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Ordinary Meeting of the Board Meeting 403 Monday 19th October 2020

MINUTES - MEETING No. 403

1. ATTENDANCE

1.1. Present

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 Raison	Mid Murray 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
Pete George	M&S Group	Treasurer
Emma Bradbury	MDA	CEO

1.2. Apologies:

Mayor Samantha O'Toole – Region 12 Chair – Balonne Shire Council

Motion: That the apology is noted.

J Campbell / D Patterson

Carried

Absent:

Cr Andrew Tilley – Region 7 Chair – City of Mitcham

1.3. Declarations

P Miller declared a conflict of interest with item 5.5 due to her role on the LGNSW board.

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES

2.1. [Meeting 401](#) held via Zoom Calendar Monday 17th August 2020

2.2. [Meeting 402](#) AGM held via Zoom Calendar Wednesday 16th September 2020

Motion: That the minutes of board meeting 401 are approved as an accurate record of that meeting.

M Rebbeck / B Lockyer

Carried

3. REPORTS

3.1. Chairman's report

D Thurley noted that he participated in the MDBA's review of the compliance compact which was set up in December 2018.

3.2. Finance reports

P George provided a summary of the finance reports.

M Rebbeck asked for further information about the deadline for delivering the Basin Communities Leadership Program.

E Bradbury said she will take the question on notice for specific details. However, E Bradbury noted that the MDA is currently tracking well and that the executive is learning so much with the delivery portion.

Motion: That the finance reports be received.

P George / B Lockyer

Carried

3.3. Chief Executive Officers report

In addition to the CEOs report, E Bradbury highlighted that this month's report is a reflection on the conduct and outcomes of the conference, post-conference decisions and reporting on operational matters.

E Bradbury added that the presentation to the Orana JO in Narromine with Region 10 Chair Phyllis attended was incredibly constructive on a couple of levels, in term of getting a better understanding of the issues and perspectives of councils in that region and regional boundaries reviews.

E Bradbury also highlighted the conference analytics brief in the CEO's report prepared by James Marshall.

M Rebbeck commended Emma and the team on the 2020 National Conference. M Rebbeck noted that although the report reflected an overwhelming feedback to have a face-to-face conference, the MDA achieved a much larger attendance and more diverse audience by having an online conference, which is something to keep in mind for future conferences.

E Bradbury agreed, and noted that the 2020 National Conference has provided the MDA with new knowledge and internal capabilities, which will help the MDA executive to develop hybrid events.

D Patterson agreed, and noted that there would be a value in blending both a live conference and a virtual conference formats.

E Bradbury noted that she will be meeting in the next couple of days with J MacAllister, D Thurley and D Patterson to discuss the planning process for 2021 National Conference in Wentworth.

J MacAllister asked for more information about E Bradbury's informal meeting with Sussan Ley on the 8th of September 2020.

E Bradbury noted that the meeting was informal and a follow up about her interview within the study tour video.

In addition to this, E Bradbury noted that she was currently in Bourke and would meeting with the

Mayor and General Manager of Bourke Shire Council. This morning, E Bradbury met with the Mayor and GM at Brewarrina. Over the coming week, E Bradbury noted that she will head along the Barwon Darling, where she will meet with the Mayor of Cobar and head over to Broken Hill. E Bradbury is currently travelling with Brendan Murphy from the Inspector General's Office.

E Bradbury also noted that she will be travelling to Canberra in early in November with D Thurley to meet with relevant ministers to discuss 2020 National Conference motions. In terms of those meetings, we are keen to pursue the community consultation standard, the role for local government and specific motions that have been resolved. Additionally, E Bradbury noted that the MDA executive will be finalising the submission to the ACCC.

E Bradbury also noted that the last couple of weeks have been incredibly busy and she wanted to especially commend Cathy for all her brilliant work in managing and coordinating diary appointments and office operations.

Motion: That the CEO's report is noted.

