

WESTON CREEK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

- Your Local Voice -

Email: info@wccc.com.au

Website: www.wccc.com.au

Phone: (02) 6288 8975

ABN: 52 841 915 317

PO Box 3701 Weston Creek ACT 2611

Established 1991

(Weston Creek Citizens Council Inc. – Reg.No. A2637)

Records of Proceedings Annual General Meeting 7.45pm 24 August 2005

Welcome

Mr Carl, Chairperson WCCC, welcomed the Committee, residents and the Returning Officer, Mr David Menzel, Chairperson, Woden Valley Community Council. This AGM would be followed by a regular monthly meeting.

Apologies

Jacqui Burke MLA, Sheila Gillard, Laurie Gillard.

Minutes of AGM 2004

The Minutes of last year's AGM were made available. After an interval Mr Carl asked if there were any questions or comments on issues in the Minutes, there being none he asked for a motion that they be accepted.

Motion: To accept the minutes of the 2004 AGM

Moved: Allan Synfield

Seconded: Barbara Brinton

Motion carried

Chairperson's Report 2004-2005

The 2004/2005 Financial Year has, in some ways, been a year of consolidation for the Weston Creek Community Council as we have predominantly dealt with "traditional" issues of the type that existed prior to the January 2003 bushfires. Furthermore, attendances at our regular monthly meetings which peaked in the year following the bushfires have since returned to about the average pre-bushfire numbers.

The after-effects of the bushfires are continuing to require some involvement by the Council. As Chairperson, I have continued my membership of the Community and Expert Reference Group during the reporting period. The Reference Group was reformed during the Financial Year and now has a majority of its membership drawn from representatives of the various urban and rural fire-affected communities. Barbara Brinton, a member of our Committee, represents the WCCC

at meetings of the Bushfire Community Development Network which is also assisting in the recovery effort.

There have been some notable developments during 2004/2005 which bear mentioning in this report. Firstly, the Council entered into a three-year Deed of Grant with the Community Engagement Unit (now located within the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services) which has resulted in a twenty-five percent increase in our annual funding to \$5,000 from this source. This longer Grant period gives us increased financial security and will enable the Council, for the first time in its history, to undertake and execute some multi-year plans.

The second notable development was the Council entering into a Deed of Grant with the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) for a sum of \$4,500 in return for the Council providing community consultation services. In effect, our funding for the 2004/2005 Financial Year was more than double that of any previous Financial Year.

The third development was the adoption of an amended Constitution at a Special General Meeting held on 25th May. The new Constitution has two main improvements over the previous Constitution. It has broadened our membership base by allowing the Council to have voting and non-voting members, with the non-voting members being able to be resident outside of Weston Creek. It has also streamlined our operating procedures and will enable the Council to properly operate in an electronic world.

The April monthly meeting which featured the Minister for Planning, Mr Simon Corbell MLA, speaking about the forthcoming review of Variation 200 was the largest meeting of the reporting period and was attended by about 65 people. The June monthly meeting which focussed on small business was the only other meeting in the reporting period to attract 50 or more people, with most other meetings attracting 35-45 people. The smallest meeting was in May with about 20 attendees.

The Council's Committee has been very active representing the community over the reporting period with participation in regular meetings of the following committees or forum groups:

- The Community Council's Forum;
- The Community and Expert Reference Group (which assists the ACT Government with the 2003 bushfire recovery effort);
- The Planning System Reform Project Reference Group;
- The Transport Reform Advisory Group;
- The Asbestos Task Force;
- The Bushfire Community Development Network;
- The Planning and Development Forum;
- The Canberra International Airport Aircraft Noise Consultative Forum;
- The Weston Creek Festival Committee; and
- The Community Engagement Working Group.

During the reporting period, the Committee has also prepared fifteen written submissions which covered many topics including the ACT Open Space Network, Stromlo Village, the 2005/2006 ACT Budget, the ACT Federal Electoral Boundaries, the Rivett Local Centre and Bushfire Mitigation. Copies of twelve of our submissions are available from our website. The other three submissions were not able to be posted on our website because they were submitted to various Legislative Assembly Committees and we believe that only those Committees can publish them.

