

The Warren Blackwood Strategic Alliance (Inc)

PO Box 389
PEMBERTON WA 6260
Phone (08) 9776 0697
e-mail: goody3@westnet.com.au
ABN 84 209 500 433

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL BOARD MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2009 AT MANJIMUP SHIRE OFFICES

The meeting began at 5.50pm

1. PRESENT

Wade De Campo (Chairman), Margaret Bird, Shane Collie, Tony Goode, Barbara Dunnet, Jeremy Hubble, Louise Kingston, Shirley Broadhurst, Brian O'Hare, Roger Downing, Alan Lamb, Deanna Guimelli (SWDC)

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Received from Brian Moore, Tim Clynch, and Graeme Baesjou

3. DISCUSSION/STATUS OF OTHER KEY REGIONAL IDENTIFIED/POSSIBLE ISSUES INC:

- The role and current operating climate of DEC

The EO generated discussions around the view that DEC's approach to their role created numerous difficulties detrimental to the region although it should be noted that the Alliance does appreciate that DEC is probably under resourced to properly carry out some of its responsibilities. Various issues emerged from the floor covering matters such as DEC land not being properly managed (especially for weed control, feral pigs, etc) and DEC failing to make provision for toilet and rubbish facilities even at obvious established sites such as dedicated camping grounds. Additionally, where DEC undertakes developments, they do not appear to consider appropriate public infrastructure such as road access and new toilet/rubbish facilities.

Many other assertions were made such as they appear to be getting behind in their prescribed burning program and this is a very serious concern. Their request for dieback free gravel seems quite difficult to administer. Again, in respect of land management, it is suggested that there is considerable confusion regarding responsibilities; i.e. who is supposed to do what (amongst entities such as DEC, LCDC's, farmers, shires, NRM etc). There are also situations where the relevant legislation appears to be deficient. For example, in the areas of verge maintenance and native vegetation clearing, the provisions are not working well. In summary, the Alliance feels that DEC show a lack of tolerance for the needs of the community and generally fail to engage cooperatively. They might follow the legislation and environmental considerations but not necessarily public requirements. Now is the time to challenge policy positions.

Proposed Barbara Dunnet, Seconded Margaret Bird

*That the EO prepare a paper outlining the Alliance concerns regarding the operation of DEC
and forward this to the Premier, Minister for Regional Development and Environment Minister*

Carried

- Biomass Plant

Wade gave a brief outline of the current status of the project. The Manjimup Shire Council had been asked to comment on EPA conditions being imposed on the project by 25th February. Manjimup is quite happy to make their response available to interested members. Wade was hopeful that they might get a response to their submission within perhaps a fortnight and then the matter would be referred to the shire council as an agenda item.

- Royalties for Regions

The EO provided an update, advising that the Department has yet to develop guidelines specifically for the regional allocations beyond what was currently available on the website. Regardless, the EO suggested that the Alliance progress the matter with a minimalist approach soliciting a few projects from each shire and then having a working party consisting of the CEO's and himself reviewing and assessing the projects prior to submitting them to the full Board. However, some members had reservations and preferred to await further developments clarifying Departmental guidelines. In addition, there was a view that there ought to be strong community consultation. We will have a more developed position by the next meeting.

- Recreation Trails Project

The EO advised that a Lotterywest grant submission was being prepared with the assistance of the Shire of Nannup and we were hopeful of obtaining \$15,000 from this source. In addition, the EO was seeking in principle support for contributions from each of the shires and the South West Development Commission in order to create sufficient seed funding to appoint a Project Officer. This would enable the Recreation Trails Project to commence stage one. The EO was asked to request funding, using a suitably weighted formula, from each of the supporting entities in time for consideration within the new financial year budgets.

- Other Issues

A number of matters relating to the Alliance Constitution arose from both the AGM procedures and Royalties for Regions. The EO advised that the current Constitution did not impede the Alliance from being accorded ROC (or VROC) status from the perspective of Royalties for Regions. Some concern was expressed that the composition of the Board potentially placed the Alliance in the position of making funding decisions with a minority input from shire councillors.

It was pointed out that, at the moment, six positions out of eight were filled by Councillors. However, under the Constitution, there could be ten positions including five community representatives (who were not necessarily Councillors). It was generally agreed that the number of community representatives should be reduced to four, allowing for one representative per Shire. The EO also advised the Board that there were areas of ambiguity in the Constitution creating potential "loose ends" and that he would like to review various sections. It was agreed that the EO would undertake a review of the Constitution, liaising with members and if necessary, calling for a meeting to implement proposed changes.

The Chairman initiated a lengthy general discussion of the state of the timber industry in light of the Minister's recent announcement rejecting substantial government intervention. The views from the members ran the gamut from writing a very strong letter to taking a more conciliatory approach but there was agreement that the Alliance should contribute a supportive industry stance. The EO was instructed to deal with the matter using the best possible mechanisms to achieve a positive result.

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.30pm