

*Your local voice*



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## **Minutes of the WCCC General Meeting Wednesday, 28 July 2010**

### **1. Meeting opened**

Chairman Tim Dalton opened the meeting at 7.35. About thirty (30) persons were present.

### **2. Apologies**

Trevor Wilson

### **3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes as distributed were approved. (Moved: Mal Ferguson; Seconded: Lance Williamson)

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

The Treasurer reported that the current bank balance is \$5640. The Treasurer has received invoices for payment of printing and distribution of flyers, for amounts of \$539 and \$345 respectively. A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was passed (Moved: John Burke; Seconded: Chris Wilson).

### **5. Presentation by Simon Corbell, Minister for Environment, Water and Climate Change, on "New Water Storage for Weston Creek Ovals"**

Mr Corbell said the ACT Government had provided funding for the replacement of potable water by non-potable water for the irrigation of playing fields and sports fields in Weston Creek, in order to protect the supply of drinking water for residents. Three ponds are to be built to manage water quality in the new Molonglo suburbs, and they would also provide a recreation facility. At present the water quality is poor because the water contains too many nutrients.

The pond at North Weston (west of the present RSPCA site) would contain 250–300 mega-litres (MGL) of water and would be 1 kilometre in circumference. It will have a pedestrian bridge across it.

There will also be two other ponds, one on Mt Stromlo and another at Holden's Creek.

The ponds will perform several functions:

- Improve water quality by preventing nutrients from flowing into the Molonglo River;
- Provide flood protection and peak flow reduction;
- Enhance urban bio-diversity;

- Provide opportunities for recreation and volunteering activities;
- Improve property values;
- Improve the aesthetics of the area;
- Allow harvesting of storm-water.

The Government expects that by 2023 the ponds will have reduced the demand on potable water by 25 percent. By 2013, no sports ground will rely solely on potable water for irrigation.

The Canberra Integrated Urban Waterways Project is a joint Commonwealth Government and ACT Government project. Its target is to replace 3 giga-litres of potable water with non-potable water. A two-phase feasibility study has been undertaken, the first phase of which was a study conducted by the CSIRO. Phase Two is to decide on several pilot projects and put them into action. The three ponds in the new Molonglo area will be pilot projects done as part of Phase Two. CSIRO's master plan is that the pilot projects will have 85 to 95 percent volumetric reliability; that is, 85 to 95 percent of the time, the projects will be able to supply water.

Pilot projects are at:

Inner North: Flemington Road; Goodwin St, Lyneham; Banksia St, O'Connor;  
Weston Creek: 3 ponds in Molonglo suburbs;  
Tuggeranong: Lake Tuggeranong; Isabella Pond.

In Molonglo, it is estimated the Weston Creek pond will provide 300 MGL to irrigate 60 hectares, while the ponds at Coombs and Holden's Creek will provide 100 MGL to irrigate 20 hectares.

Pipes will be installed along Streeton Drive to carry the water to Stirling ovals. Later pipes will be installed from Stirling through government land across to Waramanga to provide water for the Waramanga ovals.

The Banksia St pond in O'Connor is ten years old, and has been supported strongly by local residents. Community Planting Days are held and residents are encouraged to participate.

Most of the ponds are adjacent to creeks that in the past have mostly been concreted over. The ponds are safe: they are designed to have a very gentle gradient, and plantings are designed to hinder children from rushing in. The ponds are not stagnant, and mosquitoes cannot breed easily.

The Minister answered a number of questions from residents at the meeting.

Q: Have there been any studies to examine the effect of large bodies of still water on fog creation?

A: I don't know.

Q: With the enlargement of Cotter Dam, won't the volume of water it provides be sufficient for irrigation of sports fields? Will it still be necessary to have these projects to replace potable water?

A: Even with the enlargement of Cotter Dam, the supply will not be enough for all of Canberra's needs. If there were to be a prolonged dry period such as we have had over the last eight years, we would again have problems. Calculations for the Cotter Dam have taken these

water savings into account.

Q: What about Weston Oval?

A: Weston is a neighbourhood oval, so not a full sports oval.

Tim Dalton commented that it would be good to have neighbourhood ovals more usable than they are at present, when the surfaces have become degraded through lack of irrigation.

When Mr Corbell had finished his presentation, there was a break of 15 minutes for tea and coffee, then David Dawes, Chief Executive of Land and Property Services (LPS), spoke about the LPS, which manages the ACT Government's land portfolio and has responsibility for land release and the Government's land supply strategy. LPS is the portfolio department for the Land Development Agency (LDA), and comes under the Chief Minister.

LPS has a four-year program for land supply. In the Weston Creek area there are two places where land is available for development. One is in Stirling, next to the Labor Club in Teasdale Street. LPS will call for Expressions of Interest for that block later in 2010.

The other is in the new suburbs of Molonglo, Coombs and Wright. Four hundred blocks have already been sold in Wright, the first suburb to be developed. Work on the third and fourth suburbs will start soon.

Land releases are planned for 2011 and 2012, but not yet for 2013 and 2014. It is expected that in the whole ACT, 17,000 dwellings will be built in the next five years. Of these, fifty percent will be greenfields developments, and fifty percent will be in existing urban areas. The aim is to give people more choice about the kind of dwelling they want.

LPS will undertake to notify community groups if sites are coming up in relevant areas.

There will be a lot of roadworks for the new arterial road in Molonglo. LPS will send a link to plans and maps to WCCC, to be put up on the WCCC website for members to access.

David Dawes and Kathleen Pooley answered several questions.

Q: Regarding fitness trails in the new suburbs, is it possible to change the decision to pave them? Paved trails are very hard, and a softer surface is kinder to people using the trails.

A: Maybe. We will take your question back to the Department and let you know.

Q: Will Streeton Drive be upgraded before the new suburbs are open? Streeton Drive is a major concern because the new suburbs will bring more traffic.

A: Infrastructure is being done as the suburbs are being opened. We will try to find out more about the timelines for road improvements.

Q: What landscaping is planned for along Cotter Road?

A: We will bring plans when we come back for our next presentation.

Mr Dawes noted that around 3,500 people had moved into the ACT in the last year, putting pressure on housing and resulting in rents becoming higher. In addition, some unit construction has been held up because of the global financial crisis (for example, about 1200 units in Civic). The current vacancy rate is less than one percent, but it would be better if the rate were higher, around 3-4 percent.

Tim Dalton formally invited Mr Dawes and Ms Pooley to make a second presentation at the WCCC public meeting on 29 September. Mr Dawes said that if WCCC members and other interested persons were to send their questions in advance, LPS would answer them. The website address is: [www.laps.act.gov.au](http://www.laps.act.gov.au)

## **7. General Business**

1. Communities at Work has expressed its concern over parking at Cooleman Court. Roads ACT has re-stencilled the parking areas around Cooleman Court and changed the timing of many spots to two hours only. Beyond that, the situation is still that there is not enough parking at Weston, and this problem needs to be addressed.

The Greens have provided a presentation that contains some good ideas and this will be put up on the WCCC website.

The Namatjira Drive speed bump needs better signage, and maybe even orange flashing lights.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

### **NEXT MEETING**

#### **Annual General Meeting**

**Wednesday, 25 August 2010, at 7.30pm**