



MINUTES ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ELECTORS

Held on

Thursday 22 February 2024

Commenced at 6:00pm

RSL Memorial Hall (Town Hall), Donnybrook

Pursuant to Section 5.27 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, a General Meeting of Electors is to be held within a local government district once every financial year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Garry Hunt'.

**Garry Hunt
Temporary Chief Executive Officer**

5 March 2024

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SHIRE OF DONNYBROOK BALINGUP
MINUTES
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ELECTORS

Held at RSL Memorial Hall, Donnybrook
Thursday 22 February 2024

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING

Shire President – Acknowledgment of Country

The President acknowledged the traditional custodians of this land, the Wardandi and Kaneang People of the Noongar Nation, paying respects to Elders, past and present.

The President declared the meeting open at 6:00pm and welcomed the public gallery.

The President advised that the meeting is being audio recorded but not live streamed in accordance with Council Policy EM/CP-2 due to lack of live streaming facilities at the RSL Memorial Hall. The Shire President further stated the following:

“This meeting is being audio recorded, but cannot be livestreamed, in accordance with Council Policy.”

Members of the public are reminded that no other visual or audio recording of this meeting by any other means is allowed without the permission of the Chairperson.”

2 ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS PRESENT

MEMBERS

STAFF

Cr Vivienne MacCarthy (President)	Garry Hunt - Chief Executive Officer (Temporary)
Cr Lisa Glover (Deputy President) (arrived 6:02pm)	Kim Dolzadelli - Director Finance and Corporate
Cr Alexis Davy	Ross Marshall - Director Operations
Cr Peter Gubler (arrived 6:04pm)	Loren Clifford - Manager Corporate Services
Cr Anita Lindemann	Samantha Farquhar - Administration Officer Corporate Services
Cr Anne Mitchell	Tahlia James - Media and Communications Officer
Cr Grant Patrick	
Cr Deanna Shand	

PUBLIC GALLERY

10 members of the public were in attendance.

2.1 APOLOGIES

Cr John Bailey.

3 2022/23 ANNUAL REPORT

3.1 SHIRE OF DONNYBROOK BALINGUP ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

The 2022/2023 Annual Report, including 2022/2023 Annual Financial Report and Independent Auditor's Report (Opinion) were presented.

3.2 2022/23 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT AND INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT (OPINION)

The Director of Finance and Corporate gave a broad overview of the 2022/2023 Annual Financial Report and Independent Auditor's Report (Opinion).

3.3 QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS

Questions in relation to the 2022/2023 Annual Report, including 2022/2023 Annual Financial Report and Independent Auditor's Report (Opinion) were invited.

Question: Shane Sercombe

How would you describe the Shire's financial position and challenges.

Response: Director Finance and Corporate

I don't think Donnybrook faces any challenges that any other town or rural district doesn't. It has some solid foundations and I think it's made some really good headway in terms of its forward planning, asset management planning and long term financial planning. I believe that Donnybrook is well placed.

What I believe we need to do, and Council have agreed to this, is the Service Level Hierarchy for our buildings. We have a large number of buildings (over 140) and buildings which is fine when they are free, but when you need to renew them, they're not, because you generally won't get the second chance with government agency funding. I think that's a challenge and 140 buildings is not viable.

Long term the community need to be involved in a conversation with the Council to move forward and prioritise them through a Service Level of Hierarchy of buildings throughout the district. We need input from the community in terms of high priority buildings, right down to buildings we wouldn't replace. We can all try and have what we had yesterday but that's not always appropriate and things change.

Question: Shane Sercombe

The Shire's \$2.9 million loss for the last financial year marks 6 decent sized losses in 7 years. The level of these losses aren't matched by our neighbouring local governments and come on the back of record rate rises. These losses are resulting in an erosion in community assets including roads and buildings. What actions are required to both stem the losses and rebuild our financial position.

Response: Director Finance and Corporate

The Question relates to the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

My last answer would contribute a lot to what you are talking about. I also think in the presentation of the Financial Statement, where I broke down the income statement and we took away capital grants because that's not for operations and depreciation is for fixed assets which is what you are talking about.

In private enterprise when you are running a business and you're going to sell assets, and they have a saleable value, that's meaningful. Quite frankly in Local Government it's not. You can't sell a road and if we wanted to close a road, the land would revert to the Crown, It doesn't even become ours. In an accounting world, it's an asset, whereas often I refer a Road as a Liability because all they do is consume money. Just remember the rate of depreciation and we talk about dwindling asset base. The fact is our asset base isn't dwindling.

