

Your local voice



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Minutes of General Meeting Wednesday 25 May 2016

Opening of Meeting

The meeting was opened at 7.35pm. The Chair welcomed members and guests

Apologies: Pat McGinn

Guests: Jeremy Hanson – Leader of the Opposition, Guilia Jones (Member for Molonglo)
Simone Hunter and Anthony Pesec re Cotter Hub

44 people attended the meeting.

PRESENTATION

Jeremy Hanson – Leader of the Opposition

Jeremy Hanson lives in Holder and Guilia Jones in Duffy.

Mr Hanson outlined his Vision for Canberra

Five priorities:

- Health – bigger, smarter, better
- Education, especially for those with disabilities
- Growing the economy
- Build the City – make planning better
- Leave no-one behind.

Health

- ACT has all the elements of a first class health system but there are problems.
- There needs to be more beds in more locations. 60 extra beds will be provided.
- More early intervention is required.

Education

- Children are the priority
- Will support public, independent, catholic, other faith based schools and others
- Will provide pathways for children who are disadvantaged
 - Schools can help with this
 - Provide early intervention.

Building the economy

- Is pro-growth but the right sort of growth
- Not as much high density in the suburbs
- Supports high density in the Town Centres and the city.
- Lease Variation Charges. To change a commercial zoning to a housing zoning costs \$50,000 per apartment.
 - No-one is doing it
 - Get rid of the LVC
 - Will lead to more affordable housing
- Land release program.
 - Land is unaffordable eg recent Crosby release
 - Will look at making some changes
- Committed to strong action on climate change and renewable targets.

Building the City

- Support economic growth
- Make it easier to do business in the ACT
- Support small business by 'getting out of their way'. Rates have doubled in the last four years.
- Light Rail has cut local business out of the equation.
 - CFMEU and Leightons (now owned by the Chinese)
- The Chief Minister is only interested in the 'top end of town' and the unions
- Canberra Liberals have a good relationship with unions but not the CFMEU.

Leave no-one behind

- Jeremy is from a military background so this policy comes from that
- Everything is OK for the young and people living in the inner city
- The older areas and outer suburbs are being left behind.
- People with disabilities require more assistance
- Will look after all people not just a specific demographic or geographic group
- Won't triple rates
- Will look at paid parking in Civic after hours
 - This particularly affects workers in hospitality and retail

General

Canberra Liberals will:

- Provide 50 more express buses
- Establish a domestic violence court
- Duplicate:
 - Cotter Road
 - Ashleigh Drive
 - Gundaroo Drive
 - Horse Park Road
- Eliminate the Lease Variation Charge
- Respect and support the community councils
- Collect the garbage

Weston Creek

- Is being left behind

- There has been no action on the Masterplan
- More parking is required at Cooleman Court
- Needs a shopping centre to be up and running in Molonglo to take the pressure off Cooleman Court
- Duplicate Cotter Road
- Build the aquatic centre (this has already been announced)
- Get rid of graffiti
- Small local issues matter
- Urban maintenance is part of what the ACT government should be doing – roads, rates rubbish

Q. Politicians are always talking about the 'big' issues not municipal services. The government and bureaucracy are reactive and there is no program management.

A. There needs to be discussion in the news and make suburban management a priority. The increase in the size of the Assembly will help as there will be more members to look at other issues regardless of who is in government.

Q. If you want to win why don't you ramp up your publicity – it is poor so far?

A. We have been active on the ground rather than with publicity. We have had good publicity about the Transport Plan. In opposition you don't have many resources. There is not much local media. WIN News is good but the timing clashes with ABC News. 666 do some stuff. The community is not particularly engaged not even in the Federal election. You need to release policies early enough for people to see them but not too early so they forget.

Q. There is a horticulture campaign for 20% more greenspace by 2020. More greenspace is needed and there is none in Wright and Coombs. There are no trees or shrubs but these can be subsidised by the 20/2020 which is a Federal government policy.

