

WILSON INLET MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 18 FEBRUARY 2009 AT SHIRE OF DENMARK, RECEPTION ROOM AT 1.00PM

PRESENT: George Ebbett (Chairman), Kirsty Alexander (DoW), Mark Parre, Elissa Stewart (WICC), John Xanthis, Kim Stanton (CoA), Noel Chambers (DoF) proxy for Phil Shaw, Basil Schur, Ben Chuwen, Ian Osborne, Louise Bennett (Shire of Denmark) proxy for Yvette Caruso, Sandra Maciejewski (CoA), Murray Gangell (DoW – minutes).

1. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

Case Koning: asked when the WI Report No 9 would be published.

Kirsty: advised that this report is expected to be released within 6 to 8 weeks.

Case: also requested permission to sit-in on the entire meeting. The Chair sought consent from the members who had no objections with this request.

2. APOLOGIES

Phil Shaw (DoF), Tony Fitzpatrick (DPI) Yvette Caruso (SoD) and Melinda Lyons

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes from the previous WIMAG meeting held on 17 December 2008 were confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

MOVED: Kim Stanton

SECONDED: Mark Parre

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES & CORRESPONDENCE

ACTION ITEMS FROM WIMAG MEETING (17/12/08):

- 1) AI: **Yvette to research previous shire proposal to include the two other estuaries and update it. Item to be taken to council for 'in principle' support.**

George discussed at Council meeting and was deferred until further information was sought. Chris Gunby to attend next Council meeting to discuss DoW's position. Council will make a decision at this meeting.

- 2) AI: **Marisa to update terms of reference in accordance with issues as discussed above and any other minor admin changes and circulate updated terms of reference before the next meeting.**

Done

- 3) AI **Marisa to write letter to Shire of Denmark in regard to WIMAG resolution.**

"WIMAG write to the Shire of Denmark commending them on finalising the Wilson Inlet Foreshore Reserves Management Plan and urges the Shire to implement the recommendations outlined in the plan. WIMAG is happy to assist in budget planning and prioritising future works."

Done

- 4) AI: **Other Actions from previous meeting - Letters to agencies on Morley Beach recommendations. City of Albany reply has been received and attached.**

Done

5. WIMAG MEMBERSHIP & CHAIR UPDATE (Kirsty)

Kirsty advised the meeting of George's reappointed as Chairman for a 3 year term. Due to the high standard of his application Basil was invited to accept the role as deputy chairman. Basil

accepted the offer. John Xanthis was also re-nominated as a WIMAG community member for a 4 year term.

6. REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

Ben: asked if the new position of deputy chair had been included in the ToR document.

Kirsty: it hasn't and will need to be added along with the roles and responsibilities associated with the position.

7. WILSON INLET FORESHORE RESERVES MANAGEMENT PLAN

Kirsty: discussed the different funding sources that could be applied for to help implement this plan. They included Coast West funds, DoW funds and other DoW money that is currently with the Denmark Shire.

Ian: Great Southern Development Commission has \$3.5 million from the Royalties for Regions initiative that could be sourced for this type of work.

Ben: asked if the existing funds would be mentioned in the funding applications.

Kirsty: Yes they would be 'in kind' funds.

Kirsty: read out Yvette's list of high priority recommendations and invited members to identify any low or medium priority recommendations that they feel should be ranked as high.

John: identified priority 2.5g '*investigate the feasibility of making the Ocean Beach Dog Exercise Area an all season facility*'.

Ian: supported this recommendation due to the area being inaccessible during parts of the year.

John: was concerned with the Professional Fisherman Only sign at the entry into Poison Point if new tables and chairs were to be installed with the objective of increasing the public use of this area.

George: identified all the River Mouth work as a high priority due to the area's popularity.

Kirsty: suggested an operational plan needs to be written which would include timelines and costings. This was supported by Mark.

ACTIONS:

Murray: Ask Yvette to formalise an operational plan.

George: To meet with the Denmark Shire's Engineer and discuss cheaper options for remediation work associated with recommendation 2.5b. Installing a barrier aimed at preventing further riverbank degradation and formalizing boat mooring.

8. SHIRE OF DENMARK'S COMMUNITY SURVEY

Ben: discussed the survey results that related to the bar opening questions. A total of 368 respondents from the survey with 28% of the responses preferring a western opening and 58% preferring an eastern opening.

83% preferred the Inlet to be managed for environmental reasons over recreational reasons.

In light of these figures Ben suggested that WIMAG take control of the bar openings. When asked by the chairman where he wanted to go with these discussions Ben stated that due to the survey results a 5 year trial of an eastern opening be undertaken.

George: reminded the group that the survey questions related to the Inlet was part of a larger survey and the Shire would not agree to an eastern opening trial based on the survey results alone.

