



Murray Darling Association Inc.

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MINUTES

76th Annual General Meeting Wednesday September 16th, 2020 Virtual Event: Zoom Webinar

1. WELCOME

1.1 Opening Address:

The Hon Mark Coulton MP
Federal Member for Parkes
Minister Regional Health, Regional Communications and
Local Government

1.2 Welcome:

National President, Cr David Thurley OAM welcomed delegates to the 2020 AGM
and declared the meeting open at 11.10am.

2. ATTENDANCE

2.1 Present

Heather Barclay	General Manager – Assets and Infrastructure	Rural City of Murray Bridge
Cr Patrick Bourke	Mayor	Federation Council
Emma Bradbury	Chief Executive Officer	Murray Darling Association
Cr Norm Brennan	Mayor	Edward River Council
Cr Marion Browne	Councillor	Broken Hill City Council
Cr John Campbell	Councillor and chair of Region 11	Gunnedah Shire Council
Cr Robin Coleman	Councillor	City of Tea Tree Gully
Cr Greg Conkey	Mayor	Wagga Wagga City Council
Cr Ed Cox	Councillor	Moira Shire Council
Paul Currie	Executive Management Officer	Toowoomba Regional Council
Cr John Dal Broi	Mayor	Griffith City Council
Bradley Ferris	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	Albury City Council
Pauline Frost	Life	Region 7
Pete George	Treasurer	M & S Group
Gary Golland	Private Member	Region 7
Cr Jeff Hall	Councillor	Mid Murray Council
Cr Mark Hall	Councillor	Lachlan Shire Council

Cr Shirley Halls	Councillor	City of Playford
Cr Heather Holmes-Ross	Mayor	City of Mitcham
Cr Brenton Lewis	Mayor	Rural City of Murray Bridge
Cr Brian Lockyer	Councillor & Chair of Region 8	Barunga West Council
Cr Jane MacAllister	Councillor & Chair of Region 4	Wentworth Shire Council
Jessica Maher	Minute Taker	MDA
Ian Mann	Private Member	
Cr Peter Mansfield	Councillor	Moira Shire Council
Bridget Mather	Chief Executive Officer	Coorong District council
Cr Paul Maytom	Mayor	Leeton Shire Council
Greg McKenzie – proxy	Proxy	Greater Shepparton City Council
Meg Pethybridge		Murrumbidgee Shire Council
Cr Ruth McRae	Mayor	Forbes Shire Council
Cr Phyllis Miller	Mayor	Mildura Rural City Council
Cr Jason Modica	Councillor	City of Burnside
Cr Anne Monceaux	Mayor	Balonne Shire Council
Samantha O’Toole	Mayor, Chair of Region 12	Greater Shepparton City Council
Cr Dennis Patterson	Councillor and Chair of Region 2	Alexandrina Council
Cr Melissa Rebbeck	Councillor, Chair of Region 6	Alexandrina Council
Cr Michael Scott	Councillor	Karoonda East Murray Council
Cr Yvonne Smith	Councillor	Brewarrina Shire Council
Jeff Sowiak	General Manager	Riverina Water County
Bede Spannagle	Director of Engineering	Central Darling
Bob Stewart	Administrator	Albury City Council
Cr David Thurley	National President	City of Mitcham
Cr Andrew Tilley	Councillor, Chair of Region 7	Cowra Council
Cr Bill West	Mayor	Gwydir Shire Council
Cr Frances Young	Councillor	

2.2 Apologies

The Hon. Bridget McKenzie MP	Nationals Senator for Victoria
The Hon David Speirs MP	Leader of The Nationals in the Senate
The Hon Vickie Chapman MP	Minister for Environment and Water
Mr Mick Keelty	Member for Bright
Mr Ramzi Jabour	Deputy Premier Attorney General
Cr Linda Scott	Minister for Planning and Local Government
Helen Dalton	Office of Inspector General MDB Water Resources
Hon Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP	Office of Inspector General MDB Water Resources
The Hon. Tim Whetstone MP	LGNSW President
Wendy Lovell MP	MP Member for Murray
Tony Pasin MP	The Member for Stuart, Hon Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP
	Member for Chaffey
	Member for Northern Victoria Region
	Federal Member for Barker

Cr Tim Elstone
Craig Lloyd
Thornton Harfield
Cr Linda Scott
David Beaton
Mr Leon Stasinowsky
Heather Wilton
Grant Barnes
TED Rogers
Cr Denis Clark
Tammi Rose
Mayor Sandy Verschoor
Craig Farrell
Helen Halyey
Karyn Burton

Vern Leng
Sarah Philpott
Cr Bernard Gaffney
Digby Jacobs

Wentworth Shire Council
CEO , Murrindindi Shire Council
Director Assets & Environment
President, LGNSW
CEO, District Council of Loxton Waikerie
Mayor, District Council of Loxton Waikerie
Greater Hume Council
Natural Resources Access Regulator
OurNews Pty Ltd
Northern Areas Council
Yarra Ranges Shire Council
Adelaide city Council
Balloonist
Riverina Water County
Chief Executive Officer, Berri Barmera
Council
Coorong District Council
Mildura City Council
Indigo Shire Council
Murray-Darling Basin Authority

2.3 Declaration of Interests

Nil

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Motion: That the minutes of the 76th AGM, held on October 23rd, 2019 in Toowoomba, QLD be adopted as an accurate record of that meeting.

