

**SPECIAL WILSON INLET MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP MEETING  
HELD ON 17 AUGUST 2005 AT THE DENMARK ENVIRONMENT CENTRE AT 2.00PM**

**PRESENT:** George Ebbett, Dianne Harwood, Brad Kneebone, Zac Launay, John Xanthis, Colleen Donnelly, Jason Froud, Pascoe Durtanovich (2.40pm)

In attendance: David Rushton

**APOLOGIES:** Geoff Findlay

The Chairman opened the meeting at 2.10pm.

Diane Harwood tabled copies of pamphlet 'environmental weeds'.

The Chairman noted that members had received copies of the WIMAG Review criteria of options and stressed that the numbers were not hard and fast figures and to be used as a guide only. Ms Donnelly was not available for the task of the selection process, however, had communicated her information to Mr Gunby via email. Mrs Donnelly noted that she would raise further issues in discussion.

Mr Rushton queried if members were receptive to the ranking process as to how the options were considered and the anticipated outcome of the meeting was for member's endorsement. He stated that the review group had come up with a list of features and options and one model stood out to address these features. The intention of the meeting was to clarify any issues with the review process and if members were not in agreement the outcome would be documented. All were encouraged to provide input and understand how the outcome was reached. All comments were welcomed and members were not to feel pressured to agree or disagree with others views. The Chairman highlighted that WIMAG members were the best to judge and have a responsibility to seek the best outcome for the community and it was important that many community people are represented on the group.

It was queried if Peel Inlet Management Council came under the auspices of the WRC Board. Mr Rushton noted that there was to be a review of all sub committees under the board as WRC board was to become obsolete. It was also queried as to what would happen if this group wanted to remain as they were. Mr Rushton did not know however the model was to be an independent group rather than how it was currently operating. The Chairman stated that the Peel Harvey group had a high representation and was directed at economic as well as environmental issues. Peel Harvey were to form an inlet management body to control foreshores reserves and have considerable input from Shire of Mandurah and government bodies and was not just a community environmental group.

Mr Rushton noted the independent model was based on the Albany Harbours Planning Committee (AHPC). Mr Froud gave an overview of how the AHPC functioned. It worked well, however did not have community representation but the model could be varied to include community and would work well. Chair duties are shared. AHPC consider applications for various department's projects and gave advice and discussed issues.

Mr Rushton stated the main strength of this group was its strong community representation and if it went to an independent model it would become more of a voluntary arrangement than it was at present i.e. there would be no sitting fees. Some members expressed that this was not an issue. The Chairman stated that because of the time he put into business associated with the group he was reimbursed from DoE. He was not prepared to take on the role of Chair without reimbursement as financially it was not possible for him to do so.

Mr Rushton was asked if the politics of Albany Harbours Planning Committee were as difficult as Wilson Inlet and the Denmark community as it was difficult to have some form of credibility and support that can withstand all the politics of the inlet. It was also stated that the constitution should reflect that the role of the Chairman has support including financial reimbursement. The Chairman added that it would depend on the expectations of the Chair. Mr Rushton noted that it was unsure how it would be divided into task and was expected that the review group would be involved in defining the terms of reference.

Comment was also made that the community should be educated as to the role of the group.

Mr Xanthis stated that there is a community perception that the activities of WIMAG do not result in any real on-ground action. Ms Harwood noted that WIMAG was an advisory group and not an action group. There was an expectation from community that nothing was being done, however an action group requires a budget to enable work to be carried out. Mr Rushton noted that WICC was an active group in the catchment that performs that role and they seek funding to do action on the ground.

The function of this group will continue as an advisory group to decision making agencies.

The Chairman stated that any provision of infrastructure will come from local government with input from Fisheries and DPI as is happening at present such as Rivermouth.

Mr Durtanovich advised that in terms of the foreshore he is to be contacted with any issues as Denmark Shire have the history. In the meantime the engineers position has been advertised and following appointment the person will be briefed.

The Chairman advised that selection of the independent group will have to be defined. The review group to set the parameters for the group with input from the WIMAG members. In addition the following requirements were noted.

- . Guarantee of strong agency support.
- . In principle support to further the proposed model.
- . Terms of reference that fit the model prior to endorsement.
- . Consider a MOU with agencies at the table.
- . Constitution or guidelines as currently only a draft.
- . Provide the Chairman with support and remuneration.
- . Community to support the group and have a clear understanding of role in the community and vice versa.

Discussion continued as to the perception of authority of the group as it appeared the authority lay with DoE and therefore should take responsibility. Some members expressed concern that as an independent group with no authority nothing could be achieved. It was reiterated that the idea is for the group to reflect community views to agencies who make decisions and the function of the group was an advisory one only.

Mr Froud, Fisheries, advised there was equal representation on Oyster Harbour group and if a request came to AHPC and if his agency had jurisdiction and could make decisions then they would become the lead group. The lead agency would deal with the politics. The group should not be accountable to the community as they are there because of their expertise in a certain field. The relevant government department should make the decision and therefore held accountable. The outcomes are communicated to the AHPC, therefore all the agencies are aware.

The following agreement was reached.

- . The group remain in an advisory role.
- . A constitution and terms of reference to be drawn up.

**Moved: Colleen Donnelly**

**Seconded: Diane Harwood**

**1. Support in principle only be given to the independent advisory group model**

**Carried**

**8 for 1 against**

Mr Xanthis stated that he wished to remain a subcommittee of DoE and was against the model of an independent group.

Mrs Donnelly supported Mr Xanthis and was unsure of an independent model and it was the reason why she had put in principle only into her motion as she wished to see the terms of reference, protocols, constitution and agency support and could not agree to the independent model until she had looked at everything but also understood the committee had to work through the issue.

It was highlighted that agency support was one of the primary features the committee wished to retain. It was expected that the agency support would continue and use of the Albany Harbours model that was tabled along with the review sub committee as to the operation.

Mr Durtanovich Pascoe left meeting 3.10pm.

Perception of power was discussed and members given the opportunity to provide input.

The following comments were provided..

- . Perception of community could be dealt with by explaining function more clearly and constitution or terms of reference that spells out what we are doing and what we are about.

In favour of independent group but still open to other suggestions. Optimistic it will work well as independent model and with communication requirements clearly stated.

- . Worried community will not get anything as not affiliated with proper support from government dept.
- . Could be rectified with MOU or agreement and a particular format for all agencies and this group. Don't see a lot of things changing for community view and opinion to come in here and then channel to particular authorities.
- . Review group needs to bring back to this group the clear communication of selection process for membership.
- . Fisheries do not have formal approval from executive, however, attend on an advisory capacity. A lengthy process to gain approvals.
- . Constitution and terms of reference including commitment from agencies required.
- . Given DoE/WRC involvement the advisory group will not be left high and dry.
- . As a lot of issues are not relevant but all will benefit to know Wilson Inlet politics. It also enables agencies to do their job.

- . Still reluctant as agency people do not have any obligation to attend such as Shire of Albany and situation could become worse.
- . May be advisable to have formal approvals.

*Moved: Colleen Donnelly*

*Seconded: John Xanthis*

*2. That the existing review committee prepare a draft constitution to bring back to a meeting within 3 months.*

*3. John Xanthis be appointed to the review committee to replace Mrs Sandra Shakespeare*

*Carried Unanimously*

Meeting closed 3.35pm.