

Minutes

Outback Communities Authority

29 April 2020

Meeting No. 91

Members:

W McIntosh (Presiding Member)

J Fort, F Frahn, M Marsland, C Michelmore, T Roach, L Warmington

Minutes

Outback Communities Authority

Online meeting held 29 April 2020 at 2.30 pm

Present:

W McIntosh (Presiding Member), J Fort, F Frahn,
M Marsland, C Michelmore, T Roach and L Warmington (OCA Members)
M Sutton (Director, OOCA), B Gough and B Honan (OOCA).

1. WELCOME/APOLOGIES

The Presiding Member welcomed everyone to meeting 91 of the Outback Communities Authority (OCA) being held as a teleconference – a somewhat different meeting platform due to COVID 19 restrictions.

2. DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

2.1 Nil. The Presiding Member noted that this meeting was to be held in Andamooka providing the opportunity for a deputation from representatives from the Andamooka Progress and Opal Miners Association (APOMA) but due to COVID 19 restrictions this could not occur. The Presiding Member noted that correspondence was received from the Chairman, APOMA which will be considered during agenda item 6.2.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

The Presiding Member declared interest in waste management practices occurring in the region.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2020 were circulated.

Moved by Member Marsland
Seconded by Member Fort

That the minutes of the Outback Communities Authority (OCA) meeting held on 20 February 2020, meeting number 90 as circulated to Members, be adopted as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

Carried.

4.2 Business arising from minutes.

4.2.1 OCA Budget (Ref. agenda item 4.3.2, Meeting No. 75)

The Presiding Member referred to the Director who confirmed that the OCA's budget allocations are now as per the current year's budget. The Board acknowledged the difficulties the Office for the OCA (OOCA) has faced in trying to achieve a budget document that reflects the way the OCA operates. The Board agreed to remove this item from the action list.

4.2.2 Risk Management – Strategic Management Planning (Ref. agenda item 6.6, Meeting No.87)

The Director confirmed that this matter is in abeyance and will be dealt with through the Outback Futures project.

4.2.3 Lake Eyre – Analysis of the Impacts and Opportunities an Event has on the Region (Ref. agenda item 6.1, Meeting No.88)

The Director advised that the contract for service for the Lake Eyre – Analysis of Impacts and Opportunities an Event has on the Region is with Regional Development Australia Far North for consideration.

The Board agreed that although the analysis is still sought, acknowledgement of the current restrictions must be taken into consideration and therefore the work is not deemed to be urgently required. The Director confirmed that it is likely that once the agreement has been executed, that desk top research will commence, with consultation likely to follow once COVID 19 restrictions are eased.

The Members acknowledged that it is very likely that the analysis will not be completed until later in 2020-21.

4.2.4 Office for the Outback Communities Authority Accommodation (Ref. agenda item 6.2, Meeting No.90)

The Chair referred discussion to the Director who confirmed that correspondence has been forwarded to DPTI Chief Executive and a response has been received. Refer to agenda item 7.1.

4.2.5 OCA 2020-2025 Strategic Management Plan (Ref. agenda item 7.1, Meeting No.90)

The Director confirmed that consultation on the draft 2020-2025 Strategic Management Plan was completed on 17 March. This matter is referred to agenda item 6.1, therefore can be removed from the action plan.

4.2.6 Drought Communities Programme, Round 2 (Ref. agenda item 7.2, Meeting No.90)

The Presiding Member referred to the Director who confirmed that he is confident with the final submissions that have been forwarded to the Drought Communities Programme, Round 2 and final approval from the Commonwealth

will hopefully be received in the near future. This matter to be removed from the action plan.

4.2.7 Drought Forums (Ref. agenda item 10, Meeting No 90)

The Presiding Member referred to the Director who confirmed that correspondence was provided to the Minister and a generic response was received on 30 March 2020. This matter to be removed from the action plan.

4.2.7 April Meeting Location (Ref. agenda item 15, Meeting No.90)

The Presiding Member referred to the Director who confirmed that due to COVID 19 restrictions the April meeting scheduled to be held in Andamooka has been deferred.

5. ADJOURNED MATTERS

Nil.

6. OCA BUSINESS

6.1 Strategic Management Plan 2020-25 and Draft Annual Business Plan and Budget 2020-21 (Ref. N20-01/04)

The Director referred to the 2020-25 Strategic Management Plan which the Board endorsed to go to consultation at the February 2020 meeting. Consultation has concluded and submissions were received – copies of which the Board have received.

The Governance Manager confirmed that replies will be provided regarding the submissions.