Members of the Council's Committee attended various meetings with Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and senior ACT Government officers; attended several formal launches for ACT Government initiatives; attended several ACT Government consultation forums and focus groups; assisted both the Emergency Services Authority and ACTPLA organise public meetings in Weston Creek; and assisted Communities @ Work plan and deliver the second anniversary gathering for the 2003 bushfires.

Our very successful *Taking-it-to-the-Streets* program was repeated between February and April of this year with another round of visits to each of Weston Creek's shopping centres on different Saturday mornings. Members of the Committee were able to speak to almost 600 people, many of whom could not attend our regular meetings. A report detailing the comments made by local residents interviewed during this program was sent to the Chief Minister, other Government Ministers and all MLAs from the Molonglo electorate. The report is also available from our website. Programs such as this are valuable to the Council because they increase our public profile within the community as several thousand residents see our corporate t-shirts, banners and sandwich board.

Our regular electronic newsletter was also continued during the tenure of this Committee. The newsletter continues to be very well received and we have broadened our coverage of Weston Creek residents to include some of those who don't receive our flyers or the local newspapers. WCCC flyers were prepared and delivered to about 7,500 residences in Weston Creek in November, April and June to advertise our activities. The Council's regular fortnightly column in the Southside Chronicle has also continued throughout the reporting period.

On behalf of the Council, I would like to thank the management and staff of The Weston Club who have gone out of their way to accommodate our widely different meetings during the reporting period.

I would also like to extend my deep appreciation to our Secretary, Alan Henderson, for his extraordinary efforts in assisting me to cope with a workload that has increased steadily throughout the period.

Lastly, I would like to thank our Deputy Chair, Pat McGinn, our Public Officer and all of the Committee members for freely giving of their time – especially a Saturday afternoon each month for a Committee meeting – and assisting me with Council business throughout the past year.

Motion:

That the Chairperson's Report be accepted

Moved: Jeff Carl

Seconded: Pat McGinn

Motion carried

Secretary's Report 2004-2005

Notification in writing of this AGM has been in *The Southside Chronicle* on 26th July 2005 and 9th August 2005, a mail out by letter to all members on the Membership Register on 5th August 2005, as well as a reminder email to the email distribution list on 20th August 2005.

Notification has also been at the regular monthly meeting on 27th July and appeared on the website since 27th July at www.wccc.com.au

As the Secretary and Webmaster I have uploaded a number of submissions which were prepared in the year in review. The Chairperson's report has already covered these in some detail.

The Committee has attempted to balance the demands of ACT Government staff seeking to consult with the community and inviting speakers on topics of interest to the community. This balance is to ensure that the WCCC meetings remain relevant, topical and meet the needs of the community. The Small Business Forum in June was an example of the WCCC reaching to a new audience. The Committee works to cover the issues raised by residents and being on the alert for issues which are looming.

A major achievement in the financial year was the re-working of the Constitution which started in November and was adopted by a Special General Meeting of the Council on 25 May 2005. This new improved Constitution is intended to reduce the workload of volunteers. It will have an accompanying Governance Booklet which details the processes of the WCCC.

The efforts of the WCCC are believed to be valued and we continue to receive requests from a wide range of people to speak at our regular monthly meetings. At present our schedule is usually booked several months ahead.

Our attendance book is in circulation. This has become a valuable tool to record email addresses and therefore quickly and cheaply disseminate information to residents.

All forms for the continuing registration of the WCCC as an Association have been lodged and no returns to the Registrar of Associations are outstanding. The lodgement of the new Constitution was undertaken and met all the conditions to change a Constitution; this was accepted by the Registrar General.

