



Murray Darling Association Inc.

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Ordinary Meeting of the Board

Monday 17 February 2020

<https://zoom.us/j/557056457>

AGENDA - MEETING No. 395

1. ATTENDANCE

1.1 Present

Meeting open at 10.30am

Cr David Thurley	Albury City Council	Region 1
Cr Dennis Patterson	City of Greater Shepparton	Region 2
Cr Jane MacAllister	Wentworth Shire Council	Region 4
Cr Peter Hunter	Renmark Paringa Council	Region 5
Cr Melissa Rebbeck	Alexandrina Council	Region 6
Cr Andrew Tilley	City of Mitcham	Region 7
Cr Brian Lockyer	Barunga West Council	Region 8
Cr Paul Maytom	Leeton Shire Council	Region 9
Cr Phyllis Miller	Forbes Shire Council	Region 10
Cr John Campbell	Gunnedah Council	Region 11
Emma Bradbury	MDA	CEO
Tony Banks	MDA	XO

1.2 Apologies:

Cr Richard Marsh	Balonne Shire Council	Region 12
Pete George	M&S Group	Treasurer

1.3 Declarations

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES

2.1 [Meeting 394](#) held via Zoom Calendar – Monday 20th January 2020

Motion: That the apologies be accepted and noted.

P Maytom / D Patterson

Carried

3. REPORTS

3.1 Chairman's report

D Thurley provided a brief report to the board, noting that he attended the Basin Communities Committee (BCC) last week. D Thurley noted that several important issues were raised including the need for more members on the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) board, as well the lack of progress on the NSW Water Resource Plans.

M Rebbeck asked D Thurley a question regarding MDBA BCC Phil Duncan's recent tour of the Basin, including his tour of barrages.

D Thurley clarified that Phil Duncan was taken on a tour around various parts of the Basin, including Echuca and barrages, but D Thurley only found out about this after the tour.

M Rebbeck noted that Region 6 will write a letter to encourage MDBA's BCC to contact MDA regions in advance of

local and regional engagement opportunities.

3.2 [Finance reports](#)

E Bradbury presented the finance report on behalf of P George, who was an apology for this month's board meeting.

Motion: That the board approve the establishment of an interest-bearing account for the purpose of holding employee entitlements.

P Miller / P Hunter

Carried

3.3 [Chief Executive Officer's report](#)

In addition to the CEO's report, E Bradbury highlighted several points:

*"Firstly, the MDA is currently looking at a model for operating the business which has much more clearly defined our core focus as being **the go-to on Basin policy**, and then a modular approach to projects that can essentially bolt on and bolt off.*

The rest of this week will be focusing on submitting applications to a number of funding rounds that close later in the week.

Gemma Wilson has joined our team as a dedicated grants office and is absolutely marvelous. She has been working incredibly diligently and developing concepts for submission ready projects, which we're looking at finalizing some of those this week.

I will be travelling to Canberra on the 28th and 29th this month for a number of meetings that I will provide a separate report on.

Lastly, the MDA has been more actively engaged and reached out to the National Indigenous Australia Agency in Shepparton to establish and reconnect with local indigenous groups, not just in this region but across the Basin."

3.4 [Region Reports](#)

Region 6

Cr Melissa Rebbeck: *We just had our AGM on Friday, where I was reelected as Chair. We have four executives, including myself, and the other CEOs of 3 of our councils. I just wanted to note that our AGM we spoke about having a proxy in absence of Chairs. Glen Rappensberg has been nominated as my proxy, to vote in my absence if I am not able to attend any meeting.*

Region 4

Cr Jane MacAllister: *I apologize for the amount of information I've provided in my region report. Secondly, I really hope you get to read some of it, especially the analysis from Emma Carmady from the water symposium was excellent and excellently presented. I'm also trying to round up Brett Walker's presentation. Emma's helped to facilitate the letter that went out on behalf of not just region 4, but other councils in the Lower Darling in light of recent exemptions to embargo and had some really interesting feedback from that. There seems to be a lot going on in our region at the moment.*

Region 9

Cr Paul Maytom: *I didn't go to the Mick Keelty forum but Jackie our general manager did and provided a comprehensive report. In the report, Mick Keelty is quoted as saying that he wasn't going to be the knight in shining armour. He went on to say that he's looking at the low hanging fruit to get fast-short term water to irrigation communities. I also attended the Yanco Community Advisory Group meeting. We met with Water NSW who are working with us. We are preparing a business case at the present time, getting as much valid information as we can. We believe we have another way of achieving an outcome, not necessary taking a lot of water out of the creek system. I have an invite to meet the new water Minister, Minister Pitt on the 18th of February. We also have a Region 9 meeting, subject to the availability of someone from Water NSW in Leeton, there will be a presentation on groundwater and rules on groundwater, that meeting will now be on the 23rd of March. I'm also on the RAMJO special water committee and we are essentially putting together a regional position statement. I will work with Emma to make sure there is good alignment between our MDA position, and the RAMJO strategy.*

Region 7

Cr Andrew Tilley: *We've got our regional meeting coming up this Thursday. Mick Keelty is in Langhorne Creek on Tuesday 3rd of March. We've been inundated with local issues, we've been holding our breath with bushfires to the south and to the north and to the east of us. A local fire resulted in the loss of one of our councilor's fathers, Mitcham's Council's had a response to that. Other local issues have involved us wondering if water restrictions are going to be applied in South Australia and waiting for it to rain.*

Region 2

Cr Dennis Patterson: *We've been delayed a bit in Region 2 – we've had senior staff helping councils out with bushfires. And we've been working, of course, on the conference coming up which is progressing very well.*

Region 5

Cr Peter Hunter: *We have our region AGM on 16th of March. Peter Raison from Mid Murray will be likely nominating for chair and I'll be standing down. Quite impressed with Mick Keelty on his basin Tour. And we're being closely involved with the local irrigation trust talking about water stewardship at an international scale, and we're looking at it as a council and a region.*

Region 10

Phyllis Miller: *We're waiting on hearing from the Minister to determine when we're going to meet. There's been no point in having an MDA meeting for our region because we've been meeting constantly with NSW water in our catchments, having lots and lots of meetings. Hopefully we can start to take a breath, but it's been pretty tough up in this area. Mick Keelty hasn't come anywhere near us. In some respects, the upper basin is a little bit forgotten at this point.*

Motion: That the reports be received and noted.