The Members agreed that the 2020-25 Strategic Management Plan be provided to the Minister.

The Director referred to the draft 2020-21 Business Plan and Budget document recently provided to the Members for consideration.

The Members discussed the document at length and delegated to the Presiding Member to finalise and then release the document.

Moved by Member Michelmore
Seconded by Member Roach

That the OCA

- *Considered the submissions received.*
- *Provides the Minister with a copy of the Strategic Management Plan 2020-25 and recommends to the Minister he approve the Strategic Management Plan.*

- *Delegate to the Presiding Member to finalise and then release the draft 2020-21 Business Plan and Budget for consultation.*

Carried.

6.2 Proposed Community Affairs Resourcing and Management Agreements incorporating a community contribution for Andamooka and Iron Knob for 2020-21 (Ref. N20-02/04)

The Presiding Member referred discussion to the Governance Manager who confirmed that the Andamooka Progress and Opal Miners Association (APOMA) and the Iron Knob Progress Association (IKPA) have both verbally expressed their in principle approval to enter into Community Affairs Resourcing and Management (CARM) agreements for 2020-21, similar to what is currently in place. Current CARM agreements for both communities incorporate a community contribution, both agreements expire 30 June 2020.

Consultation on CARM agreements and community contributions is required before the OCA can make an informed decision on entering into agreements for 2020-21. The Governance Manager confirmed that consultation will include a draft budget for Andamooka and Iron Knob.

The Governance Manager confirmed that slightly different to past years, APOMA have developed their own budget for 2020-21, wanting to show more detail in the budget.

The Governance Manager advised that if community feedback suggests general acceptance of the CARM agreements, a similar methodology to the current agreements would be adopted, being:

- A community contribution would apply from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.
- Property units would remain the basis for determining the contributions attributable to a particular property.
- The dollar value of community contributions would be set having considered the consultation feedback, however it is expected to be the same as for the 2019-20 year's contribution, being \$400 per annum in Andamooka and \$240 per annum in Iron Knob.
- The OCA's Concessions Policy on rebates, remissions, hardship and postponements would apply.

The Governance Manager confirmed that Ministerial approval for the dollar value of each community contribution will be required and confirmed that once the consultation has been completed a report will be provided to the OCA.

The Community Engagement Strategy checklist and Consultation Checklist and Consultation timeline were provided to the Members.

The Governance Manager advised that a submission has been received from the Chairman, APOMA requesting that the OCA consider a re-introduction of a town manager. In the first instance the Members agreed to take the submission on notice and to give consideration to the full management of Andamooka, once consultation on the Andamooka 2020-21 CARM agreement has been completed.

The Governance Manager confirmed that due to COVID 19 restrictions it is very likely that public meetings will not be held as part of the consultation process. The Members noted that local newspapers have ceased to operate and therefore the consultation will consist of advertising in the Advertiser, local distributed posters and community newsletters advising of the consultation. The Governance Manager confirmed that this is a reasonable strategy in general terms and is compliant with legislation and policy.

Moved by Member Marsland
Seconded by Member Warmington

That the OCA notes the in-principal approval from the Andamooka Progress and Opal Miners Association Inc. to consider a new Communities Affairs Resourcing and Management agreement incorporating a community contribution for 2020-21 and approve the consultation plan as tabled.

Carried.

Moved by Member Roach
Seconded by Member Michelmore

That the OCA notes the in-principal approval from the Iron Knob Progress Association Inc. to consider a new Communities Affairs Resourcing and Management agreement incorporating a community contribution for 2020-21 and approve the consultation plan as tabled.

Carried.

6.3 Regional Development Australia Far North Quarterly Report to March 2020 (Ref. N20-03/04)

The Chair referred discussion to the Director who tabled the Regional Development Australia Far North (RDA FN) Quarterly Report to March 2020. The Director referred to significant achievements mentioned in the report including extensive support provided to the Office for the OCA on the development of the Drought Communities Programme, Round 2 submission; organization of an Economic Development Forum to be held in Leigh Creek on 24 March, which due to COVID 19 has been postponed, and supporting outback businesses and community groups with the preparation of business and project plans to support future grant opportunities.

The OCA noted the RDA FN Quarterly Report to 31 March 2020.

6.4 Dog Registration Fees 2020-21 (Ref. N20-04/04)

The Presiding Member referred discussion to the Business Services Manager who tabled recommended dog registration fees for 2020-21, recommending no increase in fees from the 2019-20 year.

The Business Services Manager recommended that the OCA waive dog registration fees for the month of June 2020, as was implemented in June 2019.

