

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 5th August 2013 – 12.30 – 2.30 PM
Council Chambers

ATTENDANCE: Cr Morgan (chair), Cr Jones, Stuart Holley,
Di Williams, Saskia von Fahland,
Joan Fitzsimmons, Bruce Milles, Kerri Woodcock (proxy
for Rob Cocco), Jonathon Dykyj (for Lisa Kermode)

APOLOGIES: Lisa Kermode, Peter Cluff, Rob Cocco, Peter Alden

1. **CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting held 11th June 2013 were accepted as a true and correct record.

Moved - Joan Fitzsimmons, Seconded - Di Williams .

2. **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

Nil.

3. **PRESENTATIONS**

1. Lydia Gibson - Wild Mob

4. **GENERAL BUSINESS**

1. **Coasts and Communities project/coastal activities update**

The committee received a detailed report on this item.

Additional items discussed included:

- Slade Point Reserve - Cr Jones mentioned funds available from old Friends Group. \$1900. Money to be spent on physical works.

ACTION: Investigate purchasing process and arrange appropriate works.

- Condition of the Reserve in general, particularly walking tracks.

- Acting Natural Environment Coordinator gave update on works being undertaken in the reserve. Weed contractors engaged fencing and sand ladders being replaced and maintained.

- Cr Jones informed the meeting of her communications with North Queensland Bulk Ports (NQBP) regarding fencing and access.

- Reef Catchments giving presentation to Council meeting on 07/08/13 on the Town and Far Beach beach plans.
- Blacks Beach Spit management plan public comment.
 - Discussion around the comments including dogs, tracks and other proposals in the plan.
 - Council staff and Reef Catchments to review and incorporate these comments to be accepted as amendments by Council.
 - Prioritisation of works and implementation to follow formal Council adoption of the plan.
 - Meeting commends those who worked on the plan and consultation.

2. Land for Wildlife Program

The committee received an update on this project. Discussion about the tangible benefits of the program.

ACTION: Catchment groups to meet with Natural Environment Coordinator to discuss re-funding. This to be done before November.

3. Landcare Group support projects

Detailed reports on this item were received.

Questions and discussion about schools program. **NOTED** that a coordinated approach between all groups that engage with schools in this field is required.

ACTION: Catchment groups to meet with Natural Environment Coordinator to discuss re-funding. This to be done before November.

4. Significant tree register

An update was provided as per agenda.

ACTION: Continue to promote the register in the community. Monitor and feedback activity on the website ("hits").

5. Community Environmental Grants

Two applications received. - Wild Mob
- Mackay Conservation Group

Applications circulated to NEAC members for consideration. Due to late receipt of applications and subsequent circulation (owing to tight timelines of application closing date and NEAC meeting date) the follow action on a decision making process was agreed to:

ACTION: Natural Environment Coordinator to review applications and make recommendations to NEAC by 23/08/13. NEAC to decide by the 30/08/13.

ACTION: Review guidelines around grants amounts available per individual application. Minimum /maximum?

5. FINANCIALS

The financial statements as at end June 2013 were discussed.

Additional items discussed include:

- Staffing expenditure

ACTION: Engineering Services Director to distribute 2013/14 approved Natural Environment total budget.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

- Red witch weed - approx. 4 properties in MRC area quarantined.
- Discussion around the Land Acquisition Fund
- Salonika Beach Issues - Fencing, vegetation clearing, dumping.

Meeting closed 2.50 pm

Next meeting: Tuesday 1st October - Council Chambers 12.30-2.30pm

7. UPDATED ACTION LIST

Actions arising from this meeting

- Natural Environment Coordinator to investigate purchasing process and arrange appropriate works regarding Slade Point Reserve and funds from the former Friends Group.
- Cr Morgan to raise at next Councillor forum the issue of state penalty unit increase for offences relating to vegetation clearing, with a view for a motion to be put to the LGAQ annual conference in October.
- Catchment groups to meet with Natural Environment Coordinator to discuss re-funding for LFW program. This to be done before November.
- Catchment groups to meet with Natural Environment Coordinator to discuss re-funding for Landcare support programs. This to be done before November.
- Continue to promote the Significant Tree Register in the community. Monitor and feedback activity on the website ("hits"). *Responsible officer? Corp Communications? Natural Environment Coordinator?
- Grants: Natural Environment Coordinator to review applications and make recommendations to NEAC by 23/08/13. NEAC to decide by the 30/08/13.
- Grants: Natural Environment Coordinator to review guidelines around grants amounts available per individual application. Minimum /maximum?
- Engineering Services Director to distribute 2013/14 approved Natural Environment total budget.

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. Completed. See below:

The management of vegetation is regulated by several Acts of Parliament, including:

- *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*
- *Vegetation Management Act 1999*
- *Nature Conservation Act 1992*

The penalty units for offences relating to vegetation clearing in these Acts are set by the State Government. **Therefore we would need to convince the State to increase them.**

Action: Lisa to 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. In progress.