The main cause of the increased depreciation is an asset revaluation. Which is saying these assets are now worth "X" and in 5 years time it'll happen again. Each time "X" gets bigger, the amount of the depreciation increases. It doesn't mean we are going broke, and it doesn't mean we are not sustainable. A lot of the funding of the \$3.2 million in Road's renewal expenditure came from government agencies such as the Roads to Recovery Federal Road Program. They have now realised after a damming report that the budget they have and allocate through all the States is so underdone that they have doubled it.

For our Shire next year, if we get double the allocation we did this year, that will be another \$400,000 in agency funding. I also believe that there will be a push through State Government agencies as well in terms of their funding levels to Local Government. We have the Regional Road Group (RRG) funding, and that allocation pool has not increased since COVID came in and we all know that COVID and associated pressuers has put prices through the roof. We need to be careful where we spend our money and focus on renewal.

Question: Shane Atherton

I see there's financial damage possible but more so cultural damage possible to the organisation and from what I see it is the biggest threat at the moment. My question is, is there any evidence at this time of the Executive and the staff being subject to relentless and unjustified attack from within Council and from some members of the community.

Response: President MacCarthy

Yes, we have got some behaviours that are still lagging. Yes, we are still repairing community and Council, but I have every confidence that we will move forward. There is an element of responsibility I feel in managing that way forward. I feel very protective of Council Members

and I feel very protective of Council staff. We have a duty of care to protect those people in their work environment and I personally take that on board, and Councillors feel the same way.

Question: Shane Atherton

I wasn't looking at it as criticism of the Executive, but I am deeply concerned that there are still numerous faceless attacks being made on the Executive and how do we stop it.

Response: President MacCarthy

That is happening and it has to be managed. For example, you call it out. It's difficult because now we have question time that I am trying to manage. Like I said in my preamble, these are the behaviours I expect in a meeting, and these are the ways we are going to run question time going forward. These are the ways we are going to speak to each other in meetings, and I mean not just Councillors but community members. If you wish to address a Council Member, if you wish to address a Shire Executive or one of the staff in the office, you best make sure it is nicely because we will call through our Codes of Conduct through our expectations and through our community engagement. It will be called out because we must improve and move forward.

Question: Shane Sercombe

I believe we have got \$10.9 million in liabilities and \$10.7 in cash and cash equivalence. Could you please give us an explanation around that situation.

Response: Director Finance and Corporate

The following are excerpts of the Statement of Financial Position and Cash and Cash Equivalents note for the Audited Annual Financial Statements of the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup for the year ended 30/06/2023.

The excerpts provide a breakdown of the total liabilities and Cash and Cash Equivalents of the Shire as at 30/06/2023. A further level of detail can be found by referencing the note number provided for each individual line item.

**SHIRE OF DONNYBROOK
BALINGUP
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL
POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2023**

	NOTE	2023	2022
		\$	\$
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	13	1,535,425	1,350,643
Other liabilities	14	1,915,098	2,208,477
Lease liabilities	11(b)	32,375	15,032
Borrowings	15	52,207	65,983
Other Financial Liabilities	16	221,713	0
Employee related provisions	17	904,887	856,343
Other provisions	18	0	0

TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		4,661,705	4,496,478
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	13	0	0
Other liabilities	14	0	0
Lease liabilities	11(b)	65,498	23,062
Borrowings	15	220,797	273,004
Other financial liabilities	16	3,806,000	3,802,000
Employee related provisions	17	135,655	139,132
Other provisions	18	2,006,648	1,755,323
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		6,234,598	5,992,521
TOTAL LIABILITIES		10,896,303	10,488,999

**SHIRE OF DONNYBROOK BALINGUP
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023**

CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	Note	2023	2022
		\$	\$
Cash at bank and on hand		6,617,683	7,943,573
Term deposits		4,104,847	2,500,000
Total cash and cash equivalents		10,722,530	10,443,573
Held as			
- Unrestricted cash and cash equivalents		2,987,199	2,343,238
- Restricted cash and cash equivalents	20	7,735,331	8,100,335
		10,722,530	10,443,573

A full copy of the Annual Report including Annual Financial Statements can be found on the Shires website at [2022-2023-shire-of-donnybrook-balingup-annual-report-\(includes-annual-financial-report-and-audit-opinion\)](#).

Question: Shane Sercombe

Is the \$2.9 million loss for last financial year likely to have any impact on the Shire’s ability to secure the \$3 million loan for VC Mitchell.

Response: Director Finance and Corporate

No, it won’t have any influence over the likelihood of approval for a loan.

Question: Neville Fry

I notice in the funding the Shire gives different organisations, there's an amount of \$15,000 for the Donnybrook Chamber of Commerce. Why does that organisation need funding from the Shire?