Ben: said that WIMAG should advise Council not Council advise WIMAG on the bar openings and based on the survey results WIMAG write to Council to recommend a 5 year eastern opening trial be conducted.

George: There's a whole range of issues that need to be discussed prior to a decision being made.

George: asked other members their views on the survey and results.

Kim: hadn't seen the survey and due to the distance from Albany she isn't very close to the issues related to the Inlet. Des Wolfe a past WIMAG member has been in favour of an eastern opening.

Mark: If there was no environmental disturbance to the Inlet a 5 year trial should be undertaken using the same monitoring regime.

MOTION

“WIMAG write a letter to the Shire of Denmark, Department of Water and Water Corporation based on the community survey indicates support for an eastern opening trial”

Moved: Ben

Seconded: Ian

Motion Lapsed: 2 FOR AND 10 AGAINST

“Based on the community survey WIMAG ask the Shire of Denmark, Department of Water and Water Corporation to support a 5 year trial of an eastern opening”.

Moved: Ben

Seconded: Ian

Motion Lapsed: 2 FOR AND 10 AGAINST

WIMAG recommends that the Shire of Denmark and relevant State Agencies commence a community consultation and information gathering process on an eastern opening trial, for report back to the June meeting of WIMAG, (at which time WIMAG will be in a position to recommend if it supports an eastern opening regime and, if so, under what conditions.)

Moved: Basil

Seconded: Ian

Motion Lapsed: 2 FOR AND 10 AGAINST

9. MEMBERS REPORTS

Elissa: Amended time for Soil Fertility and Plant Analysis workshop to be held on Thursday 12 March 9am-1pm at the Denmark Ag College.

Attended several farmer group meetings and noticing a growing interest in bio fuel production.

Ben: commented that by ignoring the survey results related to the bar opening WIMAG was shirking it's responsibilities.

John: Nearly lost Dog Bridge with the recent floods. Prawn Rock has been enjoyed by many families over the summer.

Kim: Councillors decision on 17/2/09 with regards to Reserve 23579 Hay River re the transfer of the Management Order to the Conservation Commission of WA for this Reserve. Councillors voted for an amended motion by Cr. Des Wolfe " for Council to notify landowners adjacent to this reserve, of the proposal by DEC re the management order transfer of the reserve being changed to "Conservation Park" and to consider any submissions at a subsequent Council Meeting prior to City of Albany giving it's response to DEC"

(Council voted in agreeance of the above.)

Basil: Would like to have seen the Drainage review draft report considered at this WIMAG meeting for discussion. Concerned about the decision making tool for the Drainage Review specifically the impacts of decisions which lead to elevated water levels between October and April. These impact severely on migratory shorebirds. He raised concerns about the some of the information and points made in relation to shore bird requirements. He also was concerned that the review states that the decision making tool would have recommended the 2007 non opening, which he considers had adverse impacts on shorebirds, foreshore vegetation etc.

Mark: Replying to Kim's enquiry from the last meeting re *flooding of roads in the eastern end of the Inlet around Youngs* last November. Mark missed the Young's Progress Association meeting but after talking to several local landowners there weren't any reports of flooding on local roads.

Kirsty: Water samples were taken at Poddy Shot as a result of nearby residents complaining of strong odours coming from the inlet. Last year the Denmark Shire removed the ruppia mechanically to reduce the smell. DoW don't have any issues with this removal process.

Noel: The DoF is continuing its research into cobbler stock in the Wilson Inlet. This is an ongoing project that has been running for a number of years targeting juvenile cobbler.

Due to the number of complaints about commercial fishermen fishing in the closed netting area of Wilson Inlet (of which none were found to be fishing illegally). The Department needs to mark both sides of the Inlet more clearly. The marker on the eastern foreshore is overgrown and the Department needs to clear the vegetation and repaint the marker. On the western foreshore we are considering installing a marker on the rocks.

George: added that he would like to see a buoy placed on the boundary line of the netting closure in the middle of the inlet, and added that the numerous other buoys in the area for the aquaculture would mean that it would not be a navigational hazard.

George acknowledged the difficult meeting and thanked Ben for bringing the discussion to the meeting and for members not to hesitate to bring future difficult issues to these meetings.

10. NEXT MEETING

Next WIMAG meeting will be held Wed 15 April 2009 (third Wednesday) at Shire of Denmark offices.

Meeting closed 3:18pm.

ACTION ITEMS FROM WIMAG MEETING OF 18/2/09:

- 1) AI: Murray: Ask Yvette to formalise an operational plan.**
- 2) AI: George: To meet with the Denmark Shire's Engineer and discuss cheaper options for remediation work associated with recommendation 2.5b. Installing a barrier aimed at preventing further riverbank degradation and formalizing boat mooring.**