Moved by Member Roach
Seconded by Member Fort

That the OCA resolves to:

- approve the dog registration fees as tabled for 2020-21, noting no increase and advise the Dog and Cat Management Board by 30 May 2020;
- waive dog registration fees for the month of June 2020.

Carried.

6.5 Finance Report 31 March 2020

The Chair referred discussion to the Business Services Manager who referred to the forecast variances advising that the Drought Communities Programme Round 1 funding, Outback Water Stations and Regional Growth Fund funding have all attributed to the variances. This income is offset by additional expenditure but all projects require close monitoring to ensure outcomes are achieved by 30 June, without further impacting on the budget.

The Members noted that Drought Communities Programme Round 1 is required to be acquitted by 30 June, although some projects have been impacted by COVID 19 which may result in timeline variations being sought from the Commonwealth Government. The Director confirmed that the OCA is yet to receive confirmation of projects approved through the Drought Communities Programme, Round 2.

The Presiding Member noted some inconsistencies in the report which affected some totals in the report. An updated report will be provided to the Members as soon as possible.

The Board noted the Finance Report as at 31 March 2020 and look forward to receiving the amended report.

7. URGENT BUSINESS

7.1 OCA Accommodation

The Presiding Member referred discussion to the Director who confirmed that a response from the Chief Executive, DPTI regarding the rent review undertaken on the office for the OCA, the reduction in floor space and the explanation of rationale supporting any rent increase has been received.

The Director pointed out that the response has not addressed concerns around the OCA's budget cycle and subsequent impact on the OCA.

The Members discussed the matter at length and resolved that further correspondence should be forwarded to the CE, DPTI reinforcing the OCA's position on this matter.

8. BUSINESS PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

The Presiding Member referred discussion to the Director who tabled the 2019-20 Business Plan Action Plan. The Director summarised progress made on the Business Plan noting that we are fast approaching the end of the reporting period of this document and although there are some actions that will not be achieved he is comfortable that these actions will be

included in the Outback Futures consultation and subsequently in the next iteration of the Strategic Management Plan and Business Plan. The Director is confident that the Outback Futures project will open up a lot of new areas and initiatives and refresh the OCA's approach.

The Director confirmed that the oneOutback newspaper is ongoing and it is pleasing to receive many positive comments after each edition.

The Members noted the Business Plan Action Plan.

9. PRESIDING MEMBERS REPORT

The Presiding Member tabled his report, summarising the activities he has been involved in, since the February OCA meeting including:

- with the Director, met with Minister Knoll and the Member for Stuart, Dan van Holst Pellekaan on 13 March and discussed the Outback Futures Project, including the impact of COVID 19 restrictions and the impact that these are having on the overall progress of this project.
- attending a meeting of the SA Outback Roads Action Group with the Director on 13 March where several issues were raised including the need for more permanent sheeting of roads, the need to address efficiency issues, recognising the skills or knowledge of local people and the need to be more flexible and use local contractors. The Presiding Member advised that an update was provided regarding DPTI operations and the successful Lyndhurst to Marree capping trial.
- attending the Isolated Children's Parents' Association State Conference and Dinner held in Port Augusta on 13 March which was well supported by informative presentations. The Presiding Member confirmed that motions put to the Conference reflected the need to maintain parity in all forms of Distance Education support, including the School of the Air staffing and those resources required to maintain standards that are commonly found in mainstream education.
- participating in a phone conference convened by RDA FN on 27 March providing a networking opportunity for local government Mayors and CEO's in the region, with the main topic of discussion being around each Council's response to COVID 19 restrictions. It was agreed that the group should continue to meet on an 'as needs' basis.

The Presiding Member advised that the Director's ongoing involvement in the State Emergency organisation has ensured that he has been kept well informed of how COVID 19 and associated restrictions has impacted on Outback people and communities.

The OCA noted the Presiding Member's report.

10. MEMBERS REPORT

Member Fort reported she is participating in meetings with SA Tourism Commission (SATC) and Flinders Ranges and Outback (FR&O) groups via the Teams platform and at this stage is confident that changes are being accommodated.