P Raison / J Campbell

Carried

3.4. Region reports

Region 1

Cr David Thurley: *Region 1 has not been able to hold face to face meetings because of Covid-19 restrictions imposed by the NSW government relating to Victorians entering NSW. Changes have now been made to these restrictions and the area of the "border bubble" has been expanded. It is planned to resume meetings with the region 1 AGM to be held on Friday 20th November.*

Albury City "hosted" some conference delegates in a large meeting room in the Albury Entertainment Centre Conference Wing. Feedback from all who attended was highly complementary of MDA staff, our MC Dominique Schwartz and BAX Audio visual and for the quality of the event. The AGM also ran seamlessly, and all delegates assisted by being concise and direct when speaking to the motions. As National President, I thank them for making my job so easy.

The new Chairman of the MDBA Sir Angus Houston came to Albury as part of his tour of the southern Basin. I had an hour to talk with him and Phillip Glyde and we discussed the existing relationship between the MDA and the MDBA and how that might change to provide greater opportunities for local government to give information to their communities and provide input to the MDBA and Basin governments.

Good rainfall has continued to fall across the catchment and Hume Dam is now at approximately 70% and Dartmouth at almost 60%. With good rainfall in the downstream catchments and other parts of the Basin, this situation may allow increased allocations after a few tough years.

Region 2

Cr Dennis Patterson: *Region 2 has our AGM coming up in first week of December 2020. Thanks to Cathy for all her work organising it.*

Region 4

Cr Jane MacAllister: *The MDA Region 4 Annual General Meeting and Ordinary Meeting were held on Tuesday 8 September 2020. Other events and activities in the region include:*

- 1. Commend Mildura Rural City Council's Water Policy, with the NSW Council's keen to draft policy position to a similar high standard.*
- 2. MDBA visited Menindee to meet with the Traditional Landowners and Native Title Holders about the location of artefacts and heritage concerns.*
- 3. Broken Hill City Council met with the NSW Water Minister.*

4. Mildura Rural City Council's elections are to be held on Saturday 24 October 2020. Region 4 have concerns that the 2021 National Conference in Wentworth was not mentioned, and no formal handover was received as per the usual process. We look forward to receiving a report on how many board members have been previously excluded from AGMs. The planning for the 2021 National Conference is proceeding well. The whole of Region 4 in all its variety will be showcased and some excellent keynote speakers are lined up.

Action: MDA executive to prepare a report regarding how many board members have been previously excluded from AGMs.

Region 5

Cr Peter Raison: *Cr Melissa Rebbeck and myself are having another meeting with Tim Smythe from Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association in regard to the water position paper. Our region meeting is on the 26th of October, which E Bradbury will attend. Presentations will include Deana Mildren from MDBA and also a presentation from Tim Smythe.*

Region 6

Cr Melissa Rebbeck: *The next Region 6 meeting will be held on 6 November 2020 at Murray Bridge, Rural City of Murray Bridge. Other events and activities include:*

- *Region 6 members and executives attended the MDA National Conference and AGM; and want to thank Emma and the MDA team for a successful online event.*
- *Proposed future events in 2021 will include, pending COVID-19 restrictions, a Region 6 Stakeholder Symposium, as conducted in September 2019: and a Tour of the Barrages near the Murray Mouth.*

When appropriate, Region 6 will continue to advocate for the Murray Darling Basin, including but not limited to advocacy letters to State and Federal Ministers. Additionally, I just wanted to mirror what Peter just said. In addition we have advertised and found successful candidate for region 6 executive officer. We plan on running a symposium or Connecting Catchments and Communities, which could potentially be run with Basin Communities Leadership Program. On Friday, we had a meeting with Rebekha Sharkie MP and her team, who has announced in the paper about a water research institute for the Goolwa region. I raised the MDA strategic plan.

