

*Your local voice*



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## **Minutes of General Meeting Wednesday, 25 September 2013**

### **1. Opening of Meeting**

The meeting was opened at 7.35pm by Chair Tom Anderson. Tom welcomed members and guests, Paul Peters (Executive Director, Roads and Public Transport Division, TAMS), Ken Marshall (Roads ACT), and Ian McGlenn (ACTION buses).

**Apologies:** Jenny Adams, Simon Hearder, Mal Ferguson, Max Kwiatkowski.  
Approximately twenty-two persons attended the meeting.

After introducing the guest speakers, Tom Anderson said that in relation to road construction, one particular problem for residents of Weston Creek was that construction never seemed to proceed according to schedule, and was never finished by the completion date that had been advertised. He said that there were regular bottlenecks on Hindmarsh Drive, and on Heysen St. He asked if planning for the proposed bridge over the Molongo River to take John Gorton Drive northwards to William Hovell Drive had started. If the bridge is to be completed by 2018, as suggested by ACTPLA and the Land Development Agency (LDA), then planning needs to be in train. He said that Weston Creek had few bus services direct to Civic and that there had been little consultation on recent changes to bus schedules. He added that residents would like to know when the proposed ParkNRide would be constructed, and when parking at Cooleman Court would be improved as Roads ACT had agreed in 2012.

### **2. Presentations**

[Below, “Q” indicates a question or comment from a WCCC member; “A” indicates the answer given by one of the three speakers.]

Paul Peters explained that three government ministers have responsibilities in the area of transport: Andrew Barr is Minister for Economic Development, with responsibility for land release and development (and thus for the Land Development Agency) and major public works and other large projects; Simon Corbell is Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development and has responsibility for transport planning—policy, corridor planning, the proposed Capital Metro (light rail), transport regulation, the strategic cycle network; Shane Rattenbury is Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, and has responsibility for transport operations—ACTION, road construction, cycleway construction, and public transport.

Mr Peters said he and the other two speakers would cover various topics and each would answer questions according to his expertise.

## BUSES

- The Real Time passenger Information System (RTIS) will monitor the location of all ACTION buses during operation. The system will be known as NXT Bus, and will provide live arrival and departure time information.
- There are 414 buses in the ACTION fleet, with eleven different bus types. Twenty-six buses have RTIS. There will be new signs at bus stops, and one-third of all stops have been set up so far. Passengers can SMS for information.

**Q:** Will there still be hard-copy timetables?

**A:** Yes.

- RTIS may be on a mobile website by January 2014, and it will be possible to download it like an app.
- There are two displays at the City Interchange, with departure time and place. More will be rolled out in future.
- Each bus stop has a number, so passengers can SMS the number of the stop they are at and will get information about when the next bus will arrive.
- The bus fleet is being updated; the old orange and blue articulated buses are being replaced by 77 new buses.
- ACTION is considering changing Route 705 which now goes from Tuggeranong to Belconnen, and proposes to bring it to the ParkNRide at Cooleman Court, then back on to the Tuggeranong Parkway to Belconnen. It would be an Xpress service, with three (3) buses each way in peak hours.
- There will be service from Woden to Molonglo to Cooleman Court, and it will link to the new aquatic facility in Molonglo. ACTION will use MyWay card information and transport planning information to determine new routes.
- Route 725 and Route 726 services will go around the suburbs, then to Cooleman Court, then on to the Parkway into the city. Route 726 is an additional route.
- In ten days ACTION has had more than 900 responses with feedback on the proposed routes.

**Q:** The southern part of Weston Creek is getting additional service, but where will the bus stops be?

**Q:** For off-peak travel, ACTION needs to determine which is the destination of most passengers—Woden or Civic.

**Q:** The proposed ParkNRide is isolated if you try to come home on any bus service other than the peak-hour Xpress service, because ordinary buses don't go past the ParkNRide. Would it not be better to use Weston Oval on Hilder St as an alternative to a ParkNRide near the Defence Staff College?

**Q:** Why do all routes from Weston Creek go through Woden?

**Q:** If off-peak fares were to be halved, more people would use the buses, which might improve usage rates and even financial performance.

**Q:** With late-night services, is it economical to run small buses then? Is the cost of the driver the reason it is not economical to have buses at night?

**A:** We already have the fleet of buses, and we have to use those buses. Driver cost is the major part of costs, and it is not economical to move a driver into a smaller bus. The fleet has 25 Darts

(capacity is 50, with most standing; seating is for around 30 persons). The fleet is designed around moving the mass of people in the morning; once you have bought a bus, you have to keep using it. If you buy small buses, they will sit in the shed during the morning, which is not economical.

**Q:** Older Canberrans will want more buses during daytime.

**Q:** The Combined Community Councils would like to see better communication between different areas within the government, between policy areas and operations areas. Because these different areas are under different ministers, it is difficult for Community Councils to get through to operations areas.

**Q:** On the revised Route 83 (orange route), where will new bus stops be? There are no bus stops at the top of Warragamba Avenue in Duffy.

- The ACTION budget is \$120 million, of which \$20 million comes from fares and \$100 million is provided by the government.
- Woden Bus Interchange is being refurbished.
- New bus stops will be set up along Adelaide Avenue, Yarra Glen, Carruthers St, Kent St, and Hopetoun Circuit.

## **ROADS**

- Construction at Cotter Rd/Streeton Drive, and Dixon Drive/Unwin Place intersections is due to be completed in September 2014.
- Cotter Road duplication Stage 2 (from Yarralumla Creek to Tuggeranong Parkway) is under design now. A bid for its construction will be included in the 2014–2015 budget.