A. We like trees and green open spaces. There are little in Molonglo or Gungahlin particularly with the high-rise going in. We need to preserve what we have. The Liberals will not infill everything. \$23m was taken out of the urban tree program and put into the Arboretum. There are not enough trees where we live.

Q. The transport plan is good but how do people get to the bus stops when the pavements need doing up?

A. The bus timetable includes 50 extra buses, increased frequency and more direct services. I take your point about the footpaths – they are shocking. They are even worse in the Inner South. It makes it hard for older people and people with prams.

Q. There is a problem with the bureaucracy. They are mowing when there is no grass and spraying weeds at the wrong time. Why?

A. Some contracts have been set up poorly. The bureaucrats are not well led or well supported so the culture is not right. Most people do want to help. You need to get the local community engaged.

Q. We are concerned about the development of Manuka Oval and how the ACT government has accepted it without attempting to get any other options. What is the Liberal Party view of the proposal?

A. The government has a spending problem. They are desperate for land sales. In relation to Manuka Oval there are two aspects:

- Do you want to see an improvement – yes we do and there are some impediments at the moment.
- Am I wedded to the proposal – not at all but it is going through the Unsolicited Proposals process (UP process). For this process the project is supposed to be unique. I am not sure that this is. Is this what we want in Manuka? Is it in the best interest of the community? We will release our view when the process has concluded and community consultation has taken place. The process (not the government Process) has been handled poorly by the developers. We had a debate in the Assembly and made some proposals in relation to a more open process. Most of them got knocked back. Some went through.

Q. Why doesn't the government put it out to tender?

A. It is an option but it needs to go through the UP process first.

Q. Why not move the oval to the open lands south of Fyshwick?

A. The current oval is in a good location but it needs more parking. It has important heritage value. It needs to be somewhere where there are other amenities for people. Eg somewhere to have dinner. If you put it in outer areas there is nothing to do. For example, at Bruce Stadium you go to the game, have expensive food and drinks and then go home. The losers in all of this are the local Aussie Rules clubs. \$23m is being paid for three games. GWS is not a local club. There needs to be more money spent locally including on the arts.

Q. No-one else is getting an opportunity in Manuka.

A. There is a smell about it. The Canberra Times says the ACT government is governing by cronyism. There needs to be more local input. There are some very good corporations in Canberra but they are being excluded e.g. in the upgrade to the courts, light rail and the upgrades to the hospitals.

Q. Why don't we keep some places individual and keep the character?

A. You can do development which is sympathetic to the area.

Q. The ACT budget is continually in deficit. Do you want to go back to surplus?

A. The revenue is ok but we need to spend less. It needs to be done in a reasonable way. There will not be big cuts but we will get rid of the tram. The savings will be done in stages. When the budget is in surplus then you better respond to emergencies. There is no list of government assets but there is some logic to asset sales. The \$67m from the federal asset recycling program could have gone to other projects but no other proposals were put up.

Q. Broadband – is there any chance for people who don't have it?

A. This is a federal issue but we want to see it rolled out more quickly across the ACT as do all of the parties in the ACT. The ACT has two very safe Labor seats so we get nothing. Eden-Monaro is a bellwether seat and it gets more money.

Q. We need to stop selling car parks. Bikes should use the bike lanes, should have reflective gear and ride in single file.

A. We need more off-road bike paths. More people on bikes is a good idea. In relation to parking most people drive cars. Canberra is easy to get around but we need to have somewhere to park when we get there – at an affordable price.

Cotter Hub – Simone Hunter and Eleanor XXX

There is a concept submission for the rejuvenation of tourism at Cotter Reserve by Canberra Cotter Group Pty Ltd.

A tourism, hospitality and community precinct is planned near the existing site. The plan is to:

- Rebuild amenity
- Rejuvenate the area (activities, spirit)
- Return people to the area
- Return a profit.