The WCCC is also complying with our Deed of Grant with the Community Engagement Unit of the Dept of Housing and Community Services. An achievement of the Committee in the FY was to source additional funds for community consultation from ACT Planning and Land Authority. This funding commenced in April 2005; more details in the Treasurer's Report.

The Committee of the WCCC regularly meets on the Saturday afternoon prior to the public meeting. This meeting has proved invaluable in planning the workload, prioritizing actions and balancing tasks between committee members.

I would also acknowledge the volunteers I call on from time to time to assist in a number of tasks.

Copies of the records for each meeting in the last year are here if anyone wishes to look at them and they are also on the WCCC website.

Motion:

- 1) That the Secretary's Report be accepted
- 2) Gary Caitcheon continue to be the WCCC Public Officer

Moved: Alan Henderson

Seconded: Noel Treggoning

Motion carried

Treasurer's Report 2004-2005.

The WCCC started the 04/05 financial year with \$760.00. Negotiations with the Community Engagement Unit enabled half-payment of the \$5,000 in the first few weeks of the new financial year. This was a major change because it removed the need for volunteers to pay the bills. The remaining \$2,500 was paid in October. An improvement in the Deed is that it was negotiated as a 3 year cyclical Deed as well as indexed for CPI.

The largest cost continues to be public liability insurance and volunteers insurance which are requirements of the Deed. This was approx \$1700.

It needs to be noted that although the grant was increased from \$4,000 to \$5,000 the insurances were in total \$1,700 so the WCCC was \$700 worse off in the financial year. In addition we are paying 10% GST on all the items we purchase and the WCCC cannot reclaim GST as the Council is the end user.

In order of expense the major costs in the financial year are those associated with

- Insurance
- phone/fax/internet costs
- Paper based adverting, the yellow flyers

The WCCC has also invested in software for anti-virus and firewall protection to minimize risks because we are so dependant on email and website for information dissemination.

A flyer to all Weston Creek letterboxes was delivered in November 2004 for that month's meeting on Public Consultation for the preparedness for the upcoming Bushfire season.

CPS Credit Union continues to be our financial institution. We continue to cover the costs of a PO Box, a phone and fax/internet line, although faxes are becoming extremely rare.

After attending a number of functions by the Committee members it became apparent that many organizations identify themselves with a corporate image. Given the increasing number of community events which Committee members attend, and our '*Taking it to the Streets*' initiative of visiting local shopping centres, the Committee decided on shirts. Thanks to Barbara Brinton the Committee member who designed the logo of the 8 suburbs dissected by roads.

As can be determined from this overview the WCCC spends significant funds in having in place the means to inform residents.

It was in the area of community consultation that the WCCC was able to negotiate a Deed with ACT Planning & Land Authority. This Deed was for \$4,500 in 04-05 and is expected to continue in 05-06FY. It has been significantly directed at consultation, two paper based flyers in April 05 and June 05 and ongoing website hosting costs.

The WCCC has finished the FY with \$1,161.45 in the Community Engagement Grant and \$2,531.61 in the ACTPLA Grant. Both of these amounts are committed and will cover costs in July and August until 05-06 FY funds are received.

The Accounts of the WCCC have been independently audited and are unqualified. Copies of the material are available at the meeting tonight for interested attendees.

Motion:

1. That the meeting accept the Treasurer's Report
2. That the meeting endorse the continued payment of:
 - A PO Box
 - A phone line
 - Internet email address
 - Web site hosting
 - Domain name registration.
3. Endorse Gary Rake as the auditor for the 05-06 financial year
- 4.

Moved: Alan Henderson

Seconded Bob Wagg

Motion carried

Committee for 05-06 FY

Mr Carl advised that Mr David Menzel, Chair of the Woden Valley Community Council had kindly agreed to be the Returning Officer.

Mr Menzel advised that correctly completed written nomination forms have been provided to the Secretary/Treasurer by the closing of nominations for positions. The AGM has been appropriately advertised through a range of publicity.

