

Your local voice



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Minutes of General Meeting Wednesday, 30 September, 2015

Opening of Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7.29 pm.

The Deputy Chair welcomed members and guests including Harry Hains from the Australian Federal Police

Apologies: Tom Anderson, Jennifer Adams, Sue Liebke, Max Kwiatkowski, Gai Brodtmann

19 people attended the meeting.

BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes of General Meeting of 26 August, 2015

Motion: That the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as circulated.

Moved: Chris Wilson Seconded: Rosemary Drabsch Motion carried.

Business arising from the minutes of the meeting of 26 August, 2015

- Council noted that there had been an increase in the number of buses from Weston Creek.
- Minutes should be better organized so matters are covered under headings. The way the basin priority project second question was reported there is not much about water quality in Weston Creek. The heading of BRP is not clear and recommend the use of the longer title to explain and put sub-title Murrumbidgee Water Improvement etc.

Treasurer's report:

Main Account 1,667.31

Funding comes through a yearly grant from ACT Government through the Chief Minister's Department. The funds are received December/January but the Council's financial year is 1 July to 30 June. The Council needs to acquit the grant as soon as possible after its AGM to ensure that they would then give it the next grant (around \$12,500) in December. The funds will be used for flyers, banners, laptop and data projector and microphone plus any running expenses.

Motion: That the Treasurer's Report be received.

Moved: Chris Wilson Seconded: Robert Marceau Motion carried.

General Business:

Cotter Road duplication

- The Council was aggravated by Shane Rattenbury MLA [Member for Molonglo]'s statement

about duplication of the Cotter Road. Tom Anderson [Chair] did an interview on radio last week about what was said about the duplication of Cotter Road, that is do something about public transport. As a result of the interview the Council received an email from Shane Rattenbury explaining what he said was there was a need to improve public transport. This will be put up on the WCCC website. The Council noted that that particular part of Cotter Road takes people coming in from North and South getting on and off Cotter Road. The WCCC will follow up.

- Guilia Jones MLA [Member for Molonglo] attended the meeting and advised that if there were any other comments people wanted to make they could talk to her. She passed around the Shane Rattenbury statements and Legislative Assembly Hansard.

Budget Submission

All community councils are invited to make submission for the coming years ACT Budget. The WCCC has made a submission and raised the following matters:

- Upgrade of Cotter Road first item in WCCC's submission. The plans for the duplication have already been drawn up. Minister for Roads applied for and was not successful in getting funding last year.
- Second Petrol station. This has already been approved and the WCCC is asking for it to be fast tracked
- Action on Master Plan for Weston Group Centre. Government announced funding for upgrading of Trennery Court and Brierly Street. The WCCC is asking for it to be fast tracked. Also asked for northern car park access and disability parking.
- New community centre - keep asking but not getting so will keep on asking
- Fetherston Gardens – asking for public toilets
- Upgrade of fisher shops
- Issues for changing population in Weston Creek and Molonglo – asking for public toilets at local shopping centres
- TAMS – announced more funding but stated that certain things be done but WCCC believes that there is still insufficient funding for TAMS to operate in a way that the community would like.
- Twice yearly pick up of bulk goods – problem at the charity bins at Cooleman Court
- Parking – suggesting high rise car parks at edge of city for park and ride
- Reiterated concern about light rail – not viable – bus cheaper cost
- Molonglo – don't want another Gungahlin – not a dormitory district – needs employment and bus service
- Concerned about loss of green space and sporting facilities.

Guilia Jones raised two matters:

- People having containers on the front of their property. This is a verge management issue; and
- Empty shops that have been empty for a long time – what leverage does the government have? Should look at alternative uses.

Basin Priority project

- \$88m from Federal Government – matched by 10% from ACT Government – to improve water quality in rivers and lakes. The assessment process was complex. Can only have 20 projects in the whole of Canberra. Weston Creek have no's 3 and 4 out of whole of Canberra. The highest rating (3) is the proposal for the Weston Oval area wetlands and three separate wetlands with vegetated reserve including areas revegetated after the 2013 bushfires on part of Dixon Drive and Cotter Road.