The location is 30 minutes from the city centre, is on the crossroads for traffic from Yass, Wee Jasper and close to traffic traveling to Tumut. It is on Tourist Drive No.5

There have been a lot of amenities in the past and they are looking at building on the foundations of what is already there. There is no other industry out there.

The development is planned for two stages:

- Commercial elements
 - Restaurant, café, microbrewery, distillery
 - Conference centre

- Cultural centre
- Lobby and foyer area as a base for tours and activities.
- Cultural and community elements
 - Heritage museum
 - Emergency services outreach
 - Accommodation
 - Arts facility, workshop etc

The positives of the plan are:

- Tourism, indigenous Australians, events and festivals
 - It is consistent with ACT government 2020 tourism strategy.
- Locals:
 - It will provide approximately 100 jobs
 - Local history will be written
- Indigenous community:
 - Will reconnect with the plan
 - Provide meaningful employment opportunities
- Community groups

The presenters asked the meeting what they wanted at the site. Suggestions were:

- A variety of food and drink outlets from a hot pie to a decent meal
- Indigenous history tours
- Not to disturb the quietness of the area
- A high quality investment making it worthwhile for people to go there
- A variety of activities.

The business model:

- Will require minimal government outlay. They want the government to give them some land.
- Will provide a broad spectrum of return both community benefits and financial benefits
- Went through the Unsolicited Proposals process.

Q. How many people are going into the area and in what seasons? Have you considered other facilities up there?

A. Ms Hunter worked at Stromlo before and after the bushfires so knows the area well. You cannot underestimate the power of nostalgia. The proposal has been worked on for three and a half years. The area will be busy on weekends. During the week the market will be the 60-95 years old.

Q. What is the timeline for the opening?

A. Approval was received from Invest Canberra in November. We are now doing the business case and the lease variation.

Q. Where will the kiosk be sited?

A. At the entrance of the Avenue or at Casuarina Sands.

Q. Is there a site plan on your website?

A. There is a hard copy design brief with a mudmap here tonight. If people would like to provide email addresses more information can be provided.

WCCC will put a link on the WCCC website.

BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting of 27 April 2016

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

Moved: Chris Wilson Seconded: Mal Ferguson Carried.

Business arising from the minutes of the meeting of 27 April 2016

- Nil

Treasurer's Report

- \$8,122-88 Main Account
- \$3,620-93 Fetherston Garden Account

Motion: That the Treasurer's Report be approved.

Moved: Chris Wilson Seconded: Shelby Schofield Carried

General Business

Brierley Street/Trenergy Court

- There will be public consultation on the upgrade at Coleman Court next weekend.
- WCCC considers that there was sufficient consultation when the Masterplan was developed and that the government should look at what was discussed at that time.

Survey on Arboretum

- The survey is available on Have Your Say

Survey on Transport

- The survey is available on Time to Talk

Government announcements

- Duplication of Cotter Road
- 50m pool for Molonglo (not new)

Garbage strike

- The bins were not collected this week.
- The carpark in Hilder Street near the oval has large bins there for people to drop their rubbish if they need to.

Rivett shops

- Upgrades to the shops are being proposed

Paid parking in Phillip

- WCCC is against it and will bring it up with the Minister.

- There should be a free element of say 2 hours like they have at Westfield.

Survey from Icon Water

- Icon is surveying selected customers.
- They are looking at increasing the fixed costs and potentially reducing some of the usage charges.

Basin Priority Project

- A wetlands between Dixon Drive and Cotter Road has been approved.

Public housing in Holder and Stirling

- There is still no clarity about what is proposed.

Fetherston Gardens

- Megan Fitzharris visited and was guided by Tom Anderson and Lesley Pattinson from the friends of Fetherston Gardens.
- It was a positive visit.

Speakers for the June meeting

- Megan Fitzharris
- Gai Brodtmann

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm

**Next Meeting Wednesday 29 June 2016
at 7.30 pm
St Jude's Primary School Hall
Mulley Street, Holder**