

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 26th March 2013 – 12.30 – 2.30 PM

Council Chambers

ATTENDANCE: Cr Jones, Cr Morgan (chair)
Lisa Kermode, Stuart Holley, Peter Cluff
Peter Alden, Saskia von Fahland, Di Williams,
Bruce Milles, Joan Fitzsimmons

APOLOGIES: Rob Cocco

1. **CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting held 5th February 2013 were accepted as a true and correct record.

Moved - Cr Jones, Seconded - Lisa Kermode

2. **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. **Action:** Meeting with the councillors to be organised prior to each NEAC meeting to discuss agenda and reports. **Completed**
2. **Action:** Saskia to provide more information to Stuart Holley regarding the potential requirement for fencing to be included in a development project at Salonika Beach **Not yet completed**
3. **Action:** Predictions for expenditure to end of financial year to be presented at the next meeting. **See financials**
4. **Action:** Recommendations for priority projects for 2013/14 will be presented at the next meeting. **See financials**
5. **Action:** Meeting to be organised between Peter Alden and Stuart Holley to confirm the process to be followed for declaring weeds **Completed**
Stuart to prepare report to council
6. **Action:** Stuart Holley to follow up about the East Point Development and report back **Completed**

Council is still pursuing this matter via the courts.

3. PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation of proposed activities at the Mackay Natural Environment Centre – Richard Brown from MRC.

Action: Richard to investigate increasing the area of the covered roof structure to extend along the full length of the 5 bay shed.

Recommendation: that Council fund the proposal as presented including allocating \$157,000 from the Natural Environment Levy in 2012/13 and \$18,500 in 2013/14 to allow the specified works to proceed.

Moved Joan Fitzsimons, Seconded Peter Alden (All voted in favour)

The committee thanked Richard for his hard work in developing this proposal.

2. Presentation of Draft Blacks Beach Spit Management Plan - Kerri Woodcock from Reef Catchments

Comments from committee members included:

- That consideration be given to producing a management plan or masterplan for the land to the west of the spit and the Mcready's Creek area
- If Council were successful in gaining the federal funding applied for to support the cost of purchasing the land, the land tenure would need to become Reserve/Environmental Reserve, rather than the current freehold tenure
- That consideration be give regarding the possibility and benefits of listing the property on the National Estate as done for Slade Point Reserve
- That fertilising the sand dunes and installing sand fencing was effective at Slade Point Reserve and these techniques may be applicable for the spit. However it was noted that the grassland vegetation type is specific to Slade Point Reserve and is not found at the spit and that there are high dunes at Slade Point Reserve where sand fencing was appropriate, but the spit site is largely flat and the management issues and responses are not the same
- That consideration be given to whether ergon actually need access along the power line easement and whether this access track and the other loop track can be closed
- The 'relocatable structures' may be stolen. However it was noted that these structures i.e. the park furniture would be on concrete pads

as per council standard, but would potentially be relocatable if sea level change were to occur

- Fauna monitoring should be ongoing to determine whether actions improve habitat for biodiversity. Recommendations have been included regarding this including providing support to local and specialist groups to assist
- It was noted that the stormwater recommendations are not currently funded and that this would be the responsibility of other sections within Council rather than the Natural Environment Levy. It was mentioned that the planning section is currently implementation works at Carbeen St and Apsley rd
- Discussion about the sensitivity of the vegetation to fire. The major weeds that increase fire risk i.e. lantana and guinea grass are high priority target weeds in the weed management plan for the site. Appropriate firebreaks and access for fire management vehicles have been included. May need to look at keeping regrowth down on access track
- Discussion regarding potentially closing the two loop tracks in the north west of the spit and utilising the firebreak area as the access track from Pacific drive. Ergon may need access to the powerlines
- Discussion about potentially closing the access track south of anglers parade or not promoting this as leading to the spit

The committee received this report and encouraged members to submit any further comments to Lisa within the next two weeks, or during the public consultation phase. A report will soon be presented to Council recommending that the draft plan be made available for public comment.

3. Presentation of priority projects for 2013/14 - Kerri Woodcock from Reef Catchments

Due to time limitations, the full presentation was not made, however committee members were given the opportunity to ask questions about potential projects.

Kerri gave an overview of the prioritisation rating system for projects, and the reasons why certain areas are higher priorities than others.

The priority projects are listed on the NEP website, but it was recognised that there are other projects that are supported by the levy that could also potentially be reported on either on Council's website or the NEP website as appropriate.

Saskia asked whether other groups could be involved in the delivery of projects. This could potentially occur, however it was noted that where agencies other than council manage the projects e.g. Reef Catchments, there is no fee for the provision of this service.

Recommendation: that Council fund and undertake the priority projects as presented, including the delivery agency.

(Moved Cr Jones, Seconded Joan Fitzsimmons)

The committee thanked Kerri for her hard work on the management plan and the priority projects.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Coasts and Communities project/coastal activities update

The committee received a detailed report on this item.

2. Land for Wildlife Program

The committee received an update on this project.

3. Landcare Group support projects

Detailed reports on this item were received.

5. Significant tree register

Update provided as per agenda.

6. Blacks Beach Spit

Refer to presentation

7. Community Environmental Grants

Update provided as per agenda

During budget discussion, it was agreed to reduce the funding to \$30,000 for 13/14 with the ability to consider funding above this amount if there were significant applications and to advertise the grants more widely, with the assistance of corporate communications staff.

5. FINANCIALS

Financial statements and 2013/14 budgets were discussed

Recommendation: that council fund the proposed budget for 2013/14 as presented

6. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Saskia mentioned that SLCMA would be running a Sarina Native Gardens Competition and will be emailing council to consider donating a prize.
2. PCL have a new Project Officer (Kate Steel) and a new Regional Landcare Facilitator (Iona Flett).

Meeting closed 2.55 pm

Next meeting: 11th June - Council Chambers 12.30-2.30pm

7. UPDATED ACTION LIST

Actions arising from this meeting

Action: Meeting with the councillors to be organised prior to each NEAC meeting to discuss agenda and reports.

Action: Saskia to provide more information to Stuart Holley regarding the potential requirement for fencing to be included in a development project at Salonika Beach

Action: Predictions for expenditure to end of financial year to be presented at the next meeting.

Action: Recommendations for priority projects for 2013/14 will be presented at the next meeting.

Actions arising from the December meeting

Action: Further discussion to be had between Peter Alden and Stuart Holley to confirm the process to be followed for declaring weeds.

Action: Stuart Holley to follow up about the East Point Development and report back.

Actions arising from previous meetings

Action: Cr Morgan, Jessica Renton, Stuart Holley and Peter Cluff to discuss the potential to increase penalty units (particularly for vegetation clearing) with local laws staff and report back to the committee

Action: Councillors to discuss with Stuart Holley and investigate how the Natural Environment Plan could inform development and report back to the committee.

Action: Lisa update the Environment Levy brochure *In progress*

Action: Committee to consider the Pest Management proposal at the August meeting.
To be considered by the committee