**Q:** The sequencing of traffic lights at the junction of Cotter Road with Lady Denman Drive seems to be a problem at present. In morning peak hour, traffic backs up all the way to Tuggeranong Parkway. Is priority given to traffic on Lady Denman Drive, rather than to Cotter Rd? Canberra has no CCTV system for managing traffic.

**Q:** Why does road construction take so long now?

**A:** Construction of Majura Parkway is going quickly, and costs between \$10 million and \$12 million per month. **Q:** Are there any penalty clauses that might force contractors to work more quickly?

**Q:** The introduction of a cycle lane at the corner of Hindmarsh Dve and Namatjira Dve has wrecked the intersection. It needs to be reviewed.

**Q:** The parking areas at Cooleman Court have lots of stones, even more than six months after the new surface was laid; it needs sweeping again. Also, on the south side of Cooleman Court, motor bike parking has taken up three or four car spaces, which is more than needed, and it is not properly marked. Needs review.

**Q:** The route to Woden via Heysen St (Weston) and Devonport St (Lyons) used to get very blocked up before construction on Heysen St at Hilder St junction started and closed one lane to traffic. The number of cars travelling along Launceston St from Hindmarsh Dve stops cars from getting out of Devonport St. Can something be done to improve the sequence of the traffic lights at the junction of Launceston St with Melrose Dve so that traffic can flow more smoothly?

**Q:** There is no bike lane on Heysen St where it passes underneath Tuggeranong Parkway, and no shoulder for bikes to use. It is quite dangerous for cycle traffic.

**Q:** Where can one find the cost of bike paths in the ACT Budget figures?

**A:** Roads ACT has capital funds for upgrades, but detailed figures are not given. The total cost

of bike paths every year should be in the Annual Report.

**Q:** How does Roads ACT envisage that residents of Molonglo will get to Canberra Hospital? What about constructing a fly-over from Cotter Road to Yarra Glen?

**Q:** It seems to have been agreed that Weston Creek will get a second petrol station, but in the meantime we need better entry into the petrol station at Cooleman Court. It has been suggested that the low wall between the footpath and the service station could be removed to make it easier for cars to get into the middle rows of petrol bowsers. This would in turn help to reduce the line of cars that waits in Brierley St and causes problems for traffic trying to get through.

**Q:** How will ramp metering work?

**A:** As people enter cautiously on to the Parkway, there is a ripple effect down the carriage-way which eventually causes cars to brake suddenly. Ramp metering will do real-time assessment and let cars on to the Parkway at an optimum rate so as to avoid this. It will not impede the flow of traffic unless that becomes necessary. There will be two lanes on the ramp, and cars from the ramp will move on to the left-hand carriage-way of the Parkway.

**Q:** With construction of John Gorton Drive, Cotter Road has been split. Will the name change? What about “Weston Creek Drive” as the new name for the old part of Cotter Road from Adelaide Avenue to the start of John Gorton Drive?

**Q:** At construction sites, the signs to control speed are set way in advance of the actual roadworks. Is this necessary?

**A:** Signs are set in accordance with Australian standards.

**Q:** There are many potholes around the Glenloch Interchange.

**Q:** With ordinary roads in the suburbs, could there be signs put at some intersections to warn drivers that the next road is limited to 50kph?

When WCCC members had exhausted their list of questions, Tom Anderson thanked the speakers for their willingness to answer, and called for a short break. After the break, the meeting reconvened.

## **Business Meeting**

### **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**Motion:** That the Minutes of the previous meeting be approved as circulated. (Moved: Pat McGinn; Seconded: Rosemary Drabsch) Motion carried.

### **Treasurer’s Report**

WCCC has \$5,822.06 in the bank.

There is one bill to be paid: \$672 for annual website maintenance.

**Motion:** That the Treasurer’s Report be accepted. (Moved: Simon Hearder; Seconded: Trevor Wilson). Passed.

### **General Business**

1. WCCC has received a letter from minister Andrew Barr asking for contributions to the budget consultation process. WCCC proposes to ask for funding to maintain Fetherston Gardens, and for more buses to serve Weston Creek.
2. The government is carrying out a review of parks and gardens, to get an overview of priorities. WCCC Chair had a meeting with the Minister about recreation spaces and their maintenance and restoration.

One WCCC member said that many play areas are very rough, are not watered, and are only roughly mown. Another member suggested that maybe the government wants feedback on their services, and is looking for evidence that parks and recreation spaces are wanted and used by the public. Anyone with feedback should contact Pat McGinn.

3. On 14 October, Tom Anderson and two other WCCC committee members will have a meeting with the Chief Minister. Issues to be raised will include: schools in Weston Creek becoming full; parking at Cooleman Court; roads and construction delays.

4. Tom mentioned a number of other issues:

- The “consultation” on the Community Hub proposed for Woden;
- WCCC has been asked to participate in a survey of community transport services;
- A recent meeting of the Combined Community Councils;
- A letter from Roads ACT about parking in Blackwood Terrace and telling residents who park on the nature strips that parking inspectors will be visiting;
- Fetherston Gardens will be open to the public from Sunday, 13 October. The formal opening will be held on Saturday, 12 October, and the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Shane Rattenbury, will open the Gardens.
- At Waramanga shops, the post box has been moved to down beyond the medical centre, so the Post Office shop has lost business. Refurbishment has taken eight months.
- It was suggested that at WCCC public meetings the business meeting should take place before the presentation, so more members will be present (rather than rushing off home immediately after the presentation). This could be trialled in October. The meeting agreed that moving the starting time of meetings forward to 7pm would not be convenient for members.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

**Next public meeting: Wednesday, 30 October 2013.**