The forms for the following vacancies on the Committee were received:

Chairperson	Jeff Carl
Deputy Chairperson	Pat McGinn
Secretary	Bob Sutherland
Treasurer	Juanita Kerec
Ordinary Committee	Allan Synfield
	Barbara Brinton
	Rosemary Drabsch

Since there have been no other nominations received for a vacancy, the candidates are deemed to be elected to the nominated positions. Mr Menzel congratulated the incoming Committee and handed the meeting over to the new Committee.

Mr Sutherland as incoming Secretary advised the meeting that the Committee of the Council could be 10 people and casual vacancies could be filled during the year. If any residents were interested in assisting they could contact the council.

Close AGM

Mr Carl acknowledged the length of the contribution of the outgoing Secretary / Treasurer and proposed a vote of thanks which was duly recognised by the attendees. The AGM was then closed by Mr Carl and residents were invited to remain for the August regular monthly meeting.

Regular Monthly Meeting

24th August 2005

Welcome

Mr Jeff Carl, the WCCC Chairperson, welcomed the new WCCC Committee and residents. Mr Carl advised that there were two issues to be covered and there would be other business.

The first issue would be the Recovery Research project on the social effects of the January 2003 Bushfires, which is headed by Professor Camilleri of the Australian Catholic University, and then this would be followed by a presentation on the plans to expand the Mirijani site in Weston by Mr Phil Quinton.

Bushfire Recovery Research Project

Mr Carl introduced Professor Camilleri who is the convener of a multi-discipline research team evaluating the social effects of the 2003 Bushfires on the residents of Weston Creek and other fire-affected communities. Professor Camilleri said that the Project is being funded from a number of sources with a major part of the funding coming from Emergency Management Australia.

Principally, the research team would be looking at what measures relating to community recovery worked well in the Canberra environment to see what relevance, if any, they might have for other communities who have experienced significant disasters. What started out as a project involving a number of people who were interested in this area has broadened when ACT Mental Health also wanted to participate.

Ms Chris Healy, Chief Minister's Department, said that the research would take a whole of government approach. There were a number of different Government grants and researchers wanted to know what impact these had on people and families and what did the community itself do to aid recovery?

No research had been done on how governments communicate with their communities. There is a need for a community update in this area. Information is needed at the right time. The research team will not be looking at the restoration of infrastructure, but rather at the resilience of the community. The research team needed "feedback" on the effectiveness of the Community Update Newsletter and on what role the media played and where this could be improved.

Mental Health is looking at the medium to long-term effects of the Bushfire. After the Bushfire a range of counselling services were provided for affected residents. At the moment these are still being provided but the number of people using them is now small. The counselling services revealed a wide range of mental health issues as a result of the Bushfire. An important point was to find out who accessed or are accessing mental health services. The information here is incomplete.

Community resilience was commented on by everybody and a particular interest of the research team was what made a community resilient? What sorts of groups do resilient people belong to? What role did social connectedness play? Was it an enabling role?

During the time allowed for questions an attendee asked whether the research would also look at the effects of the fire over the border in NSW? The answer given was that people who registered with the Recovery Centre in Lyons would be contacted and that ads would be placed in the press asking people, including people living close to the ACT in NSW, to contact the research team about their experiences. The attendee said that they would spread the word.

A resident asked if the team would be developing a model of communication which would, for example, allow people in South Australia to compare their outcomes with outcomes in the ACT? The answer was that the team would be developing a prototype model of how governments can communicate with their communities and thus assist them to recover after natural disasters. One issue to be looked at was did communities start their own new local groups?

Another resident commented that people regard mental health issues in different ways. A difficulty in looking at mental health problems was that some people may have had mental health problems before the fire and this may mask the true impact of the fire. Some people can't bear to drive up Dixon Drive now. It was said that some people had to be accommodated as far away as Campbell and this made communication difficult. What period of time do we mean for medium and long-term recovery periods? The answer to this question was 2 to 3 years for the medium term and 5 to 8 years for the long term.

