

Kojonup



SHIRE OF KOJONUP

MINUTES

ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING

19 July 2023

1. WELCOME

The Shire President, Cr Ned Radford, declared the meeting open at 6.02pm and alerted the meeting to the procedures for emergencies including evacuation, designated exits and muster points and outlined the procedures of the meeting.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Shire of Kojonup acknowledges the first nations people of Australia as the Traditional custodians of this land and, in particular, the Keneang people of the Noongar nation upon whose land we meet.

We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Cr Ned Radford Shire President
Cr Roger Bilney
Cr Parminder Singh
Cr Cindy Wieringa
Cr Alan Egerton-Warburton
Cr Kevin Gale

STAFF

Grant Thompson Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Jill Watkin Manager Kodja Place, Tourism and Marketing (MKPTM)
Judy Stewart Manager Governance and Administration (MGA)
Jill Johnson Manager Finance and Corporate Services (MFCS)
Robert Jehu Manager Regulatory Services (MRS)
Estelle Lottering Regulatory Services Administration Officer (RSAO)

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Robin Evans
List as attached (attachment 2.1)
Others (names not placed on list)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil

APOLOGIES

Cr Paul Webb Deputy Shire President
Cr Felicity Webb
Frank House
Jill House
Ron Wright
Margaret Wright

3. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

3.1 Unconfirmed minutes of the Annual Meeting of Electors held 16 August 2022
(attachment 3.1.1)

RECOMMENDATION/ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING DECISION

1AEM/23 Moved Susanne Bilney Seconded Cr Gale
That the unconfirmed minutes of the Annual Meeting of Electors held 16 August 2022
be accepted.

CARRIED

4. REPORTS

4.1. Shire President

The Shire President, Cr Ned Radford, elaborated further on his report as contained within the Annual Report.

Cr Radford stated that Council would be looking at ways to increase the local population, housing and school student numbers.

4.2. Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mr Grant Thompson, elaborated further on his report as contained within the Annual Report envisaging a future growth period for the Shire of Kojonup.

The CEO presented a slideshow of key highlights for 2021/2022 (attachment 4.2.1).

5. 2021/2022 ANNUAL REPORT

5.1 – Shire of Kojonup 2021/2022 President’s Report
(contained within attachment 5.2.1)

RECOMMENDATION/ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING DECISION

2AEM/23 Moved Kath Mathwin Seconded Jill Mathwin
That the Shire of Kojonup 2021/2022 President’s Report be received.

CARRIED

5.2 Shire of Kojonup 2021/2022 Annual Report and Annual Financial Report
(attachment 5.2.1)

RECOMMENDATION/ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING DECISION

3AEM/23 Moved Cr Gale

Seconded K Thomson

That the Shire of Kojonup 2021/2022 Annual Report and Annual Financial Report, as circulated, be received.

CARRIED

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS/OTHER BUSINESS OF A GENERAL NATURE

6.1. Questions Taken on Notice from Previous Meeting

Nil

6.2. An Opportunity for Questions, Feedback or Items to be Raised from the Floor including prior notice questions

Prior Notice Questions (received 7 days prior to the meeting)

1. When is the budget going to reflect the actual cost/income of a program? That is when the apportioned cost of Shire Staff that is attributed to a program be shown. This would be useful in evaluating the cost/benefit of a program but also useful in staff allocation.

Response

The budget already reflects the allocation of wages and other overheads by cost code and by project code. The staffing costs are allocated to the individual cost centres as:

- Wages and Salaries
- Admin re-allocation cash
- Each cost centre then reports the actual wages cost associated with each area and by project.

2. The budget continues to show small amounts for building and grounds maintenance, 2022/23 \$13,470. What is this money going to be spent on?

Response

Each property/asset cost centre has its own grounds maintenance cost code budget item line, which means that amount is allocated to that property/asset for that financial year. Effectively this money reflects the cost of gardening, general grounds upkeep, spraying and minor maintenance in some codes i.e.; reticulation maintenance etc.

- 3. The Shire has not appointed a Deputy CEO and replaced the Records Officer. Some of their work would be regulatory, how is this being covered? Has the Shire Council evaluated what staff positions will be required in the future and how has the Council come to this decision?**

Response

The Shire is not large enough to require a single role fulfilling the Deputy CEO functions. As per the Council policy, any requirement for an Acting CEO can be delegated to one of several Senior Management roles. It is more important to the Shire to have Senior Management roles that reflect the actual functions to be performed e.g.; Financial, Governance etc. This is more effective and efficient.

As regards to the decision to appoint roles, the Shire has regulatory obligations to fulfill certain functions as a local government. As an example, one of those functions is record management as per the *State Records Act 2000*. Due to the complexity of record keeping, the Shire requires a role to ensure it fulfills its record keeping obligations.

