

Your local voice



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Minutes of the WCCC General Meeting Wednesday, 30 March 2011

1. Meeting opened

WCCC Deputy Chair Tom Anderson opened the meeting at 7.35pm.

Twenty-four persons were present.

Tom welcomed the guest speakers, Ms Bree Frost and Ms Rachel Caoilli from ACTEW, who will speak about progress of the new Cotter Dam, and Darryl Ramm and Ms Rebecca Mitchell from ActewAGL, who will speak about the WireAlert project. He also welcomed Peter Reynolds from the *Canberra Chronicle*.

2. Apologies

John Milne, Caroline Le Couteur, Jeremy Hansen.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous public meeting (February 2011) were accepted as circulated. (Moved: Simon Hearder; Seconded: Heather Hughes)

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that WCCC has received two grants, one from the chief Minister's Department (\$5895), and one from ACT Planning and Land Agency (\$5125). The bank balance is \$12,833.29.

5. Presentation: Progress Report on the Cotter Dam Project

Rachel Caoilli, Communications Officer, Water Security Program, Bulk Water Alliance, spoke about how construction is proceeding at the new Cotter Dam. The project has been delayed by about three months, after heavy rainfalls at the end of 2010 and early in 2011, and it is now expected the dam will be completed around March 2012, weather permitting.

In February ACTEW Corporation Managing Director Mark Sullivan said, "On seven occasions areas in the Cotter had to be closed to the public due to flooding, and there have been four separate flood events since September 2010 which caused significant damage to the worksite and the Precinct, including severe damage to the Cotter Dam Discovery Trail". He added that as a result of increased flood risk, the existing diversion arrangement within the Cotter River which diverts water away from the construction area where the new dam will be positioned has also required a reassessment and redesign.

Rachel gave various statistics for the project, and said that recently 8900 tonnes of rock had been crushed on one day, which was something of a record. Work on the dam is now being carried out 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

She noted that the ACTEW website has photos of the dam and of the Cotter area, and said that a new photo is put up on the website every day showing the progress of construction.

6. Presentation: WireAlert

Darryl Ramm, Manager, Safety Systems and Training at ActewAGL, spoke about WireAlert, a project to hold a trial of a device that can detect certain wiring faults in the low voltage electricity network.

- WireAlert was developed by Aurora Energy, a Tasmanian Government-owned electricity distribution and retail company. It is a safety device that monitors wiring conditions inside and outside the home 24/7 and signals unsafe conditions such as broken neutrals and loose or hot connections via an audible and visual alarm.
- ActewAGL Distribution is planning to hold a trial of the device in Weston Creek during May-June 2011. Every householder in Weston Creek will receive a flyer in their mailbox, and about a week or so later, will receive one of the devices through the mail system. Householders are asked to plug the device into a power point and switch it on.
- Householders can check another circuit by moving the device around to other power points in other parts of the house.
- If there is a potentially dangerous problem, a red light on the device will start to flash. The householder should then ring ActewAGL, report the fault and follow the operator's instructions.
- The WireAlert will only detect a problem in the circuit it is currently plugged into. It is not able to detect problems in other circuits in the house. The device will do a self-test every 24 hours, and ensures that any changes to wiring conditions can immediately be identified.
- Like a smoke alarm, it is important that the WireAlert be kept active all the time. Cost is about 2 cents a day, roughly the same as a smoke alarm. Weston Creek had been chosen because it is a good size for a sample population, with around 9250 households. The houses are neither too old nor too young, and there is a good mix of new and older network assets.

Q: What if there is a power surge?

A: That will not be a problem for the WireAlert. It will do a test, then wait and do a second test. If everything is fine, there will be no further action and the sensor will give a green light.

Q: Does WireAlert detect problems only at one power-point, or on the whole circuit.

A: It will detect problems on the circuit to which that power-point is connected. For example, it could detect a problem with another power-point on the same circuit where that power-point is in the circuit between the WireAlert and the switchboard. It will NOT identify problems on a different circuit, so the householder will need to move it around the house to different circuits.

Q: Will there be training for local electricians in what the device does and how to use it?

A: Yes.

Q: Will it check lights?

A: No. The areas of most concern are the areas around power-points, and the main switchboard which also has an earth connection to water pipes.

Q: If a problem is identified, should we ring ActewAGL?

A: Yes. Please DON'T ring an electrician until ActewAGL has been called.

Q: Will ActewAGL do a survey of results?

A: Yes, after 3 months.

Q: How frequently does the device find faults?

A: It finds about 3-4 faults per thousand devices. The frequency may be different in Canberra from where trials have previously been held; one relevant factor may be that Canberra is not near the ocean.

Q: Why do you need to leave the device on for a long time?

A: Because some problems, such as corrosion, develop over time.

Q: What about power-points that can't be reached, such as behind the dishwasher?

A: This device will work where it can be plugged in and checks the circuit back to the switchboard.. The device won't detect issues on lighting circuit, and it won't monitor the appliance itself. The device will not check if active and neutral have been swapped (reverse polarity). There are other devices that can check that.