Another questioner asked "what does recovery mean?" The answer to this question to this was that the community will answer this and if the community says it has recovered then it has. Community in this instance is the group which has been affected by the Bushfires.

A resident said that people who were ten years old in 2003 and affected by the Bushfire are now entering their teenage years Will the research team be involving children? The answer was no, not directly, but only through the parents and in the questionnaire to be used there will be some specific questions relating to children.

A resident said that the community had been affected by the lack of power and gas and this had a positive affect on relationships as people who had been able to use camping equipment for essential services also shared this with their neighbours who weren't so fortunate.

Another questioner wanted to know whether those who failed to register with the recovery organization would be included in the study. The answer was that the ads to be placed in the press would hopefully pick these people up.

A resident wanted to know if any comparison would be made with the community before the fire and the community after the fire? The answer was that there was no "before fire" data. All we can learn from is the recovery process.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Chairperson Mr Carl thanked the visitors for their presentation.

Mirinjani Expansion Plans.

The Chairperson then introduced the architect for the expansion of the Mirinjani Nursing Home, Mr Phil Quinton, and invited him to make a presentation.

Mr Quinton said that his firm of architects, which was stationed at the Hawker Shops, had completed a number of projects in Canberra designing facilities for aged person's accommodation. In his presentation Mr Quinton showed pictures of the site and how the proposed new building would affect the surrounding houses. The current Nursing Home facility has 60 beds and the extension is planned for an additional 64 beds, with half of these beds being for people with dementia. Part of the design problem was that the site was steeply sloping with about a nine metre fall from the top to the bottom. Sloping sites were not meant to be ideal locations for nursing homes.

It was planned that the proposed new building would complement the existing Nursing Home and be joined to it. Both the existing and new buildings would use a common entrance and car park which would be expanded in capacity. To accomplish an expansion in the car park an existing maintenance building would be demolished and a replacement structure erected on the nearby Eabrai Lodge site. The new building would be connected via a bridge to the existing building. There would be a minor point of access primarily for emergency vehicles to the new building from Namatjira Drive through the basement, but the main vehicle access would continue to be from Conder Street. The bulk of the new building would follow the southern boundary principally along Namatjira Drive and the adjoining open space area up to McInnes Street. The building would be three storeys facing Namatjira Drive, but only one storey would be visible from McInnes Street. Advantage of the slope of the block would be taken to provide two courtyards on the north side which would "flow together" and be below the level of McInnes Street.

Questions were then invited and in reply to a question about the open style fencing to be erected along McInnes Street. Mr Quinton said that there would be screen planting along McInnes Street which would gradually soften the effect of the building.

A resident expressed concern about the difficulties ambulances might have in being able to get people out quickly when the need arose. Mr Quinton said that the new building met the required standards in this respect.

Another resident asked if, in the next 5 or 10 years Mirinjani would occupy the whole site? The only answer that could be given was that the ACT Government is actively looking for aged care sites.

The issue of car parking was raised, how many places would be needed for the staff? Mr Quinton replied that there would be 10 people employed on each floor of the new building making 20 extra employees in total. Under his brief he was not required to provide for on-street parking and special events are not catered for, but that the number of car parking spaces provided met the required standards.

In answer to the question would there be easy access to Coleman Court, Mr Quinton replied that this would only be needed by the staff because the patients were not ambulatory.

Other Business

The Weston Creek Spring Fair to be known as “Up the Creek Spring Festival” would be held at Cooleman Court on 24 September. The WCCC will be manning an information stall. There will be lots of things to do and see including a Jumping Castle and the design for the new mural on the southern wall of the Community Centre would be on display.

The Chairperson announced that at the next meeting of the WCCC would be on 28 September. It was hoped that representatives from the ACT Land and Planning Authority would be making a further presentation about Molonglo at this meeting, but this was yet to be confirmed.

Mr Carl called for any other business. As there was none forthcoming Mr Carl closed the meeting and thanked residents for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 9:30 pm.

Next Regular Meeting
Wednesday 28th September 2005