

Your local voice



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Minutes of General Meeting Wednesday 27 April 2016

Opening of Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7.38pm. The Deputy Chair welcomed members and guests

Apologies: Tom Anderson, Janice Paull

Guests: Ro Spence – Deputy Australian Electoral Commissioner for the ACT

11 people attended the meeting.

PRESENTATION - Ro Spence – Deputy Australian Electoral Commissioner for the ACT

The ACT

- Has one house of parliament
- Uses the Hare-Clarke system of proportional representation
- Has fixed four year terms with the next election due 15 October 2016
- Will have 25 MLAs elected in 2016.

Hare-Clarke system

- Quota preferential method of proportional representation
- Uses the 'single transferable vote'.
 - Everyone has a single vote but it is transferable between candidates
- A quota is the minimum number of formal votes a candidate needs to be certain of election.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Quota} &= \frac{\text{Number of votes}}{\text{Number of vacancies} + 1} + 1 \\ &= \frac{1}{5+1=6} + 1 = 16.667\% \end{aligned}$$

- Party column stays in the one place but the candidates are rotated in the column (Robson rotation)

Casting a vote

- Polling place on polling day
 - New one in Coombs
 - Stirling has been closed
- Pre-polling | the three weeks before polling day (27 September)
 - The numbers are continually growing
 - The closest is Callum offices in Woden
 - All other major business districts have one
 - Happy to consider options in Weston Creek
 - Electronic voting is available.
- Postal vote
 - You can apply online, by phone, by email on behalf of yourself or someone else
 - Online will be available in June
 - Ballot papers are not available until 27 September
 - Must be returned by 21 October – postmarked by 15 October.
- Mobile polling
 - Hospitals, nursing homes, gaols

Casting a formal vote

- A vote is considered formal if it has a single number 1 vote on the ballot paper
- A vote is considered informal if it:
 - Is totally blank
 - Has no number 1
 - Has more than one number 1. This is the most common as people vote 1-5 in each column
 - Is marked in a way so that the elector can be identified such as a legible signature
 - Contains a tick or a cross.
- Repeating or omitting a number other than number 1 does not make a ballot paper informal.

Q. Why don't you have electronic voting online?

A. It is too risky. People can rig it too easily. Electronic voting at polling places is on a closed circuit.

Size of the Legislative Assembly

- An Expert Advisory Group was appointed by the Chief Minister in December 2012 to look at the size of the Assembly. It was chaired by the ACT Electoral Commissioner.
- Commonwealth legislation to increase the size passed in March 2013.
- Two thirds of the Assembly had to pass the ACT legislation. It was unanimously supported.

Redistribution

- In October 2014 a Redistribution Committee comprising the Electoral Commissioner, the Chief Planner, the Surveyor-General and the head of the ACT Bureau of Statistics was convened to look at the redistribution of the ACT

electorates following the decision to have five electorates.

- The five electorates are:
 - Brindabella - Tuggeranong less Kambah
 - Murrumbidgee – Weston Creek, Woden and Kambah
 - Kurrajong – Canberra central, Inner South and Jerrabomberra
 - Ginninderra – Belconnen less Evatt, Giralang, Kaleen, Lawson and McKellar
 - Yerrabi – Gunghalin, Hall, Evatt, Giralang, Kaleen, Lawson and McKellar

Q. When is the next review due?

A. 2018 – 2 years before the next election.

Computer voting

- Computer voting used in 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2016
- ICR (Intelligent Character Recognition) scanning of ballot papers used in 2008, 2012 and 2016
- Electronic electoral rolls used in 2008, 2012 and 2016

Q. If you scan do you lose votes like they did in Western Australia?

A. The ACT doesn't have the long distances to travel or a series of returning officers. Electronic scanning would help in WA.

Q. How can the Senate election be ready for scanning by July?

A. Lots of money is being spent on it.

Q. How does the scanning machine work for folded paper?

A. It is industrial strength and is used to it.

Electronic voting

- First used in 2001
- 25% of votes were electronic in 2012
- There is no manual counting
- It is reliable, secure and transparent
- It eliminates unintentional voter error
- It has reduced the number of informal votes
- There is an audio version for the sight impaired
- There are instructions in 12 languages.

Q. Are there many instances of people voting more than once?

A. It is most commonly people in nursing homes. The Electoral Commission goes to the nursing home and then the family takes the resident down to vote.

Q. Are there many cases of deliberate fraud?

A. Prior to computer voting the number was minuscule. It just doesn't happen. The most common mistakes are made when names are crossed off the roll – the wrong name is crossed off and then it looks like one person has voted twice and one not at all. This is usually pretty obvious.

