

MINUTES

THE ROSS LOCAL DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE READING ROOM, ROSS, ON TUESDAY 4th JULY 2023, COMMENCING AT 11.17am.

1 PRESENT

Arthur Thorpe (Chairperson), Christine Robinson, Julie Smith, Marcus Rodrigues, Jill Bennett, Sally Langridge, Ann Thorpe (Hon Secretary).

2 IN ATTENDANCE

Herbert Johnson, Marten Cullity (Ross Hotel).

3 APOLOGIES

Mayor Mary Knowles OAM, Councillor Richard Archer, Helen Davies, Michael Smith.

4 DECLARATION OF ANY PECUNIARY INTEREST BY A MEMBER OF A SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

In accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Part 5, S48A – S56, a member of a Special Committee must not participate in any discussion or vote on any matter in respect to which the member:

- a) has an interest; or
- b) is aware or ought to be aware that a close associate has an interest.

A member has an interest in a matter if the matter was decided in a particular manner, receive or have an expectation of receiving or likely to receive a pecuniary benefit or pecuniary detriment.

It should be noted that any person declaring an interest is required to notify the General Manager, in writing, of the details of any interest declared within 7 days of the declaration.

Nil Declared

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

*That the minutes of the meeting of the Ross Local District Committee held on **Tuesday 2nd May, 2023** be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.*

Sally Langridge / Jill Bennett

6 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6.1 Closure Of High Street Pedestrian Rail Crossing

Following the recent Council budget discussion meeting, NMC has agreed to apply to TasRail for a license to build a new, legally compliant crossing. \$60,000 has been allocated in the 2023/2024 budget for the construction of this crossing. This item was unanimously voted for by Councillors, and the RLDC Chair thanked them for their support in this matter.

Matter ongoing.

6.2 Ross Village Green – Entry Of Dogs On Leash

On the 5/4/2023, a water trough in the off lead dog park at the Ross Recreation Ground was placed in position, however it has since disappeared. It will be replaced, however there will be a more secure attempt to make it theft proof.

No further action at this time.

6.3 Maintenance Of Ross Footpaths

Several gravel footpaths around Ross need remediation; photos have been sent to Council, and Customer Request 78015 has been raised.

Council has replied –

“Unfortunately, due to the recent weather events this has disrupted multiple works throughout the municipality. Our priority atm is for roads to be repaired, but we do acknowledge your request and will have them addressed as soon as practicable.”

Attendees discussed and agreed that the path from the Town Hall to the female factory is the most important one and should be repaired as a matter of priority.

Matter ongoing. No further updates.

6.4 Pedestrian Railway Crossing Chicane Portugal Street

Pedestrian Railway crossing at Portugal St, appears to have one complete chicane barrier removed and not replaced when recent maintenance work was completed on the eastern (cemetery) side of the rail line

Matter raised with NMC a number of times, and Jonathon Galbraith (NMC Engineer) has been in touch with TasRail, but TasRail have not yet responded to Councils request for the chicane to be reinstated.

Matter ongoing.

6.5 Council Review Of MOU

Council has completed reviewing the current MOU, and has issued an approved revised MOU which will come into effect after the terms of appointment of the current LDC's expire in December 2023.

Until that time, LDC's will continue to operate under the provisions of the current MOU in place.

It is the Chair's understanding the revised MOU will be presented to the new committee in January, 2024.

No further action. Item to be removed from Agenda.

6.6 Review Of Local District Committee Structure

Council has agreed to extend the terms of appointments of all LDC's and Forums until December 2023, while the Local District Committee structure review is being undertaken.

The review will examine the LDC's role and function, membership, meeting times, funding and communication with the local community.

Chair to contact RLDC Councillor Representatives for any relevant update.

Matter ongoing.

7 NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Future Of Local Government Review

The Local Government Board is developing a package of reforms to improve the way Tasmanian councils work for their communities into the future, and a report has been released by the Tasmanian State Government that proposes serious changes to the Northern Midlands Council (NMC).

The Northern Midlands municipality will cease to exist if the mandated changes to boundaries detailed in The Future of Local Government Review's preferred hybrid option are implemented. The NMC would be broken up and absorbed into Launceston City, Southern Midlands and Meander Valley and possibly Break O'Day municipalities.

Should Campbell Town and Ross be subsumed into the Southern Midlands Council (SMC) as proposed, then in all likelihood the Campbell Town Forum and the Ross Local District Committee will also cease to exist, given that the SMC does not have "Special Committees." The SMC has apparently declined to establish "Special Committees" on previous occasions, on the basis that SMC monthly general meetings are held on rotation within the various townships/villages within the SMC municipality.