Region 8

Cr Brian Lockyer: *Last month, I had the privilege of attending a Legatus meeting as an observer. At the end of the meeting, I got to do a presentation on MDA to all member councils in the region. Senator Jeff Brock has said please pass on his howdy doodies to both Emma and David. He is a great advocate towards the water supply, deliveries and functions within this area. Hopefully his advocacy within the area will help increase our membership rating. We are due to have a region 8 meeting in December. Our next meeting may be virtual due to distances in travelling. At our next meeting, we will have presentation from Melissa Rebbeck and Amy from Water SA in reference to an inquiry I had here awhile ago about our supply, security and services within the area.*

Region 9

Cr Paul Maytom: *Region 9 met on Thursday 17 September 2020. The key items at the meeting were:-*

- *A presentation from NSW DPIE on the NSW Government's Regional Water Strategy Program. The strategy is a 20-year State Water Strategy for NSW that draws on recent water reform, water planning and water security work and sits within the broader policy and planning context, including the National Water Initiative, the Basin Plan and Murray Darling Basin Agreement. The initial draft is scheduled for public consultation in 2021.*
- *Consideration of the draft "Climate Ready Statement" for Region 9. Feedback is currently being provided by each of the members. I think its important that having those people in our chambers – allowed them to see our perspective on things.*

Leeton Shire Council (LSC) hosted MDBA's new chair, Sir Angus Houston, on Monday 28 September 2020. He was accompanied by MDBA's CEO Phillip Glyde, Jody Swirepik, the Commonwealth Environmental Waterholder, and senior staff from the Dept of Agriculture, Water and Environment, MDBA and the Commonwealth Environmental Waterholder. In discussion LSC focussed on the urgent need to plan cohesively for the future and the importance of ensuring a diverse and sustainable agricultural sector supported by a fully optimised irrigation area. A key messages was moving to measure economic success at a whole of community level, not only at the farm gate; and pursuing an appropriate mix of permanent and annual crops that will continue to foster diversity and support the wide range of food and fibre manufacturing industries in the region.

Region 9 will be seeking to work with WaterNSW on their 20-year Infrastructure Options Study to continue to identify and determine priorities with water infrastructure in NSW.

The following Murrumbidgee allocation announcements were welcomed on 1 October:

- General security - 48%
- High security – 95%

Region 10

Cr Phyllis Miller: *We've been really busy with lots of meetings with regards to the raising of dam wall. We are constantly on zoom meetings in relation to that. We are being updated if not weekly, then biweekly. Our regional water studies, we are constantly having state water working with us. Big thing for me is for Emma and I to have a Region 10a & b up and running.*

Region 11

Cr John Campbell: *Well, today should have seen the first day of our BCLP program at Collarenebri. However due to a long and much awaited harvest we have had to postpone this segment. The drought is never over until the money is in the bank, so I wish all farmers the best in getting their quality crop off and into the terminals ASAP. Region 11's next meeting will be held in Bingara on the 13th November at 1.00pm. This will be directly after the BROCC meeting so looking forward to seeing a good roll up. I did the webinar last week on the Regional Water Strategy for Gwydir and tomorrow will be the Border Rivers one.*

Motion: That the region reports are noted

D Thurley / D Patterson

Carried

3.5. Communication and Briefing reports

- 3.5.1 Delegates Report – National Conference
- 3.5.2 MDA Productivity Commission Submission
- 3.5.3 Media release – overhaul of the Murray-Darling basin water buyback scheme
- 3.5.4 National Conference Testimonials.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

4.1. Correspondences Out

<i>Item</i>	<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Topic</i>
4.1.1	Sir Angus Houston	Welcome Letter
4.1.2	National President's response letter to Wentworth Council	AGM Clash with Wentworth Council.
4.1.3	Thankyou letter to the Greater Shepparton City Council	Hosting of National Conference

4.2 Correspondences In

<i>Item</i>	<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Topic</i>
4.2.1	Sir Angus Houston	Thanking the MDA on his appointment
4.2.2	Community Grants Hub	Unsuccessful applications
4.2.3	Kia Hodge – Executive Director Regional Water Strategies	Development of Regional Strategies
4.2.4	Wentworth Shire Council	Disappointment from MDA region 4 regarding Meeting Clash AGM and Wentworth Shire Ordinary Meeting

Motion: That the Board receive correspondence.

