance of people doing things well, skilling people up, occupational health & safety requirements. People have been trained in the tractor but this has not always converted to tractor work being done for the community. **Option:** require all members contribute a certain number of hours for the community as part of their membership and not claim money for it. **Option:** Expand model of paying Clint to do roadworks with his equipment, gives a mid-range rate compared to outside contractors. Could replicate this for Sam operating the flail slasher and Aaron doing tree work. Next agenda item is also relevant to this. **Option:** more working bees (e.g. weekly) and coordinating work by hamlet.

Proposal by Craig to co-ordinate a small group of members (e.g. Sam, Ralph VH, Clint, Alby) who are approved to do maintenance at \$30 an hour. Straw vote to assess support for this proposal: For 17, Against 1, Abstain 0. **Discussion points:** We have a large property and fire risk that requires maintenance (regular slashing and then there is also clearing up damage after storms). Some maintenance stalwarts are aging. Upped APZ budget to \$7,500 which can be used to help get this work done. Either members do the work or we hire a contractor. Community needs to decide how much maintenance we want done.

Secretary Report - (Anna)

No Discussion

Membership Report - (Elizabeth read report from Ishbel)

Update on Prospective Members

- Laura Manerowski application process is on hold until after baby
- Mim Fluhrer – review at next GM/SGM so final vote can happen in June, share can be ratified then too. Mim/Jim/Cindy are seeking expedited process for Mim's application which we can facilitate through calling a special GM
- Jay Fluhrer (Mims' Sister) – attended one GM and social events
- Janet Hope – no update
- Timothy Stewart – no update
- Maurice – not in a hurry, attended two GMs and social events
- Shannon and Luke – enquiry stage

Currently Eligible for Membership but don't have a Share: Anadean Douglas and Jay Keenan, Arley and Sam, Michelle and Logan. Requirements to retain eligibility for membership are outlined in the new membership policy.

Shares for Sale: Sue Loudan, Ralph Ethel, Santina De Moleay

Machinery Report – Kevin, Ralph & Sam

- Kevin researched PTO Chipper: Cost \$5.5K, easy to brake by putting too big gauge vegetation through it, safety issues, need someone to feed the chipper. Not recommended to proceed.
- 6-foot heavy slasher is broken, need to replace. Sam researched cost for a new normal slasher \$8K, bullet proof \$14K. Leah asked if secondhand would be an option, Sam did not recommend. **Proposal:** To approve \$14,000 of funds be allocated from sinking fund to purchase new slasher. *Proposed by: Natalie, Seconded by Wayne.* Passed (17 For, 1 Against, 0 Abstain).
- Both tractors are working, but one is in trouble
- Sam proposed we also get an auger, to be raised again to directors for consideration

Fire and Flood Report - Craig

- Reduced risk of fire. Fire permit period finished. Window of opportunity to burn is often shorter than you think. Talk to Craig / Jac if you need support on burning. Best time to prepare for fire is when it is wet.
- Keep an eye on your flood supplies. Another La Nina season is forecast. Recent rains have highlighted the water flow across the low part of Nevertire Road.

Landcare Report - Jac

- **Frog ID:** Recording by Jac two years ago helped with the identification and classification of the rare and endangered Coastal Banjo Frog, a lot of coastal swamplands have been lost to development, so we are providing one of the few remaining habitats for it.
- **Asset Protection Zone (APZ) Work:** Need to make decisions on trees on the side of our access roads to manage fire and storm risks. RFS said to get rid of them. Casuarinas on frog hollow are continually falling and damaging the fences. Casuarinas have re-grown on Chris Robbins access road which is a key APZ for Red Hill, it should be been slashed regularly after we paid for it to be cleared but not enough people to do it. Plan is to identify the highest priority area and the most dangerous trees while also assessing the ecological values and impacts. Explore how best utilise the timber resources from this work, e.g. timber for community projects, firewood. Ethan is looking for trees where we can barter our trees for his services.
- **Cleaning-up after Storm Damage:** Ethan (friend of Aaron) brought in 2 machines at a cost of \$880 for four hours – bobcat to move large trees/limbs and a chipper. 20 members also attended a working bee to stack material and Ben/Justin helped Ethan feed the material into the mulcher/chipper . This kept costs down and sped up the process. Thanks to all who helped.
- **Weeds Programme Update** – Contractors have finished their weed programme on camphor and lantana. Government will fund these weeds as they are of state-wide concern. Two camphor trees remain due to access issues. Good progress on lantana removal, we still have large lantana infestation in our NE boundary.
- **Invasive non-native plant species of concern:** Please be aware that Jacaranda trees are considered a legacy weed, it is not going to be our problem but it will be our grandchildrens'. Terrible for pipes, every seed germinates, they are slow to grow at the start and then take off, we have ideal conditions for it,

