



Board Meeting 421

AGENDA

5 June 2023

Murray Darling Association Incorporated
ABN 64 636 490 493

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Meeting Commencement Time

9:30am

1. Acknowledgement of Country

Murray Darling Association acknowledges the traditional owners & custodians of country and pay our respects to the people, cultures, and elders past, present, and emerging.

2. Attendance

2.1 Present

Delegate	Council	Region
Cr David Thurley	AlburyCity Council	Region 1
Cr Geoff Dobson	Greater Shepparton City Council	Region 2
<i>Vacant</i>		Region 3
Cr Marion Browne (Interim)	Broken Hill City Council	Region 4
Cr Andrew Kassebaum	Berri-Barmera Council	Region 5
<i>Vacant</i>		Region 8
Cr Glen Andrezza	Griffith City Council	Region 9
Mayor Jamie Chaffey	Gunnedah Shire Council	Region 11
Mayor Samantha O'Toole	Balonne Shire Council	Region 12
Peter George	M&S Group	Interim Treasurer
Mark Lamb	MDA	CEO

2.2 Apologies

Delegate	Council	Region
Cr Airlie Keen	Rural City of Murray Bridge	Region 6
Cr Andrew Tilley	City of Mitcham	Region 7
Mayor Craig Davies	Narromine Council	Region 10

2.3 Declarations

3. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Refer to - Attachment 3

MOTION: (G Dobson / G Andrezza)

That the minutes of MDA Board Meeting 420 held on 3 April 2023 be accepted as an accurate record.

4. Reports

4.1 Chairman's Report

Chairman, D Thurley, provided their Chairman's report verbally.

The Chair noted that the NSW DPE had invited the MDA to be on the Reconnecting River Country Program Advisory Committee. Indicated that the MDA was looking for feedback from Region Chairs to properly represent the MDA's members.

The Chair noted that the MDA had been invited to sit in on the Productivity Commission review of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. Indicated that the MDA was looking for feedback from Region Chairs to properly represent the MDA's members.

- G Dobson noted that the Greater Shepparton City Council was preparing a report to provide feedback to the MDA. Noted a particular reference to the use of Environmental Water.

The Chair note that Region 1 had discussed the following during its recent Region meeting:

- Feral animal control in Region 1
- NSW Water Resource Plans.
 - The Chair noted that it had had members from the Inspector-General for Water Compliance office speak to the Region Meeting. Noted that there was more push coming from the Commonwealth to use their powers.

MOTION: (A Kassebaum / J Chaffey)

That the Chair's report be noted.

4.2 Chief Executive Officer's Report

CEO, M Lamb, provided the CEO's Report for noting.

The CEO took the report as read.

The CEO noted that the MDA was reaching out to Non-Member councils, with the recent membership drive proving to have some effect, as Paroo Shire Council in QLD having elected to rejoin the MDA.

The CEO noted past discussions with Toowoomba Council, who indicated a great interest to re-join the MDA.

The CEO noted that he had been working with Region 7 Chair A Tilley regarding a membership drive in the Region.

The CEO raised the MDA's Advocacy, noted that there was the ongoing challenge to meet with as many people as possible, with the MDA having sent out hundreds of letters to minister, departments, and relevant representatives. The CEO noted that through the correspondence, and ongoing engagement with ministers, department heads, and representatives was making great progress.

The CEO raised the MDA's Partnerships, collaboration, and engagement. Noted that the MDA was going from strength to strength. The CEO noted that the MDA was doing more work with the CSIRO on the Circular Economy, as well as further consultation work. Noted that the CSIRO and the MDA were currently working with Region 2 Chair, G Dobson, and the Greater Shepparton City Council to further develop Circular Economy meetings.

The CEO noted that the MDA was looking to develop clear outcomes from its partnership with the One Basin CRC and the SQNNSW later this year.

The CEO raised the 2023 National Conference and 2023 AGM. Indicated that he was really excited about the 2023 Conference 27-28 September 2023. Noted that the MDA had already confirmed a

Platinum Sponsor and a Gala Dinner Sponsor. The CEO outlined the National Conference's event dates; Welcome Reception 25/9/23, Study Tour 26/9/23, Conference Day 1 27/9/23, Gala Dinner 27/9/23, Conference Day 2 28/9/23, 2023 AGM 28/9/23.

The CEO encouraged its Board Chairs to book their accommodation early.

Refer to Attachment 4.2

MOTION: (A Kassebaum / J Chaffey)

That the CEO's report be noted.

[The Treasurer Peter George arrived 9:39am]

4.3 Finance Reports

The Treasurer, P George provided the Finance reports for noting.

J Chaffey noted a statement of congratulations on the great turn-around of the Association's finances. Commended M Lamb for the great work. J Chaffey noted he was looking forward to more in-person meetings.