Q: How long will the pilot run for? And if it works, will it be rolled out for the rest of the ACT?

A: The mail-out to Weston Creek will occur in May-June, with delivery of the devices staggered at a couple of hundred units per day. If ActewAGL concludes that the trial is not beneficial, it will not be continued. If the trial proves useful, ActewAGL may decide to try it more widely in the ACT.

Q: How will it be delivered if the mailbox is too small for it?

A: The Post Office may do 'safe drops', that is, leave the package in a spot close to the house that should be safe enough. Otherwise, the householder may get a card in the mailbox asking them to pick up the package from the Post Office.

After a break, normal business resumed.

6. General Business

6.1. Combined Community Councils meeting

A Combined Community Councils meeting was held on 19 March, hosted by Woden Community Council. Speakers included Marie Coleman and a representative of Canberra's developers who spoke about how the community can work with developers.

As part of a move to have all Councils speak with one voice, the meeting set development priorities for Councils when they make representations to the ACT Government, including:

- public transport
- greenfields developments
- maximum heights for buildings.

There has been some publicity recently after the ACT Architect suggested that Development Applications should be notified to neighbours before an application is submitted to ACTPLA,

not afterwards.

Q; Barbara Brinton asked if other councils were able to find volunteers for Council committee positions.

A: Woden and Tuggeranong seem to be OK. North Canberra and Weston Creek have similar problems. Tom is not sure about Gunghalin or Belconnen.

6.2. Submission on Electoral Boundaries

Tom made a submission to the Redistribution Committee, putting strongly the wish of Weston Creek residents for Weston Creek to be kept as a complete entity and to remain in Molonglo electorate.

Only six submissions were received by the Redistribution Committee, and these have been put up on the Electoral Commission website. One submission was from Gunghalin, which also wants to be kept a one whole entity.

6.3. Molonglo Planning Stage 2 Forum

A forum for community consultation on the second stage of planning for the Molonglo development will be held on Thursday, 24 March, at St Peter's Church in Weston. All residents are welcome.

6.4. Cooleman Court and Environs

Trenerry Place: Tom met with TAMS representative in March 2010 to discuss improvements at Trenerry Place, which looks in need of some renovation. There has been little action so far, but now it appears something is to be done. The garden beds will be cleaned up, and the advertising pillar will be cleaned.

Parking: Tom also wrote to Roads ACT in February, but has had no response yet.

One member asked about parking in the big circle behind the Garden shop, and suggested that perhaps proper parking lines could be painted on the ground so people could know where it is OK to park. At certain times (when there is a sale at the Garden shop, for example), it becomes very difficult to park in that area, but people need to be fairly close to the shop so they can move heavy items out to their cars.

Heather Hughes had written to Tony Gill of Roads ACT about the bus shelter on Parkinson Street which blocks the view of traffic for cars leaving the parking area on the south side of Cooleman Court, and has received a response to say they will do something about it.

6.5. Fetherston Gardens

Representatives of WCCC, the Islamic School, TAMS and ACTPLA met at the Gardens to show ACTPLA what has been agreed about the line of fence to be erected by the School. After some discussion, ACTPLA has agreed that the Development Application will be approved, so the School can go ahead with the fence.

Lesley Pattinson has sent out a Newsletter about what is happening at the Gardens. Anyone who would like to receive it can contact WCCC and the request will be passed on.

- The most recent working bee, held on Sunday, 27 March, was attended by about 20 volunteers, the largest attendance so far.
- The next working bee will be on Saturday, 30 April, from 10am till 1pm. Go to the

entrance of the Islamic School on Heysen Street, and the gate to the Gardens is on the right just as you enter the carpark. Bring your own tools, a hat and sturdy working clothes, plus a drink and, if you like baking, a contribution to morning tea.

7. Other Business

7.1. Bike Lanes on Streeon Drive

Barbara Brinton said that a few years ago, WCCC worked hard to improve safety on Streeon Drive by having one side of the road made free of parking. She has been astonished to read in the *Canberra Times* that Roads ACT is proposing to re-introduce parking on both sides of Streeon Drive and to install a bike lane along the road as well.

Tom said he would write to Roads ACT about the matter, and also to Jeremy Hansen, Liberal party MLA for Molonglo, as he may not know about previous efforts to ban parking as a way of improving the safety of Streeon Drive.

7.2. Disused petrol stations

A questions was asked about what is happening to the disused petrol stations in Weston Creek.

Tom said that the Chapman petrol station has been demolished and the petrol tanks are being removed. Heather said that the Duffy site has been sold twice, but recently the second purchaser had gone bust, and now the site was up for sale again. All the planned units had been sold, but the buyers apparently got their money back.

About two weeks ago, Tom asked ACTPLA for information on these sites, but has not yet had a response.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

NEXT MEETING

Jeremy Hanson

Wednesday, 18 May 2011, at 7.30pm

PLEASE NOTE

**Date of meeting is 18 May,
due to State of Origin match on 25 May**