Moved: Cr M Rebbeck/Cr B Lockyer

Carried

4. REPORTS

4.1 2020 Financial Report

Moved: Cr P Maytom /Cr P Bourke

Motion: That the 2019-20 Annual Finance Reports be received and noted.

Carried

4.2 2020 Annual Report

Moved: Cr D Thurley / Cr B Lewis

Motion: That the Annual Report for the year ending March 31st, 2020 be received and noted.

Carried

4.3 Strategic Plan 2020-2025: Vision 2025

Moved: Cr D Thurley / Cr B Lewis

Motion: That the Vision 2025: Strategic Plan 2020-205 be received and noted.

Carried

5. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Motion 5.1 Amendment to MDA Constitution

Moved: Cr D Thurley/Cr P Miller

That the Constitution of the Murray Darling Association be amended at

- a) *Add Part 5 s16 (11) A Region Meeting may be held with use of technology that allows a member using the technology and the members present at the meeting to clearly and simultaneously communicate with each other. A member in attendance using that technology will be deemed to be physically present at the meeting.*
- b) *Add Part 6 s17 (12) A MDA Meeting may be held with use of technology that allows a delegate using the technology and the delegates present at the meeting to clearly and simultaneously communicate with each other. A delegate in attendance using that technology will be deemed to be physically present at the meeting.*

Carried

Motion 5.2 Agricultural & Agribusiness Plan for the MDB

Moved: Cr P Maytom/Cr P Miller

That the Murray Darling Association call on the Federal Minister for Agriculture and the National Farmers Federation (NFF) to collaborate with strategic partners in the development of an integrated Agricultural & Agribusiness Plan for the Murray Darling Basin.

Carried

Motion 5.3 Buybacks and the 450GL

Moved: Cr D Patterson/Cr P Bourke

That the Murray Darling Association

- i. **does not** support the further buybacks as a means for acquiring the 450 GL of water to be recovered for the environment under the Murray Darling Basin, and further
- ii. **does** support the position that if on farm efficiency programs are to be used to obtain the proposed 450 GL then any participants to the program must be subject to an independent socio-economic analysis that proves that such transfers do not cause adverse socio-economic issues in regions where water is being recovered.

Carried

Motion 5.4 Carbon Neutral Farming Incentives

Moved: Cr M Rebbeck /Cr J Modica

That the Murray Darling Association advocate to the Federal Government that it provide increased incentives for farmers and their communities to implement carbon neutral strategies and on ground actions that improve economic viability and enhanced water security while adapting and mitigating climate change.

Carried

Motion 5.5 Centre for Excellence

Moved: Cr J Campbell /Cr P Miller

Call on Basin Governments to support funding for the Murray-Darling Basin Local Government Centre for Excellence: providing a space for local government and stakeholders across the Basin to collaborate and innovate.

Carried

Motion 5.6 Coalition of Peaks

Moved: Cr D Thurley / Cr M Rebbeck

That the Murray Darling Association support the development of a Murray-Darling Basin Coalition of Peaks and call on Basin governments to collaborate in the development of an agreed Terms of Reference to enable an active contribution.

Carried

Motion 5.7 Consistent Metering and Monitoring by Inspector General

Moved: Cr P Maytom / Cr A Tilley

That the Murray Darling Association call on the Basin Officials Committee and the Ministerial Council to

- i) *Endorse the Office of the Inspector General*
- ii) *Request that the office establish and maintain consistent and equitable metering and measuring extraction across all states and regions, including flood plain harvesting, ground water extraction and river extraction.*

Carried

Motion 5.8 Definition of Basin Governments

Moved: Cr D Thurley/ Cr J MacAllister

That the Murray Darling Association continue to seek representation of local government as a sector

- a) *At the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council in an advisory capacity, and*
- b) *At the Basin Official Committee in a contributory capacity to provide more direct local content in the decisions relating to the Murray Darling Basin.*

Carried

Motion 5.9 Development Downstream of the Choke

Moved: Cr D Patterson/ Cr P Maytom

That the MDA call on Basin Governments to ensure that the passage of water intended for irrigation use downstream be minimised to flows that do not cause environmental harm to river environs and, in particular, the Barmah Choke on the Murray River and the banks of the heritage listed Goulburn River downstream of Eildon Weir.