nothing grows under it. Think twice before you plant it and consider removing them. Members need to be very careful about what plant and weeds we bring in, even accidentally in manure, mulch, machinery. Monitor and report if something taking off. If you are concerned about an invasive plant/weed talk to Jac or landcare group member pronto, early intervention is best, we do not want to have to use herbicides due to impacts on soil/flora/fauna e.g. frogs.

Social Committee Report - Craig

- Move Art Jam Exhibition from May to G-month. Alby coordinating. Help welcome. Entry forms for submissions available.
- G-month 2024 and G-25 (our 25th Anniversary in 2025) in planning
- FilmFest – thanks to Marc and Ben, 11 entries, all very different.
- Tropfest Music Night – EDU Band from Crescent Head was a great success. Band is taking a break for a while over winter. Pizza nights incoming.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Red Hill Last Resort Improvement Plan – Julica on behalf of Alicia (Project Manager)

- Detailed project plan costed at \$15K is on website to make it a more usable community space – power, water connections, outside kitchen, storage outside (fold up chairs, sports equipment, fire equipment, table tennis table), paver pathway outside, re-use toilet from camp kitchen. Hoping to find free, low cost materials. Peter Wells offered to do the solar.
- Marty also did a drawing of a lean-to and tank relocation stimulate ideas (available on website), this is not a final design, please come forward with any alternative/better ideas and plans, community consultation/input on community building is important
- Considerations: glass in fill around the tanks, accommodation of fire striker, building's purpose as an emergency assembly point / refuge
- Can include a community donation scheme as part of the funding – each person donates materials and time. e.g. laying pavers that have been personalized/decorated by each person
- We can fund this project by re-allocating money from other items in the budget, by using some of the \$20K surplus in budget or we can raise levies

Proposal: To increase the existing last resort budget item by \$5,000 to make it a more usable space in line with the project plan.

Proposed: Julcia Seconded by: Wayne Skinner

Vote: Passed (8 in favour, 1 Against, 5 Abstain)

Fun Working Bee on 4th May For Last Resort – Need urgent repairs to walls damaged by sideways rain. Can do full working day with lunch or half day. Labour intensive, need 20 people. James looking at making it more tornado resistant.

Outback has heaps of work need a working bee also.

Pizza Oven Roof – ongoing, men's shed is working on it. Needs more bracing.

Nevertive Road Stage 2

Section 2 is expected to involve two areas: from junction of Maria River road to around the corner and a 90-100 meter section starting at the existing seal to downhill past Jason's place (subject to it being within our budget). Kevin Hall's design has been delayed by 3 weeks due to his knee operation. Once we have design the next steps are a bill of quantities then our contractor will give us a quote. Kempsey Council will come out in June and give us a final approval of the section completed and take over maintenance, this will involve Council inspection fees.

ByLaws Revision

Meeting members dwindling, those remaining tired and flagging. Held over to next meeting or a special GM. Option to vote on them individually and see how many get through and reward others as necessary.

Note from Denise: There is now a section for DA information on the website with information for members on how to lodge a DA.

Next General Meeting: 8th June 2024. Chair – Peter and Craig Volunteered. Minute taker – to be decided

Meeting Closed 1.25pm.