




Town of Narrogin

MINUTES

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ELECTORS
2ND DECEMBER 2014
7.00PM**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS
THE TOWN OF NARROGIN
89 EARL STREET
NARROGIN WA 6312**

These minutes were confirmed at the Annual General Meeting of Electors held on 8 December 2015

Signed:  Date 8/12/15
(Presiding Member at the meeting at which minutes were confirmed)

Minutes are 'Unconfirmed' until they have been adopted at the following Annual General Meeting of Electors..

Mayor Ballard raised the issue of Cr Paternoster being **indicated** as being present and absent and confirmed that Cr Paternoster was in fact absent.

Replaced "indicted" with "indicated". Amended at AGM 8/12/2015.

3.2 RECEIVING OF THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2013/14.

3.2.1 2013/14 Annual Financial Report

Moved: Cr Paternoster

Seconded: Mr Seale

That the Annual Financial Statements for the financial period of 2013/14 be accepted as presented.

Questions Received:

- Mr Peter White – Raised that he has a series of questions regarding the full Annual Report and it is assumed that these would be raised at the end? Mayor Ballard replied that the Annual Report questions would be later in the meeting but if it is associated with the Financial Report then I will take these questions now?

- Mr Seale – Questioned that within the disposal of assets on page 44 that a BBQ was disposed of for the value of \$10,404 as this seems like a large amount for a BBQ.

Mr Bastow – The asset was not disposed of, as such, but disposed of within the asset register as it falls below the adopted value threshold.

- Mr Seale – As this is quite an expensive BBQ can this please be commented on.

Mr Bastow – It was two BBQ's that were installed at the Leisure Centre and John Higgins Centre.

- Mr Seale – The cost values applicable to employing staff is not always the same as cost of paying staff as in many instances there are additional costs like superannuation, insurance, to name a few that are included within this cost and Local Government has utilized a ratio of employment costs against rates raised to ensure that the expenses are not too high. In this report the employment costs are higher.

Mr Cook – Yes this is the full cost of employment of all staff and does include superannuation and other costs but it must be noted that all of the Home Care employment costs are included in this amount yet all the expenses are reimbursed to the Town and as such does throw this ratio out.

- Mr Seale - It is noted on page 3 the rates are listed as being \$3,023,455 whereas on page 8 is reads \$3,049,433. Although this appears minor can this please be explained?

Mr Bastow – It is the movement of the opening and closing of the rates debtors.

- Mr Crosby – In regards to note 2 on page 29 of the report regarding the Housing comment and objective. Can it be explained where these houses are and how many of them there are?

Mr Bastow – Thank you this is an error in the document as most Local Governments utilize a template document.

(This item has been checked with the Auditors after the meeting and has been approved to be altered)

- Mr Crosby – I am concerned that Council is using a template and it's not been gone through thoroughly and items of no concern should have been removed and as it's provided to the stakeholders that it provides the impression that Council is doing something that it is not.

Mayor Ballard – The official copy will be altered to reflect this correction and we take the input from the community regarding matters like this to ensure that it is correct.

- Mr White – On page 4 under Governance the budgeted figure was \$5,100 yet the actual was \$212,216 can this please be explained.

Mr Bastow – This is explained through the allocation of a grant received during the period that was not budgeted.

- Mr White – On page 8 under insurance expenses there is a large increase during the year, what caused such a large increase?

Mr Bastow – This is due to the reallocation of all insurances to one account and as such it is better captured in the reporting.

Mr Seale – Could this not be due to the large increase in building valuations during the period?

Mr Bastow – This would present as one minor part of this increase, the majority was the reallocation to the one account.

- Mr White – On page 42 item 16 Joint Venture Arrangements and it is commented that the Town purchased a 50% share of a parcel of land for industrial use, note the spelling of industrial; however the land would need to be rezoned and the additional comment states that it is uncertain the land can be used for this purpose. Why would Council enter into the agreement if the rezoning was not complete and how much did Council spend on the project and what ongoing costs may there be to Council?
- Mr Robinson – It is not reflective of the situation and the comment should be altered at the end of the paragraph stating "until rezoned". This would then show that the land is fit for purpose once this task was complete.