As far as the whole structure is determined, this is aligned to the Strategic Community and Corporate Business Plan. A Workforce & Diversity Plan is an informing and guiding document for the CEO that supports the most efficient structure to execute the Corporate Business Plan. A Workforce and Diversity Plan is being created and will be adopted as per the Integrated Planning process.

- 4. When is the formatting of income and expenses in the Annual Budget going to follow the accepted norm? That is, expenses are red, income is black.**

This is a regulatory requirement for Local Government financial statements; it is not at the Shire's discretion to change.

- 5. Why is the Shire Council pursuing a Youth Precinct Plan when the Upgrades to the Memorial Hall are not complete, let alone the maintenance required for the Barracks and Elverds Cottage.**

There is consideration in this year's budget for Memorial Hall and Historical Buildings Maintenance. The Council is yet to sign off on this expenditure.

The Youth Precinct is an important part of the Shire's Strategic Community Plan to give the youth of Kojonup a place to play safely and create community wellbeing.

- 6. Can the raw data of the Shires accounts, i.e. bank statements be made available for analysis?**

The Shire does not make this information freely available as standard practice.

You can apply under an FOI process and that comes with fees and conditions i.e.; redaction and removal of all sensitive or confidential information.

Questions/Statements from the floor

Responses in italics

- Memorial Hall painting
In next budget to complete.
- Annual Financial Statements – page 31, item 19: personnel costs increased \$250,000.
These employee costs increased mostly due to key personnel changes and benefits paid out on long standing employment ceasing with the Shire (i.e. the previous CEO, Manager Corporate and Community Services and other key roles).
- Kodja Place (KP) – lease transition of Black Cockatoo Café (BCC)
The Kodja Place Community Fund Inc (KPCF) approached the Shire stating that the BCC isn't sustainable in the KPCF's hands. The Shire has taken back operation of the BCC with a view to stabilising, providing good service and putting any profit back into the Kodja Place, after which Council will decide on its future direction.
- Was there a Plan for the BCC when leased?
The BCC is different to a normal business when operating as a community café; its main objective is to return value back to the Kodja Place precinct. Lease applicants were interviewed and discussion was undertaken on how they would meet certain criteria and the original objectives of the café – the KPCF intended to return all profit back to the Kodja Place precinct.
- How long did KPCF lease the BCC?
From September 2022 until current date; the KPCF approached Council and Council's decision was based on what is best for the community and the management of the asset.

Analysis was done on the previous Council managed experience when it operated the BCC and the goal is to learn from this and return value back into the community.

The Shire is focused on improving three critical areas to manage the Cafe operations for sustainability:

- 1. Rostering and managing the labour cost component. Match labour to sales hours, not just days.*
- 2. Food preparation and procurement, cost of goods sold management, and menu management. Need to understand how much each meal costs in its entirety and ensure pricing is aligned to the margins required. Costing of plated meals and pricing of food is essential to success.*
- 3. Culture, training and customer service is essential.*

- KPCF and Kojonup Historical Society (KHS) meeting – where will this be held and what issues are there? The KHS, KPCF and Returned and Services League (RSL) have only a small number of people running each. Going to focus on this project?

Need to prioritise what the community wants – the Committees are self-determined. When Committees come to us struggling or with loss of ability to manage, the Shire is the organisation that can provide a safety net and offer support.

- Two groups have reached that point but don't have a plan, so much maintenance to be done.

Suggest the groups and office bearers of those groups determine whether they are ready to discuss a transition plan openly with the Shire. It will happen at the right time. The Shire is aware the groups are assessing their future – Shire is happy to facilitate and is committed to continuity.

- Look to ourselves, rather than government?

Not about monetary value, we can still be efficient, still be supportive – whilst monetary management is tight due to debt and other cost increases, there are signs of value within the community.

Need to have discussion about asset priorities, Shire is here to support what the community wants.

- Black Cockatoo Café some years ago had a \$70,000 loss – if running for 12 months?

The Shire will stabilise and the Council will determine the next steps on behalf of the community. Different options depending on the value points. Community funds built the Café to generate value for the Kodja Place.

Lessons have been learnt from the previous experience as outlined before (see above answers), we have sought advice from experienced café owners and have been given key focus areas to concentrate on such as staggered rostering, managing costs prescriptively, cost of food and plates, management of portion size or reflect in pricing.

- Doesn't help if no staff are owner of the business – sponsor a family, people who will stay.

Need housing to support; support people who are there.

- Conflict of interest – gags people? Is it worth bringing in consultants – value for money?

Regulation deems people who have a conflict of interest are unable to participate in debate.

Consultants can fill the void when there's no expertise or capability available in house. Every local government has the same challenge and regulatory framework to work within – it is sometimes more effective to use consultants.