Member Fort also reported that:

- the impact of COVID 19 directly after drought conditions has had a huge effect on industry cluster groups with all operators being severely impacted and communities that rely primarily on tourism are decimated.
- there have been silver linings in that families are spending time together, people living in the region are enjoying the natural beauty of their surrounds and experiencing life in a different way.
- regarding collaborative funding and shared marketing arrangements with FR&O and SATC – projects have been suspended or postponed and I have signed off on the Deed of Extension and Variation for the Digital Contract and Moving Pictures Project. Funds will be carried over to the 2020-21 financial year. The Moving Pictures Project is postponed until travel resumes – I have offered to manage and facilitate this project which will commence as soon as restrictions are lifted.
- Sharon McInnes and Michelle Reynolds have developed a roster to cover the region's digital footprint having had some concern that the agreed marketing strategy prior to COVID-19 is not across the needs of the region during the 'shutdown'.
- an additional \$10K that does not need matched funding is being made available to FR&O. This will be applied for prior to June 30 and will be directed towards ongoing promotion and marketing of the region.
- meeting regularly with SATC/Tourism Industry Council of SA (TiCSA) and am in constant contact with Jeremy Carn (RDA FN) and together we will plan our destination management recovery strategy.
- from a tourism perspective we are doing our best to prepare for a recovery even though we don't know when that will be.

Member Roach reported that there is uncertainty in the northern Flinders Ranges region relating to food security, noting the uncertainty of the local Foodland trading. Member Roach explained that some indecision by the operators at Foodland is impacting on the local community and although local help has been offered to the owners, this has been declined. Member Roach reported that there have been instances where outback people have travelled to Leigh Creek to find that the Foodland is closed during the day.

The Director advised that the Leigh Creek Taskforce is aware of the food security concerns and are looking at ways to assist.

11. DIRECTORS REPORT

The Director confirmed that he also has the role of Chair of the Far North Zone Emergency Management Committee, part of the State's emergency management reporting arrangements. The Director advised that on 20 March SA Police, being incident controllers coordinating the State Government's management of COVID 19 activated the Far North Zone Emergency Support Team (ZEST). The Director confirmed that ZEST meets weekly via teleconference and from this meeting it was determined that a sub-committee, the Remote and Vulnerable Communities ZEMC, was required to look at remote and vulnerable communities, specifically those communities identified as being quarantined under a Commonwealth biosecurity declaration on 26 March. The Director confirmed that at the first meeting of the sub-committee it was determined that a further sub-committee be established to look specifically at food security, which the Director Chairs.

The Director agreed with Member Fort, acknowledging the impact that COVID 19 has and is having on the Outback region and in particular the Outback Futures project. The Director confirmed that although approval for the recruitment process for the Project

Officer position has been in place for some weeks, it has not been possible to advertise and subsequently, fill the position.

The Director advised that Outback communities have been contacted to gain an understanding of food and water security, essential services and overall mental health with information being recorded on a running report.

The Director confirmed that COVID 19 restrictions have also impacted on STARCLUB courses resulting in postponements, however as the OCA are a member of Sports SA, some webinars have been offered in various subjects. Youth Week has also been postponed and Youth groups have ceased operation.

The Director confirmed that the OOCA continues to provide support toward the Drought Communities Programme Round 1 and is pleased that Round 2 projects were submitted to the Commonwealth on 21 April.

The Director summarised several meetings that he has attended since the OCA's February meeting and also the extensive list of activities that OOCA staff have managed and or been involved in.

The OCA noted the Director's report and thanked him for his ongoing efforts in managing the extensive workload associated with the pandemic outbreak. The Members requested that the Director thank all individual members of the staff for keeping the functions of the OCA going whilst dealing with the extra workload during these challenging times.

12. SECTION 11 COMMITTEE REPORT – OUTBACK FUTURES

The Director confirmed that there is no written report to receive, however he advised the Outback Futures project has been severely curtailed due to restrictions as a result of COVID 19.

The Director confirmed that the process for the remuneration and associated allowances for appointed Members of the Outback Futures Committee is progressing, noting that it was evident that this process was very likely to be a drawn out process.

The Director advised that the human resource processes associated with the Project Officer, Outback Futures has been approved and finalised and once the COVID restrictions are eased, the position will be advertised internally within DPTI and the interview process proceeding.

The Director confirmed that he is confident of further funding for this particular project in 2020-21 as very little expenditure is likely to occur prior to June 30.

The Presiding Member advised that he has maintained conversations with the Outback Futures Committee during challenging times created by COVID 19 restrictions.

13. CORRESPONDENCE REGISTER

The Director tabled the Correspondence Register for the period 14 February to 22 March 2020.

The OCA noted the Correspondence Register.

14. CONFIDENTIAL ORDERS

No Confidential Orders were discussed.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The OCA noted that the next scheduled meeting is a teleconference to be held on 28 May if required, or if not required a meeting is scheduled for 17, 18 June to be held in Port Augusta, noting that this will be confirmed closer to the date.

The meeting closed at 4.17pm.

W. M. H. L. H.
18-6-20