G Dobson queried whether the MDA was intent on putting some of its funds into an interest account. Affirmed J Chaffey's note of congratulations.

- M Lamb noted that this would be a discussion topic with the MDA Treasurer.

P George advised that the MDA's Annual General reports would be finalised by the month's end.

Refer to Attachment 4.3

MOTION: (A Kassebaum / J Chaffey)

That the reports be noted.

5. Correspondence

5.1 Incoming

Refer to Attachment 5.1

Date	Received From	Subject
28/3/2023	CSIRO	Remittance Advice
15/5/2023	Hon Steven Miles MP Mayor Kris Hanna Mayor Mathew Dickerson	RE: 79 th National Conference – Invitation to attend
17/5/2023 – 21/5/2023	Murrumbidgee Council City of Wagga Wagga Snowy Valleys Council Campbelltown City Council Moira Shire Council Lachlan Shire Council	Remittance Advice
22/5/2023	Mayor Mark Reeves Mayor Steven Reynolds Mayor Angela Evans	RE: 79 th National Conference – Invitation to attend

5.2 Outgoing

Refer to Attachment 5.2

Date	Issued to	Subject
28/3/2023	Attending Mayors at the Darling Downs and South-West Queensland Council of Mayors Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deputy Mayor Cook Deputy Mayor McMullen Mayor Antonio Mayor Beresford Mayor Golder Mayor Mackenzie Mayor McVeigh Mayor Pennisi Mayor Radnedge 	Letter of Thanks, Membership Invitation
31/3/2023	Tamworth Regional Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager Peter Ross Mayor Russell Webb 	Murray Darling Association Northern Basin Forum 2023
13/4/2023	The Honourable Rose Jackson MLC	Letter of Congratulation, Introduction to the MDA, Invitation to speak and attend the 79 th National Conference and Northern Basin Forum
19/4/2023	EO Michael Drum	Invitation to speak at the at the Northern Basin Forum
20/4/2023	CEO Paul Brimblecombe	Invitation to speak at the at the Northern Basin Forum
26/4/2023	The Hon Tara Moriarty MLC	Letter of Congratulations, Introduction to the MDA, Invitation to speak and attend the Northern Basin Forum
4/5/2023	The Hon Harriet Shing	Introduction to the MDA, Invitation to speak and attend the 79 th National Conference
10/5/2023	The Hon Glenn Butcher MP	Invitation to speak and attend the 79 th National Conference
10/5/2023	The Hon Susan Close MP	Invitation to speak and attend the 79 th National Conference
10/5/2023	The Hon Troy Grant	Invitation to speak and attend the 79 th National Conference
10/5/2023	CEO Andrew McConville	Invitation to speak and attend the 79 th National Conference
10/5/2023	Exec. Director River Management Andrew Reynolds	Invitation to speak and attend the 79 th National Conference
12/5/2023	MDA Member Councils	Renewal of Membership to the Murray Darling Association
15/5/2023	MDA Member Councils	Representing communities across the Basin
15/5/2023	Murray-Darling Basin Councillors, Mayors, Ministers	79 th National Conference – Invitation to attend
22/5/2023	Non-Member Councils	Invitation to consider Membership to the Murray Darling Association
22/5/2023	MDA Member Councils	Letter: 2023-24 Budget Summary

MOTION: (J Chaffey / G Andrezza)

That the correspondence be received and noted.

6. Business Arising

6.1 Board Resolution Register

The Board Resolution Register was provided to the Board to review the motions and actions completed.

D Thurley noted that the MDA had strongly followed up on the Motions raised during past AGMs. Noted that the MDA was receiving great feedback. Noted that the action and engagement showed that the MDA was a really active group and a worthwhile peak body.

Refer to Attachments 6.1

MOTION: (S O'Toole / G Dobson)

That the report be noted.

7. General Business

7.1 Membership and Engagement

The CEO, M Lamb, provided an update on recent membership and engagement activities.

The CEO noted their earlier commends of membership. Noted that it was critical to have face-to-face meetings. Indicated that he was looking to organise meetings and engagement opportunities in Regions 11 and 12 in due course.

The CEO noted that it was a challenge to be everywhere, but that face-to-face meetings, and being able to sit down and discuss the values of the MDA made an incredible difference.

7.2 Review of Membership for the MDA

- That the Board of the Murray Darling Association consider and approve two types of membership for our association:
 - Type 1: Riparian Membership \$0.305 per head of population capped at \$6,682.82 per year.
 - Type 2: Non-Riparian Membership \$0.15 per head of population capped at \$3,286.63 per year.
- That the Board introduces: Corporate membership, tiered membership, pensioner membership.

D Thurley noted that the MDA did have Riparian and Non-Riparian membership in the past.

A Tilley noted that he was currently in Region 8. Noted that, as D Thurley identified, there was non-Riparian Membership, which had been withdrawn over night around 4+ years ago.