D Thurley / M Rebbeck

Carried

5 BUSINESS ARISING

5.1 Review of actions table

MDA Matters in Progress arising from previous Meetings

M Rebbeck encouraged all regions to complete their Climate Ready Communities Statements as soon as possible and asked E Bradbury regarding timeline for completion.

D Thurley agreed that this is an important priority for the MDA.

Action: MDA executive will email all regions who have not yet completed there Climate Ready Communities statement with framework.

E Bradbury suggested that the strategic planning workshop in 2021 may be a useful deadline for the Climate Ready Communities, which will tentatively be a hybrid event.

5.2 CSIRO/MDA Collaborative Relationship Agreement

The CEO of the CSIRO has endorsed the Collaborative Relationship Agreement.

An official signing of the agreement is scheduled in Canberra on the 10th November 2020, Jane Coram the Business Unit Director from the CSIRO will present the agreement to the National President David Thurley and CEO Emma Bradbury.

The draft CSIRO Science and Education subcommittee Terms of Reference will be revised in collaboration with the CSIRO upon final exchange of the Collaborative Relationship Agreement. The final draft will be presented to the board for feedback and approval.

P Miller left at 11.22am

5.3 Election of President/Vice President/Treasurer

Board elected the president and two vice presidents consistent with Part 4, s8 (2), and Part 4 s7(c)(a) of the constitution.

There was one nomination received for the position of national president (Cr David Thurley). Cr David Thurley from Albury City Council was therefore re-elected as the Murray Darling Association National President.

D Patterson congratulated D Thurley for his steady leadership and providing the MDA with stable governance and direction.

There were two nominations for position of vice-present - Cr John Campbell and Cr Melissa Rebbeck. It was agreed that consistent with last year, the board appoint a vice president and a deputy vice president.

P George noted that he would like to see someone else on the board take on the position of Treasurer. P George will remain in the position for the following three months pending the appointment of a skills based treasurer.

The board all showed appreciation for P George for his support and role as Treasurer.

Motion: That the following appointments are made to the board

a) National President	Cr David Thurley OAM	Albury City Council
b) Vice President	Cr John Campbell	Gunnedah Shire Council
c) Deputy Vice President	Cr Melissa Rebbeck	Alexandrina Council
d) Treasurer	Pete George (interim)	

B Lockyer / J MacAllister

Carried

Motion: That the board thank and appreciate Pete George for his contribution to the MDA as treasurer

J MacAllister / P Raison

Carried

P Maytom left the meeting at 11.45am

5.4 Regional Boundary realignment

The Board was provided with a briefing paper to inform the Board of progress to date and a proposed process going forward on the regional boundary review and realignment.

Action: MDA executive to contact Regional Chairs to determine a time and date for a workshop to contribute to the discussion paper.

5.5 M-DLGA Name change consultation

A briefing paper was provided to inform the Board of the proposed process for consultation with members on changing the organisation's name to the Murray-Darling Local Government Association (M-DLGA).

E Bradbury noted that the MDA executive will develop a consultation standard including a survey and some other tools, which will be distributed to the board and our members. The MDA executive will then develop a briefing paper on the consultations and at the 2021 strategic planning workshop we will conduct an EGM to resolve the matter.

5.6 ACCC Submission Feedback – Murray-Darling Basin water markets inquiry

The ACCC submission for feedback is due on the 30th October 2020. We are seeking feedback on the MDA's draft submission from the board.

Action: That the Board provide feedback on receipt of the MDA's draft submission

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

M Rebbeck noted that Region 6 is undergoing a membership drive.

7. PRESENTATION

Presentation from **Mr Ramzi Jabbour Deputy Inspector-General of Murray-Darling Basin Water Resources**
Current Status and future role of the Office of the Inspector General .

The presentation included a comprehensive briefing on the role of the Inspector-Generals Office in water management and Basin communities. The board and Mr Jabbour discussed the importance of two-way communication and collaboration with stakeholders in water management, and current issues such as floodplain harvesting and compliance issues.

8. Items from the Regions.

No items received this month.

9. CLOSE at 12.11PM