Carried

Motion 5.10 Drought Management Plan

Moved: Cr P Maytom / Cr M Hall

That the Murray Darling Association call on the Federal Government to

- i. *lead the development of a comprehensive National Adverse Events Management Plan (incorporating a Drought Management Plan for the Murray Darling Basin).*
- ii. *Provide ongoing economic support to cushion Basin communities from unexpected, short term emergencies and, for the medium to long term, to establish and operate Innovation Hubs across the Basin as cooperative models of research and innovation to secure the future sustainability of Australian agriculture.*

AMENDMENT: Cr M Rebbeck asked for the inclusion of “and water” to the end of the second point. Both the mover and the seconder accepted the amendment.

Motion 5.10 as amended:

That the Murray Darling Association call on the Federal Government to

- i. *lead the development of a comprehensive National Adverse Events Management Plan (incorporating a Drought Management Plan for the Murray Darling Basin).*
- ii. *Provide ongoing economic support to cushion Basin communities from unexpected, short term emergencies and, for the medium to long term, to establish and operate Innovation Hubs across the Basin as cooperative models of research and innovation to secure the future sustainability of Australian agriculture and water.*

Carried

Motion 5.11 Investment in Barrages

Moved: Cr M Rebbeck/ Cr J Modica

That the Murray Darling Association:

- a) *calls for national investment to upgrade the barrages to enhance efficient water management of the Murray Darling Basin.*
- b) *notes the findings of the Lower Lakes Independent Science Review;*
- c) *encourages all communities to maintain a focus on protecting ecological values and maintaining agricultural productivity in a changing climate;*
- d) *reaffirms Motion 5.6 from the 2018 MDA National Conference and AGM calling 'for a detailed climate change vulnerability assessment and adaptation plan for the Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth region'*

Carried

Motion 5.12 Report on Recommendations

Moved: Cr M Rebbeck / Cr J MacAllister

Calls on government to make public or report on actions taken regarding the implementation of recommendations from successive reports on the Murray Darling Basin including:

- *Keelty Report: Impact of lower inflows on state shares under the Murray–Darling Basin Agreement (Interim Inspector-General of Murray–Darling Basin Water Resources, 17 April 2020)*
- *Murray-Darling Basin Plan: Five-year assessment, Inquiry report (Productivity Commission, 19 December 2020)*
- *Sefton's Report: Independent Assessment of Social and Economic Conditions in the Murray-Darling Basin Draft Report (Independent Panel Report, 16 March 2020)*
- *Murray-Darling Basin water markets inquiry Interim report (Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, 30 June 2020)*
- *Independent Review of Lower Lakes Science Informing Water Management (Independent Panel Report, 29 April 2020)*
- *Matthews Report: Independent investigation into NSW water management and compliance (NSW Department of Industry, 24 November 2017)*

Carried

Motion 5.13 SDLAM Projects

Moved: Cr P Maytom / Cr B Lockyer

That the Murray Darling Association call for

- i. *the deadline dates for the more complex Sustainable Diversion Limited Adjustment Mechanism (SDLAM) projects be extended.*

- ii. *alternative options be considered in cases where the initial SDLAM proposals are found not to be delivering the efficiency mechanisms intended*

Carried

Motion 5.14 Water Infrastructure Plan

Moved: Cr P Maytom/ Cr G Conkey

That the Murray Darling Association call on the Federal Government to prepare and publish a short, medium and long-term water infrastructure plan in collaboration with all Basin governments to sustain our nation across all environmental, social and economic sectors for generations to come.

Carried

Motion 5.15 Water Infrastructure Working Group

Moved: Cr D Thurley/ Cr P Miller

That the MDA call on the National Water Infrastructure Authority to establish and resource a National Water Infrastructure Communications & Consultation Working Group in partnership with the Murray Darling Association.

Carried

Motion 5.16 Water Literacy

Moved: Cr D Thurley/ Cr J Modica

That the Murray Darling Association call on the Federal Education Minister to enhance the inclusion of water literacy in the Australian curriculum from primary through to tertiary and vocational levels.

Carried

Motion 5.17 Water Trading System

Moved: Cr P Maytom/ Cr J Campbell

That the Murray Darling Association call on Federal Government and the ACCC to establish a water trading system that responsibly optimises (not maximises) the economic performance of irrigated agricultural communities (not only farms).

Carried

Late Motion

Motion 5.18 Name Change to Murray-Darling Local Government Association

Moved: Cr D Thurley / Cr S O'Toole

*That the Murray Darling Association commence consultation with its members on affirming the identity of the association as a representative of local government by incorporating the words **local government** words into its name.*

Cr P Miller declared a conflict of interest due to her role on the board of LGNSW and abstained from the vote.

Carried

6. NEXT MEETING DATE: To be advised.

7. MEETING CLOSED: 1.07 PM

Minutes to be confirmed at 77th AGM