A Tilley noted that Adelaide Metropolitan was unique that they do not have the river right on their door and do not see their connection to the River system. Noted that Councils found it easy to withdraw their membership. A Tilley indicated that if a Non-Riparian rate was allowed in Region 7 and Region 8, it could greatly increase membership in the Regions. A Tilley noted that he believed that there was a reasonable reason to offer a discounted/reduced rate.

A Tilley noted that Region 7 currently had 2 Member Councils, while confirming that the City of Tea Tree Gully was keen to rejoin the MDA.

J Chaffey queried whether the MDA had run the numbers to see what the financial impact would be on the MDA if Riparian and Non-Riparian membership was implemented across the Basin. Noted that you could not bring two tiered membership in for one Region and not the other.

- M Lamb noted that this analysis had not been done Basin-wide. Indicated that the MDA would look into this immediately.
- D Thurley noted that any analysis should be done at different percentages. E.g. 50%, 60% et cetera... Noted that now that the MDA was including topics such as the Circular Economy within its scopes, the MDA may have more councils interested.

G Andrezza queried whether Riparian and Non-Riparian membership would have different voting rights.

- D Thurley noted that a review of past rights should be done in a discussion paper. Indicated that M Lamb and T Phillips should prepare this for discussion during Board Meeting 422, or as a flying Minute.

D Thurley noted that it was worth looking into corporate tiered memberships.

A Tilley noted that only a couple of councils had taken up the Non-Riparian memberships. Noted that when it was taken away, it was done so without consultation.

MOTION: (D Thurley / G Andrezza)

That the Board consider two types of Membership: Riparian Membership, and Non-Riparian Membership.

7.3 Reports for Delegates

The report is provided for noting.

Refer to Attachment 7.2

7.4 Region Reports

The Region Chairs provided reports on their regions, including ongoing flood recovery, for noting.

Region 2: G Dobson

- Noted that the MDA was doing a lot of work in increasing membership. Suggested that a viable pathway for increasing membership was to approach the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) to discuss a secondment program, seek a staff member of the MDBA to assist the MDA for a period of time to undergo this process, e.g. 12 months. Noted that Terms of reference would have to be discussed. May be an item to be discussed at the AGM.

Region 9: G Andrezza

- Noted in the last Region Meeting there was reference on the fish kills. Queried if there were reports available from this fish kill event.
 - M Lamb noted that last he heard, these reports were ongoing.
- Referenced the Hydrogen Hub in Whyalla. Noted that the State Government had put forth \$500m, with the Hydrogen Hub appearing to intend to use Adelaide Water Allocations as the source of water. Expressed the belief that this was not a good outcome for a project that is meant to be green.
 - D Thurley noted that this should be something to keep an eye on.

- J Chaffey queried what the project's timeline was. Noted that the timing was interesting with the Basin Plan review around the corner.
 - A Kassebaum noted that the project was underway. Feasibility study underway. Noted that the Project was approved and funded.

Region 4: M Browne

- Noted that at Board Meeting 422 Cr J Modica would once again be Region 4 Chair.

Murray Darling Association: M Lamb

- M Lamb noted that the Federal Government was seriously looking for ways to fulfill the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. Noted that it was imperative that Member Councils provide feedback to the MDA.
 - G Andrezza noted that a lot of projects were still in limbo in NSW. Noted that when they run out of time they would likely be thrown up and that that would be when Buy Backs would be implemented to cover the shortfall. Noted that if those projects could be implemented, then a lot of heartache could be avoided.
 - D Thurley note that this may likely ne something coming from the Productivity Commission that these projects need more time to be completed. Impressed upon the MDA Board that this was why the feedback was so important. Noted that the Water Resource Plans cannot be completed by 2024 and that the Commonwealth still appeared hesitant to use their step in powers.

7.5 Region Border Review

Board discussed the review of MDA Region Borders.

D Thurley noted the recent joint meeting between Region 1 and Region 2. Noted that during the meeting a merger of the Regions was raised. Noted that he was hesitant to merge the two regions, but indicated that greater cooperation between regions would be greatly beneficial.

- G Dobson noted that it could be a good idea for Region Chairs to join other Region Meetings.
- J Chaffey noted that something of this magnitude should be put to the MDA's Members. Suggested that the MDA AGM would be a good platform.
- D Thurley noted that he and G Dobson would put together a discussion paper to put to the Agenda for the AGM.
- G Andrezza noted that the amalgamation of regions would likely make the regions too big. Noted support for inviting neighbouring Region Chairs to attend Region Meetings.
- G Andrezza suggested that Regions 1 and 2 be utilised as a pilot project.

ACTION:

D Thurley and G Dobson to prepare a discussion paper for the MDA 2023 Annual General Meeting.

8. Meeting Close

The Chair to declare the meeting closed at 10:25am.