The public can have their voices heard regarding these proposed changes, by contacting the Local Government Board on email:-

lgboard@dpac.tas.gov.au

and/or by contacting your local Members of Parliament and/or Councillors.

7.2 Round Table

Arthur Thorpe

- Discussed Item 7.1 with attendees. If amalgamations are forced upon the NMC, then the preferred option would be to merge with Meander Valley Council.
- Budget discussed. Although on RLDC wish list, the basketball hoop and quarter court was not given approval in the budget. Committee still keen to progress this.
- Doctor's surgery in Campbell Town would appear to be finalised, and estimated to open in 3 months' time. A great outcome for the community.

Sally Langridge

- Now that the Church/Bridge Streets tree leaves have all fallen, could NMC please clean out gutters in the Town Hall, Public Toilets, Reading Room and the Drill Hall. Supper Room walls in Town Hall damaged - presumably from blocked gutters, but may possibly be a structural issue. Chair to obtain photos and forward Customer Request to NMC.

Julie Smith

- Could NMC replace the carpet in the Ross Community Library. What is currently there, was second hand from the Campbell Town Library quite some time ago. Michael Smith in discussion with Works Manager regarding this request.

Jill Bennett

- Bollard chain on Northern side of Bridge Street has fallen off. Can it please be repaired. Chair to check and contact NMC. Julie Smith asked if the chains are removed, could Ross community have them back for perhaps display purposes.
- Concerns with Contractor spraying. Mrs Keach's cottage in the main street, in front of the house the spray is too deep, lots of dirt but not a lot of grass. Can contractors be asked to take more care.
- Christmas Tree in Ross Village Green. Committee expressed disappointed this was not voted for in the budget and could the community perhaps do this ourselves. It would need council approval. Chair to speak to Works Manager.

Herbert Johnson

- White lines removed prior to roads being resurfaced need to be reinstated. Any time line as to when? Chair to follow up with NMC.
- Parking at the old quarry, Buses can't park there, due to NMC gravel stockpile. Chair to follow up with NMC.
- Edges of road need attention, not wide enough for cars and pedestrians. Chair to ask if the \$1.33 million included in the 2023/2024 budget for road resealing/resheeting all areas, includes any allocation for Ross.
- Caravan Park still has sand bags and black plastic up against the heritage building. Chair to send photo and Customer Request to NMC, but as park is leased, unsure if NMC can do anything.
- Steps at Ross Bridge untidy and need attention. A member of RLDC normally sweeps the steps as a community service, but is currently away. The Ross Bridge is owned by State Growth and is not Council's responsibility. Regarding constructing a set of alternate steps or retaining wall, it is impossible to have any new infrastructure constructed near the bridge. In the past, the committee has corresponded with, and met with the 3 entities involved in the care of the bridge (Heritage Tasmania, NMC and State Growth) and it is almost impossible to have a consensus of opinion. However, at the last meeting with representatives from the 3 entities, the RLDC was advised nothing will be allowed to be built near the bridge.

- Cumbungi in the river. This has been an ongoing matter over a number of years. However, NMC has no responsibility for the river, it's State Growth's responsibility. Although the Chair and Council have endeavoured many times to encourage the responsible authorities to deal with the Cumbungi and the general state of the river, no outcome has been achieved. NMC advised by email dated 28th March 2023 (copy attached) that Council will no longer be undertaking a spraying schedule which is costly to Council and ratepayers.
- Gorse needs spraying in the town area. Chair to follow up.
- Could a water fountain be placed in The Village Green? The 2023/2024 Capital Budget has been finalised, however this item, if supported by the Ross Community, could possibly be placed on the 2024/2025 Capital Budget request list.
- Eastern side of the Macquarie River edge walk somewhat unsightly on some of the privately owned blocks of land which run to the river's edge. Council are not legally obligated to tidy any land held in private hands, as private landowners are totally responsible for keeping their lands in a tidy condition. This request has been raised numerous times in the past, and Chair and NMC investigated the possibility in great detail. This issue cannot proceed due to the number of the blocks of land that go right to the river's edge (as shown on Land Titles) which are in private hands, see attached copy of **LIST** map. Mr Johnson mentioned land shown on old maps, however the information shown on Land Title certificates is what is now legally relied on, not old information.

8 NEXT MEETING/CLOSURE

The Chair closed the meeting at 12:08 pm.

Next meeting – Tuesday 1st August 2023 commencing 11.15am in the Ross Reading Room.