D Thurley / P Hunter

Carried

E Bradbury commended M Rebbeck on re-election to region 6, and also commended her chair's report at the AGM: *"The report reflected an active and busy year, and it's a credit to your region and stability that's come out of region 6 now. The clarity of presentation of your region, and the challenging nuances of multi layered presentation has been a credit to your leadership and I'd like to acknowledge that at the board level."*

4. CORRESPONDENCE

4.1 Change to Constitution – Motion 1 – 75th National Conference

- 4.1.1 [Response from NSW Fair Trading](#)
- 4.1.2 [Constitution](#)

Motion: That the board note the amendment to the constitution

J Campbell / B Lockyer

Carried

- 4.2 National Water Infrastructure – feasibility investment
Letters to Ministers and departmental heads
- 4.3 NSW Water Sharing Plans
Email to Mr. Jim Bentley – Dept of Infrastructure and Environment
- 4.4 MDBA Chair
The Hon Minister David Littleproud

Motion: That the correspondence be received.

P Miller / P Maytom

Carried

5. BUSINESS ARISING

5.1 [MDA Matters in Progress arising from previous Meetings](#)

Motion: That the Matters in Progress be accepted and noted.

D Thurley/ P Hunter

Carried

5.2 Inquiry into Management of Murray Darling Basin Water resources

5.2.1 [CEO's report from Deniliquin](#)

5.2.2 Region 4 Chair – [Cr Jane MacAllisters report from Mildura](#)

M Rebbeck and A Tilley will both be attending the session in Langhorne Creek.

J MacAllister asked for clarification regarding Mick Keelty's role in the South Australia Bushfire Inquiry.

D Patterson noted that he (Mr Keelty) may also be involved in the national bushfire inquiry.

5.3 Lock Zero – [Updated Briefing](#)

D Thurley advises against MDA taking any position until such time as the Lower Lakes Independent Science Review and Inspector-General's report has been done in March.

D Thurley / J MacAllister

Carried

5.4 BCLP Update

5.4.1 Curriculum Matrix

5.4.2 Workshop Program – Trainee

5.4.3 Workshop Program - Facilitator

T Banks provided a brief update on the Basin Communities Leadership Program, including progress the development of the materials.

T Banks noted that pre-study modules are coming together quite well, and MDA will start sending the board links to actual content soon, with feedback encouraged.

D Thurley noted that this is very high quality material.

P Hunter said it's great quality and quite thorough. P Hunter noted that there is very detailed planning and commended Tony on the detail he's put into it to date.

E Bradbury also updated the board on the recruitment phase and engagement with councils. E Bradbury explained the process in further detail, and how councils can get involved in recruitment process to identify those emerging leaders within your communities. E Bradbury commended T Banks and J Maher on the content and mechanics of the communications strategy.

5.5 [Climate Ready Communities MDA Commitment to Action](#)

E Bradbury provided an update on the Climate Ready Communities MDA Commitment to Action, which has been updated following board feedback. E Bradbury suggested that on from here would be that, subject to any feedback, the draft is approved for distribution and consultation with regional communities.

J MacAllister noted a document sent through to MDA executive on the 31st of January including a document titled "Climate Change Risks to Australia's built environment" dated October 2019, which was a summary of local government areas at risk of various forms of climate change impacts. J MacAllister noted that quite a few MDA members are mentioned in that document. J MacAllister noted that more research like this should be included in the Climate Ready Communities MDA Commitment to Action.

D Thurley noted that feedback is important to strengthening this document and adding the relevant facts and details.

Motion: That the board

(a) Note the draft Climate Ready Communities MDA Commitment to Action

(b) Approve its release for consultation

M Rebbeck / B Lockyer

Carried

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

6.1 History of Water Sharing Agreement [Briefing Paper](#)

A Tilley noted that this document was very informative.

7. STRATEGY

7.1 Minutes from Strategic Advisory Committee

E Bradbury highlighted that recommendations from the Strategic Advisory Committee included the board make a clear decision regarding MDA's naming and identity, which will be looked at strategic planning workshop. Additionally, the Strategic Advisory Committee were particularly specific around providing advice recommending a focused session on consolidation on where we are up to as a business at the strategic planning workshop.

J MacAllister agreed with consolidation.

Motion: That the board receive Strategic Advisory Committee's recommendations

J MacAllister / J Campbell

7.2 Update – 2020 National Conference

D Patterson provided an update on the 2020 National conference, including an emphasis on education and sharing knowledge.

D Patterson also noted that this year's conference will begin with the study tour, exploring issues around the Barmah Choke and the narrows.

E Bradbury commended the work done so far, and noted that drawing on Cr Patterson's experience at the Toowoomba conference and having experienced MDA executive has made the planning process an incredible different experience.

7.3 Vision 2024

E Bradbury noted that the document went out on Friday, and encouraged the board to consider carefully and provide feedback.

7.4 Registrations – Eventbrite – Strategic Workshop

D Thurley encouraged board members to register for the upcoming strategic workshop.

8. CLOSE

Close at 11.33am.