Brierly Street Upgrade

- WCCC sent email recently to expedite the proposed upgrade but the ACT Government has not finished the plans. They might close the entrance to Trennery Court from Brierly Street as they are trying to make a larger meeting place on Trennery. They are also planning beautification with trees and seats.

WCCC applying for grant to run Bonfire festival in 2016

- Will be looking for people/organisations to help out if we do not get a reasonable grant
- Cost about \$20,000 to \$25,000 to run

Survey of Weston Creek residents

- Information received but needs to be assessed. Any conclusions will be sent to all MLAs in the area and the Chief Minister.

Rivett petrol station site

- A Development Application is in progress
- WCCC has been lobbying to get the site developed and/or looked after until it is developed

Venue for general meeting (St Jude's School)

- Will be heated, especially during the school terms
- Moved here for more parking, no interruption from speakers, easy access
- Toilets, chairs, tables available.

PRESENTATION— Station Sergeant Harry Hains, Woden Police Station
Australian Federal Police

Levels of crime in Weston Creek and police response

- Breaking into cars and stealing items such as Ipads, credit cards. A concerted effort across Canberra resulted in two major offenders being arrested. They were responsible for 90% of break in.
- Houses also broken into from car thefts where offenders found information to identify and help access the homes.
- Massive decrease in home break over whole of Weston Creek following arrest of the two offenders. Home break in were 11 in June, 13 in July and 2 in August.
- 258 charges from Woden in Weston Creek area. The majority for theft and property damage. This is the biggest issue facing police.

Increases in car theft

- 490 car breaks across ACT – largest around Rivett, Woden, Weston Creek – in drive ways
- 25 April, 16 May, 22 August – large drop when two offenders arrested

Q. How have you reported to get the message out to people?

A. Through our media. Through the press in the Canberra Times, an extensive media campaign by patrols (door knocks in areas where offences occurring). Police conducted a massive campaign about locking up cars across the ACT.

Availability of police resources with growth of Molonglo and Coombs

Q. Are you seeking extra resources to cover the expansion?

A. There is a challenge with Molonglo and Coombs as there are extra people living in the area but not the extra resources to cover the additional area. Looking at and seeking more resources. There is currently 65 officers but full time CID branch – 6 response teams – 24 hours roster for 365 days each year.

Types of offences in Weston Creek

Q. Is our area typical of Canberra?

A. The types of offences will not be typical while the developing areas do not have shopping centres, It is the centres that drag offenders in. Police deal closely with shopping owners in best way to reduce stock theft. Cooleman Court has started a CCTV system and more crimes are being reported since its installation.

Police patrols

Q. What is the frequency of patrols?

A. When one team on there is one sergeant and two cars. That is a minimum of one sergeant and six constables. The patrols in Weston Creek cover an extensive area. Intel about where crimes reported see a spike in patrols. Patrols were targeted following a massive break in in June.

Drug houses and drug deals

Q. Are you getting information about drug house and doing raids on a regular basis?

A. Different areas. Police need good intel to get a warrant. Random drug raids are a waste of time. Crime stoppers is the best way to report houses. Information is put into the intel section. Reports are put through and when identify areas drug squad do jobs Patrols are encouraged to take on proactive jobs such as store thefts. Police do target drugs and encourage people to report. In relation to family

violence – this is about looking out for your neighbors and if someone reports the police will make it a priority one response.

Q. Reported a drug deal last year. When I mentioned it to the neighbors they said it was not worth doing anything as nothing will happen. How can you assure the community that small information will help?

A. By the police going to community meetings to let them know that everything they do does help. All information comes from reports from various people, police etc and is put together to get a warrant to do a drug raid on a house. Insignificant information can give police vital information in their investigation.

Q. If we put any information on WCCC site we could let people know that small information is relevant?

A. Yes. Sergeant Hains will send an email to the WCCC about the type of action that would assist.

Family violence

Q. Reporting of family violence

A. It is a very personal thing. How far does government reach into people's lives. There is the question about women and people being hurt but we can do it better. One way is to engage with offenders through the family violence perpetrator program. People who have engaged through the program have been found to modify their behavior. The police go to schools and talk about family violence and talk to the children about behavior.

