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## **Minutes of the General Meeting Wednesday, 26 November 2008, 7.30pm**

### **1. Opening of meeting**

1. Meeting opened 7.40pm.

### **2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Tim Dalton, Rosemary Drabsch, Susan McMaster

### **3. Minutes**

The minutes of public meetings held on 24 September and 13 November were distributed and approved as presented. (moved: Trevor Wilson; Seconded: Tim Walshaw)

### **4. Treasurer's Report**

Tim Walshaw reported that there is approximately \$4800 in one bank account and approximately \$2800 in the other. A motion to accept this report was passed. (Moved: Chris Wilson, Seconded: Tim Walshaw)

### **5. Presentation from Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS)**

Presented by Neil Guthrie, Tom Elliott, Paul Higginbotham. (An electronic copy of the presentation was sent to WCCC after the meeting. )

## **Stromlo Forest Park Development**

The ACT Government is undertaking three key projects: Stromlo Forest Park, the Arboretum, and the Century Project at Tidbinbilla Sanctuary. A section called "Territory Venues and Events (TVE) was established within TAMS at the beginning of July 2006. This section manages the Canberra Stadium, Manuka Oval and Stromlo Forest Park.

### **Current status at Stromlo Forest Park.**

The government is to invest \$7.5 million in the site and its facilities. These will include:

- 2.4km grass cross-country running track
- 1.2km bitumen Criterium cycling track
- 60km international standard mountain bike trails
- 25km equestrian trails
- Event pavilion, 'bare-base' infrastructure, car parks. The pavilion has toilets, change rooms, and office and a grandstand.

Other features of the site will include:

- 100% use of recycled or bore water
  - 24 mega-litre dam on site
  - Site will have its own bore
- Biolytic sewer processing system

The site can be used free by recreational users, and can be hired at cost.

There are not many mountain bike sites in Australia, and only two that operate as a business.

### **Major events held so far**

1. National Mountain Bike Championships, 2007, 2008
2. Mountain Bike World Cup Round, 2008
3. Rob de Castella Invitational, 2007
4. National Junior Road Championships, 2007, 2008
5. Scott 24-hour mountain bike event, 2007, 2008

Since December 2006, 143,600 cars have visited the site.

### **Plans for Stromlo Forest Park as tourist destination**

TAMS plans to start marketing Stromlo Forest Park as a tourist destination, and as part of those plans expects to seek a bike hire business and a coffee shop, and will install BBQs and play facilities for children.

TVE's main focus up till now has been on fixing defects, establishing safe management procedures, developing relationships with stakeholder, business and facility development, signage rollout, and marketing and communication.

### **Events planned in 2009**

1. National Mountain Bike Championships
2. Mountain Bike Trials and World Championship (September). Up to 40,000 people are expected to attend this event.
3. Stromlo Running Festival (February/March)
4. National Junior Road Championships (September/October)
5. Scott 24-hour mountain bike event (October)

### **Budget for the next three years**

The ACT Government has allocated \$2.97 million in the 2008-09 budget, to be spent over 3 years. Planned expenditure includes;

- Bushfire Memorial access road, car park and access path to Criterium Track
- Feasibility studies for accommodation and chairlift options
- Operational upgrades (trails, signs, kids area, road sealing, drainage, temporary cafe and bike shop, etc)
- Design of second building beside the Event pavilion, which will include disabled toilets and club rooms
- Re-vegetation. The trees being planted now are already quite large trees, and are mostly deciduous. They are being planted especially at nodal points (junctions of trails, paths, etc). Fire-resistant trees have been selected (particularly trees with smooth bark). Spotted gums are doing well. Greening Australia has done some work near Block 12 to remove pines.

### **Focus of Future Development**

#### **1. Development of a master plan**

This will go to tender in December 2008.

## **2. Integration of the master plan with the development of Molonglo Valley and the ANU's facilities on Mt Stromlo.**

- De-conflicting of transport lanes
- Accommodation for cycle tourists in the Molonglo Valley
- Establishment of a recreation corridor linking Stromlo Forest Park with the Molonglo River corridor, the Arboretum, and with Civic Centre
  - Sealed bike lanes will be made 6 metres wide, to meet the world standard for bike races
  - TVE has been pressing for adequate links for bikes. It has been noted that many cyclists who come to participate in competitions

ANU has plans to improve the educational opportunities on the summit of Mt Stromlo. It is possible the Planetarium will be moved from Dickson.

## **3. Likely additional developments**

- On-site tourist accommodation, 1-2 star
- 150-bed YMCA-run cabins for groups
  - Lease to contractor who would build and rent out low-cost accommodation for school groups
  - Chairlift up to Mt Stromlo summit, and supporting tourism business on summit
- Second building near current pavilion
- International BMX facility
- Tourism businesses (inside the second building)
- Improved trail network and amenities (picnic tables, other furniture, etc)

TVE will continue to seek world-level events.

The mountain bike trails are built by experts, and are meant to be bumpy. The soil out there is not good, and it is hard to grow things.

- Need specialist inspection once every six months to ensure that the trails are maintained to world standard
- The trail builder inspects the trails every month.

The main trail is a 16km circuit with clover-leaves of varying difficulty off the main circuit.

The master plan will be open for public consultation. The tender will close at the end of January 2009. The winner of the tender may do the public consultation around March-April 2009.

At the end of the presentation, the TAMS representatives responded to some questions.

WCCC may need to go back to ACTPLA about the 80 metre-side strip from Cotter Road to the river corridor that was agreed by Minister Andrew Barr in a meeting with WCCC in April 2008.

There is an allocation in the current budget to signpost off-road cycle paths  
Completion date for the bushfire memorial car part is early 2009.

This presentation is available on the stromloforestpark website. Maps can be downloaded from the ACTPLA website.

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.