

**Mackay Regional Council  
Natural Environment Advisory Committee**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

*Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2014*

*Venue: Council Chambers*

**Attendance:** Cr Morgan (Committee Chair and Councillor Representative), Lisa Kermode (Natural Environment Coordinator), Peter Owen (Manager Parks and Environment), Joan Fitzsimmons (Community Representative), Margaret Lane (Pioneer Catchment and Landcare Group Representative), Margaret Meng (Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association Representative), Lalith Gunasekera (Mackay Regional Pest Management Group Representative)

**Presenters:** Dale Arvidsson (Curator Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens), Trent Power (Project Officer Catchment Solutions), Richard Brown (Natural Environment Officer)

**Apologies:** Cr Jones (Councillor Representative), Gerard Carlyon (Director Community and Client Services), Kerri Woodcock (Reef Catchments)

Meeting opened: 12.35pm

ITEMS	COMMENTS	ACTION / RECOMENDATION	DATE TO BE COMPLETED
1.0 Confirmation of minutes	Minutes of the meeting held 7 <sup>th</sup> October were confirmed as being true and correct  Moved – Joan Fitzsimmons  Seconded – Margaret Lane		
2.0 Business arising from the previous minutes	The action list from the previous meeting held October 7 <sup>th</sup> was reviewed and updated		
3.0 Presentations			
3.1 Presentation by Dale Arvidsson –	Dale gave a presentation regarding a Platypus survey to be	That the NEAC support funding up to \$15,000 for	

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Platypus Survey in the Botanic Gardens Lagoon	undertaken at the Botanic Gardens Lagoon and sought funding from the Natural Environment Levy for this work to be carried out. The survey is required to ensure proposed desilting works which will be undertaken by Water Services do not have a negative impact on the platypus known to inhabit the lagoon.	the platypus survey in the lagoons, with council officers to determine the preferred supplier. If the accepted quote is over \$15,000, the additional funds will be provided from the Botanic Gardens budget. The \$15,000 can be funded from the 'NEAC allocated projects' account.	
3.2 Presentation by Trent Power – Tilapia Electrofishing in the Gooseponds	Trent gave a presentation about the electrofishing and e-dna monitoring program for Tilapia at the Gooseponds and sought a contribution from council to cover the eDNA component. The wider project involves detection sampling, distribution mapping, education and awareness raising, population control and building the resilience of aquatic systems. EDNA sampling can detect Tilapia dna in water samples. It is cost effective and more sensitive than electrofishing. Pre wet season sampling occurred in November 2014 and this funding is sought for post wet season sampling.	That the NEAC support funding \$6,420 towards the eDNA sampling component of the Tilapia project. This amount can be funded from the 'Monitoring and Research' allocation.	
4.0 General Business			
4.1 Councillor update	Cr Morgan advised that the October NEAC meeting minutes were presented to council on 5 <sup>th</sup> November. Part funding the Eungella book and the extension of the comments period to provide feedback on the role of the committee were noted.		
4.2 Feedback on the role of the committee	<p>The submissions received were discussed and the following common themes were identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Bimonthly meetings are appropriate</li> <li>– The current make up of the committee is considered appropriate (including 3 community representatives). A University representative could be considered</li> </ul>	Advertise for committee members in February 2015. Existing committee to meet on 17 <sup>th</sup> February.	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– More updates on levy funded projects are suggested (via a comments column to be included in the financial report)</li> <li>– Committee appointments to be for a 4 year period, with the committee to be appointed one year prior to council elections.</li> </ul> <p>The land acquisition fund was discussed in further detail. This item to be included as a standing agenda item.</p> <p>Requesting nominations from the community regarding potential properties for purchase was discussed</p> <p>Terms of Reference – requires review and updating. The Stormwater Quality reference is no longer relevant</p> <p>Reports on Land for Wildlife project, Landcare group support, Coastcare activities etc are not required bimonthly. Comments can be included in the financial report. Continue to provide an annual report.</p> <p>The Natural Environment Levy and Plan needs to be promoted more widely.</p> <p>Local weed declaration</p>	<p>Include a comments section in the financial report to provide levy project status updates</p> <p>Include land acquisition as a standing agenda item.</p> <p>Provide an outline on how the nomination/expression of interest process would work at the February meeting.</p> <p>Review of the Terms of Reference for the committee to be listed as an agenda item for the February meeting.</p> <p>Incorporate project reports into the financial report via a comments column and report on Land for Wildlife, Landcare group support and Coastcare activities annually, unless there is something particular to highlight.</p> <p>Communications to be included as a standing agenda item and a communications strategy developed.</p> <p>Include as an agenda item for the February meeting.</p>	February meeting
4.3 Washdown facility	The memo regarding the washdown facility investigation project was discussed. The NEAC accepted the memo and expressed their appreciation to Richard Brown for his work	The NEAC note the memo provided and recommend no further action at this time.	

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	on this.		
4.4 Coasts and Communities activities update	Report provided as per the agenda		
4.5 Land for Wildlife update	Report provided as per the agenda		
4.6 Landcare Support projects updated	Report provided as per the agenda		
4.7 Green Army update	Report provided as per the agenda. The Green Army team has been undertaking great work, and the feedback received from the community has been positive. An application has been submitted for a coastal team (3 consecutive teams over an 18 month period) in the second funding round. It is anticipated that council will hear back regarding the success of the application in the new year.		
5.0 Financials	Finance currently working on a revised financial report	New format financial report to be provided at the February meeting	February meeting
6.0 Other business	Report on the turtle tracking project noted		

Meeting Closed 2.35pm

Next Meeting Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 12.30-2.30pm, Council Chambers