Q. What are the penalties?

A. There are substantial fines.

Q. Are the 12 languages audio as well?

A. No, written only.

Q. How do I nominate for election?

A. The nominations open 9 September and close 21 September. If you want to run as an Independent you must be nominated by 20 electors in your electorate. If you want to register a party it must be done by 30 June 2016.

Q. How much is to nominate?

A. \$250.00

Q. Do you have to register every party every election?

A. No but we write to them each time to ensure they have the correct number of people (100) and the proper constitution.

BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting of 30 March 2016

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 30 March 2016

Public Housing

- We have been endeavouring to get the Minister for Housing to speak to us
- No decision has been made on Holder yet
- Stirling is supported by the community but no decision has been made yet either.

Q. Where is the land in Holder?

A. Where the preschool is. That will be demolished and become the entrance. There is a rectangular shaped block which will hold 20-25 units.

Nature Strip guidelines

- WCCC put a submission in
- There is nothing in place as yet.

Transport review

- Megan Fitzharris is coming to the public meeting in June.

Letter to Roads ACT

- WCCC wrote to Roads ACT regarding some issues around traffic flow. The answers are:
- Duplication of Cotter Road
 - A commitment in two years is expected
- Default setting on lights at the corner of Cotter Road and Streeton Drive
 - Was green on Streeton Drive
 - The default position is green on Streeton Drive during the day and on Cotter Road in the morning peak hour and the evenings as there is more traffic coming from Molonglo than Weston Creek. This position is disputed by WCCC
- A review of the lights at Kirkpatrick Street in the morning peak hour as the length of time they are green is encouraging rat running and causing a buildup on Cotter Road
 - Hard to differentiate between legitimate traffic and rat running
- Traffic from Lady Denman Drive turning right onto Cotter Road and blocking the intersection at evening peak hour as lights at McCulloch Street aren't synchronised

- This is not an issue apparently
- Intersection of Hindmarsh Drive and Melrose Drive only letting a few cars through in the morning peak hour
 - Nothing can be done as pedestrians have to have time to cross.
- Heysen Street/ Devonport Street/Launceston Street roundabout backs up at peak hour
 - The only thing that will solve this is traffic lights
- It was agreed that the red light on the left turn lane from Cotter Road into Streeton Drive is working well for residents using Dixon Drive.
- WCCC considered that some of these responses were inadequate.

Traffic

- A resident of Warramanga has written to Andrew Barr (cc WCCC) re the new sets of traffic lights proposed for the Hindmarsh Drive and Launceston Street, Lyons and the Hindmarsh Drive and Eggleston Street, Chifley intersections complaining about the number of traffic lights on Hindmarsh Drive. He also advised that the amount of money being spent on the light rail means that everyone else is missing out.
- Caroline Le Couteur suggested that WCCC speak to Woden Valley community council as they have done some work on this.

Treasurer's Report

- \$12,615.40 Main Account
- \$3,620.96 Fetherston Garden Account

All community councils have had a request from the ACT government asking what unspent funds they have. We are not sure if they are planning on taking it back.

The Chief Minister wants to make alterations to the Deed of Grant for money received each year by all community councils. This is to be discussed at the Planning and Development Forum meeting on 28 April 2016

General Business

City and Urban Gateway Renewal

- It is proposed that the entrance into Canberra down Northbourne Avenue be upgraded
- It is proposed that Northbourne Avenue will end with a plaza between the Sydney and Melbourne buildings. It is not yet clear where the traffic will go.
- There will be a funnel effect with more greenery at the start of Northbourne Avenue and less at the end.
- There will be two villages along Northbourne Avenue
- There will improved landscaping and new buildings and footpaths
- Plans are on the government and the WCCC websites.

Speakers

- May - Jeremy Hanson and Cotter Hub
- June - Megan Fitzharris

Chris Boswell from Canberra Bio-Dynamic Gardening and Farming Group spoke briefly

- They are working on the orchard on the other side of Unwin Street from Fetherston Gardens past the Orana school
- There are approximately 40 fruit and nut trees
- They have an agreement with TAMS to have a community orchard
- The first working bee is 22 May 2016

- They are liaising with Fetherston Gardens Friends.

Q. Is it intended that people can go in and pick fruit?

A. The first stage is to make it safe. Later locals, schools etc. will be able to pick the fruit.

Peter Hosking a Liberal candidate for Murrumbidgee spoke briefly.

- He was born at the Woden hospital and lived in Hughes.
- He now lives in Woden
- His main issues are:
 - Duplication of Cotter road
 - Shops in Molonglo to take the pressure off Cooleman Court.

The meeting closed at 8.58 pm

**Next Meeting Wednesday 25 May 2016
St Jude's Primary School hall
Mulley Street, Holder**