Kodja Place Community Fund paid for this particular consultant to review its operations, consultants are accountable for output and performance like anyone else. Consultants have a finite role to play.

- Congratulations to Jill Watkin and team. With BCC, why not lease straight away? *Looking to stabilise, simplify menu, improve rostering, conduct a prescriptive food preparation cost analysis – unique factors about it. Managing those points efficiently will determine the profitability of the Café. Even a small profit comes back to KP but creates a lot of value. Café was built to fund KP, net profit leaves when people don't live in the community.*

Previous arrangement allowed a veto of any activity (community groups vetoed) – there were no day time charity functions, only evening events, no promotion of events in the community.

The objective is to capture value and put it back into the community. There was no surrender clause with KPCF but could, by agreement in writing, relinquish lease.

- Don't want to be paying rates if unsustainable. *The asset is owned by the Shire and it will always fall back to the Council to determine the Café role within the community.*
- Running BCC – current staff? Advertising? *Current structure being used - CEO and MFCS currently restructuring the Café to match the objectives of being sustainable.*
- Did pay \$70,000 previously, equipment not kept up to date. KPCF has put a lot of money into the structure, painting etc, spending money – did have a go. KPCF has few members now, like the other committees – if interested, come to a KPCF Committee meeting.
- Every community group is struggling. *Budget will come out in August.*
- Is Landcare in new plan? Employee expertise? *'Environment' is a strategic initiative.*
- Employee expertise? *Natural Resource Management (NRM) meetings have been a bit hit and miss due to resourcing and availability constraints, could utilise/engage Team Members on a different service level of agreement – still debating that in Workforce Plan (for August delivery). Look at grants through other avenues e.g.; Southern Dirt.*

- Not caring enough for NRM?
Looking at swapping, possibly employing local Noongars to develop a ranger program – haven't decided which way to go, need people willing to help and support.
- Farmers? To donate to the Shire? May present issue of conflicts of interest, how to get around that. Farmers have a choice of paying higher rates or pay higher tax to Federal Government.
Philanthropy? Depends why donating, have to be very careful, would suggest into community funds. Shire can't fund everything, lots of community groups wanting dollars - only levies, grants and rates. Need volunteers and investment outside the Shire.
Facilities and services cost the Shire but, when reviewing the assets, need to analyse what the community return on capital is. It's not always about a surplus or deficit
- KP not an essential part of community.
Not everyone is a sports person, need balance for those community members that are interested in alternative cultural activities - these facilities generate a multiplier effect like the EV charging station does.
- Katanning Road buildings?
#34 – Dr's surgery – renovating to be executive home.
#30 – re-painting and re-carpeting.
GROH (Government Regional Officers Housing) – finished and rented to GROH.
One Katanning Road house rented to MRS. GROH house attracts significant rent – paying for itself, finding contractors is not easy.
- Housing in Kojonup is extremely tight.
Katanning Road subdivision will provide for lots for sale. Soldier Road land available for subdividing.
- Federal/State Government?
Is focused on low income housing i.e.; social housing, 'no control over who goes in' this type of housing. Need to build 3 x 2 housing, get families in - no grant money at the moment.
- Somewhere coming up?
That is objective of Katanning Road subdivision – there are problems with conditions e.g.; Western Power cost with an 18 month wait time – nine blocks but waiting for approval, some complexity around how to distribute, can't get title without services provided.

#1 priority in new Strategic Community Plan is to provide diverse accommodation options. Farmers to invest in Kojonup so people come to town - better option than Shire building houses?

- Rating system – as in United Kingdom?
Can't do in Australia, diversity problems with types of housing.

6.3 SPRINGHAVEN

Assistance from external aged care providers, Hall and Prior, has been very successful in providing back up for the 22 beds (full time and respite) and resources to manage such.

Will further develop how we can partner and grow bed numbers. Next step is for the Springhaven Working Group to meet with Hall and Prior and establish the future relationship framework.

- Encourage Council to grow – perhaps with grant money, may need a capital partnership with Hall and Prior?
- Congratulations on management of Springhaven

The CEO presented a slideshow on Springhaven (included in attachment 6.3.1).

- Praise to Springhaven staff – appreciation to the Manager (Ciara O'Regan') and Staff of Springhaven - report demonstrates Springhaven is in good shape to be a hub for aging in place in Kojonup.

7. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Shire President declared the meeting closed at 7.30pm.

8. ATTACHMENTS

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| Item 3 | 3.1 | Unconfirmed minutes of the Annual Meeting of Electors held 16 August 2022 |
| Item 4.2/6.3 | 4.2.1/
6.3.1 | Slideshow of key highlights for 2021/2022 inc
Springhaven update |
| Item 5 | 5.2 | Shire of Kojonup 2021/2022 Annual Report and Annual Financial Report |