Response: Director Finance and Corporate

The Donnybrook Chamber of Commerce Industry has a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Shire and through that Service Level Agreement, the allocation to them is \$15,000. At the time the Service Level Agreement was approved by Council, conditions were put in terms of the outcomes they needed to achieve or strive for. It was seen as a way that Council or the Shire could support the Chamber to support local businesses.

Question: Neville Fry

Why was the Chamber of Commerce also given another \$2,000 later in the year. shouldn't it be included in their \$15,000.

Response: Senior Community Development Officer

The Donnybrook Balingup Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc applied for and were successful in procuring a Major Community Grant in conjunction with the Donnybrook Regional Tourist Association to run the 2023 Donnybrook Twilight Christmas Markets.

The funds were sought for the provision of ambient lighting for patrons, outdoor furniture for patrons to sit and eat the food from the food trucks, audio visual equipment and operators for speeches and entertainment.

The purpose of the Donnybrook Twilight Christmas Market is to increase foot traffic and spending in the town centre. It provides an opportunity for local vendors to sell their product and provides an enjoyable experience for the community.

The application was assessed by Community Development, the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and then endorsed by the CEO. The grant application was found to meet the eligibility criteria as set out in the Community Grant guidelines attached.

The grants are open to any community group and are advertised in the Preston Press, on our website and on social media.

This activity is outside the remit of the Service Level Agreement that the Donnybrook Balingup Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc is also signed up to.

Currently having a Service Level Agreement does not preclude an association from being eligible for a grant.

Question: Neville Fry

If the Chamber of Commerce can get \$15,000 from the Shire, why can't the museum.

Response: Chief Executive Officer (Temporary)

I can't explain what was in the minds of the Council when that decision was made, other than to say, I think your point about the relevance of money that is allocated is a matter which the Council will deal with in the budget process, and sessions. Council have already agreed that there will be a series of workshops starting in the next month and that will be the opportunity for them to look very closely at all the allocations that have been made in the past and whether they are relevant for the future.

Question: Neville Fry

In the budget coming forward, is there an allocation there that can be put aside for the museum. An allocation equal to what the Chamber of Commerce get.

Response: President MacCarthy

We haven't started the budget process yet.

Question: Neville Fry

Can you make an allocation for it please.

Response: Chief Executive Officer (Temporary)

Yes, the Council can if they make such a decision. That will be up to them as part of the budget process. As I said, they will have a schedule which highlights all the different groups, and the Chamber of Commerce is one of them. In the presentation you would have seen that the Donnybrook tourist group get some, so does the Balingup Group. All those groups will be articulated in the documentation and the Council can then make decisions on which groups they allocate money to.

Question: Neville Fry

From the \$2.9 million loss we made last financial year, has there been a mid financial review and what was the outcome.

Response: Chief Executive Officer (Temporary)

Theres a mid year financial review being conducted at the moment and that will go to the Council in March.

Question: Neville Fry

That's surprising that its coming to March because when it happened the first time it came in December.

Response: Chief Executive Officer (Temporary)

I doubt it would have occurred in December because the half yearly review is on the 31st of December. Its normal for February/March to be the period when local governments deal with their half yearly budget review.

Question: Neville Fry

Will the review be released to the public in full.

Response: Chief Executive Officer (Temporary)

Yes, all reports like that have to be released in full.

4 GENERAL BUSINESS

4.1 QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS

Nil.

4.2 MOTIONS FROM ELECTORS

Motions made by Electors at an Annual General Meeting of Electors are presented to a meeting of Council for consideration per Section 5.33 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, which reads:

President MacCarthy called for motions from Electors and stated; *‘All decisions made at an Electors’ Meeting are to be considered at the next Ordinary Council Meeting, or if that is not practicable, at the first Ordinary Council Meeting after that meeting or at a Special Meeting called for that purpose, whichever happens first.’*

ELECTOR MOTION 1

Request Council to consider introducing a harvest ban notification policy possibly using an SMS service to both assist staff and inform the community.

MOVED: Shane Sercombe

SECONDED: Neville Fry

CARRIED

ELECTOR MOTION 2

Request Council to review the Donnybrook townsite drinking water protection plan.

MOVED: Shane Sercombe

SECONDED: Neville Fry

CARRIED

ELECTOR MOTION 3

Request Council to consider delivering recreational water testing at the Donnybrook Amphitheatre, Wrights Bridge as per the Western Australian Health Department recommendations.

MOVED: Shane Sercombe

SECONDED: Neville Fry

CARRIED

ELECTOR MOTION 4

That the Audit and Risk meeting be live streamed.

MOVED: Neville Fry

SECONDED: Shane Sercombe

CARRIED

5 CLOSURE

The President advised that the next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held on 28 February 2024 commencing at 5.00pm in the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Council Chamber.

The President declared the meeting closed at 7:19pm.