Q. Do drugs play any part?

A. Drugs, money, stress, health issues, growing up in violent situation, vulnerable women.

What action is being taking on family violence?

A. Something is due soon. All government across Australia are working on this matter and will bring out a response soon.

Traffic offences

Q. What action has been taken with hooners on John Gorton Drive?

A. Have instructed patrols to do more targeting as time allows. People ring police and they have gone by the time they arrive but the information that they report such as the times and types of cars enable the police to target them better. Woden general duties response does traffic targeting patrols – 7 in March, 11 in April, 2 in May, 8 in June, 1 in July 1 and 11 in August (due to Wright). When lights are fully operational on John Gorton Drive expect they should calm the incident of hoon driving.

Q. What action can be taken against offenders who speed on Copper Crossing and John Gorton Drive, and overtake on double lines?

A. The problem is noted and the police are looking at increasing the patrols to deal with problem drivers. The Road Traffic Authority will look at traffic calming measures to deal with problems in these areas. A person can ring up and make complaint but the police need details and the person must be willing to go to court. The police have power to seize cars doing burn outs. The police attend, photo and measure car burn outs and will use as evidence at court. To speak to police call 131444. The 000 is only for an emergency.

Q. How much outreach is there in schools?

A. Need to be whole of government response. Kenny Koala and Cassie K in schools.

Home security and break in

Q. I am new to Canberra off a farm. What house break in occurs in the area?

A. It goes in waves. Property crime - 90% by 10% of offenders. It takes time to get DNA results back and see if in database. DNA enables the police to get hits on offences across Canberra.

Q. How can people prevent break ins?

A. Police encourage householders to do normal things - lock house, car, let neighbors know when away. You need to know your neighbors. Invite neighbors around for coffee and get to know them. Place locks on windows and doors. Dogs are not counted for security for insurance purposes but they are a deterrent.

Littering

Q. What can we do about litter especially fast food packaging?

A. Contact ACT rangers. The police can issue infringement notices. This is a big problem across Australia. In the ACT we have stiff fines for lit cigarettes outside windows, broken glass, bottles. With regard to fast food packaging, you could approach McDonalds and campaign to stop their customers littering the area around Cooleman Court.

Use of police equipment

Q. How heavy are you with and without your police gear?

A. I weigh 80kgs. The gear weighs (wearing load bearing vest) 8kgs.

Q. How does the taser make contact with a person?

A. There are two darts that penetrate clothing. It has a range of 7m and carries 50,000 volts. The taser mimics the body's impulse pulses and affects the peripheral nervous system. A person can see and hear but cannot stand.

Q. Why do the police need to use it more than once on a person?

A. This has not happened in the ACT but has occurred in Sydney. This is a less than lethal option.

Q. Is the carrying of tasers limited to sergeants and above in the ACT?

A. The Ombudsman oversees the use of the taser in the ACT. The Taser Review Committee looks at the circumstances when a taser is used.

Disabled parking at Cooleman Court

Q. At Cooleman Court there are 3 disabled car spots. Cars are rarely facing the right way.

A. This is definitely worth reporting to the police. Suggest take the car registration.

Q. In Western Australia if you do the wrong thing in a disabled car park you get fined.

A. I will get some of my officers to look at it depending on priority. Problem usually goes away once police gives it some attention.

Subsequent to the questions being asked, it was noted that the problem could be because the driver wanted to get out on footpath side rather than the road side. Design may need to be looked at to ensure that the driver can get out on footpath side.

Parking offence – double parking

Q. Is there any possibility if a person sees double parking but does not manage to get all the car's data could he use CCTV to seek that information?

A. The police would come and get it as part of their investigation.

Right of way on footpath into Weston petrol station

Q. Crossing the footpath into patrol station. Do people driving cars have right of way when entering the petrol station?

A. The police will take on notice and send the information to WCCC.

The meeting closed at 9.07 pm

**Next Meeting Wednesday 28 October 2015
7.30 pm St Jude's School
Mulley Street Holder**