(This item has been checked with the Auditors after the meeting and has been approved to be altered)

- Mr White – On page 45 regarding Information on Borrowings it has some figures there regarding the Narrogin Leisure Centre showing that the principle outstanding on the loan at 30th June 2013 was \$474,312 and at 30th June 2014 it is \$437,514 is Council only paying the interest?

Mayor Ballard – if you re-read the figures, Council has paid some \$40,000 of the principle.

Mr White – What amounts are expected to be paid off each year and how long will it take to repay this loan?

Mr Cook – This is a fixed term loan and the principle and interest amounts are set each year and the duration would have been established for potentially 20 years.

Mr Cook – If you will allow Mayor these questions are advertised as being required 7 days prior to the meeting to allow officers time to review the points raised and prepare

answers so that accurate and clear answers can be provided. This happens each year but the advertisement is clear and receiving detailed questions like this with no notice is unfair on the officers and only provide the officers best judgment not accurate detailed answers and as such is inappropriate. Perhaps all additional questions in this matter can be tabled in writing and officers can respond properly which would be recorded within the minutes.

Mr White – I would have thought that the persons that prepared the report were across the subject matter and have not had issue with the responses.

Mr Cook – If you wish to continue asking questions in this manner we will provide responses that we can with the little resources that we have here.

Mr White – I only have one more question.

- Mr White – On page 52 under Land Transactions in point 31 it talks about a cash flow from a subdivision.

Mr Bastow – It looks like the change in the template is again wrong and need to be deleted as the Town did not participate in any major land transactions.

- Mr Little – In regard to the question raised by Mr Seale, I find it extraordinary that Council has two BBQ's that amounted to \$10,000 and were written off yet why were they not sold or put up for tender or is that not allowed.

Mr Bastow – They were not disposed of this is a book transaction.

Mr Cook – It is clear that these are the two BBQ's that were purchased by a grant and are housed at the Leisure Centre. They are electric BBQ's and are very expensive and the reason why they were written off is because their value falls under the required amount within the asset register which is set by Council. They were never sold nor tendered and the assets are still in use.

CARRIED 11/0

3.2.2 Audit Report

Moved: Cr Paternoster

Seconded: Mr Seale

That the Auditor's Report for the financial period of 2013/14 be accepted as presented.

Questions Received:

- Mrs Beaton – The auditors raised in last year's report that it was recommended to enact policy regarding aged debtors.

Mr Cook – Council has reviewed its procedures in regards to aged debtors and has been following this through with increased vigour especially in how the rates were raised and then followed up with the notices. As such there has been a review of the area.

Mrs Beaton – Does this not need to be policy or can it just be done on the hop?

Mr Cook – Council has always had a policy on its aged debtors and in the past it has been a more relaxed interpretation of this, now officers are enacting the requirements more strongly.

CARRIED 11/0

3.2.3 Mayor Report.

Moved: Cr Paternoster

Seconded: Cr Kain

That the Mayors report for the financial period of 2013/14 be accepted as presented.

CARRIED 11/0

3.2.4 Chief Executive Officer's Report.

Moved: Mr Seale

Seconded: Cr Schutz

That the Chief Executive Officer's report for the financial period of 2012/13 be accepted as presented.

Questions Received:

- Mr Seale – Within the Chief Executive Officer's Report it states an uncommitted surplus of \$390,000 where the financial statements clearly show a surplus of approximately \$1,000,000 and this is a little confusing, It is my understanding that the statement of the \$390,000 is over and above the budgeted surplus.

Mr Cook – The \$390,000 is, as stated, the uncommitted surplus and forms part of the overall surplus figure. The remaining funds in the surplus are committed to be expended in a particular way whereas the monies quoted is the increased revenue and reduced expenses saved by Council through the year and form part of Council's general municipal account. The main reason as to why I note this figure is that people tend to look at the surplus figure in the financials and think that this is what Council raised in extra revenue and saved through the year.

CARRIED 11/0

3.2.5 Other Items Contained in the Annual Report

Questions received:

- Mr Crosby – On page 25 under structure reform is the noting of the Shire of Narrogin incorrect?

Mr Cook – Thank you yes this is an obvious error and will be corrected.

- Mr Crosby – That at the meeting that was held regarding the merger that it is a boundary change. Please explain how the Building Code will apply when the two Councils merge?

Mr Robinson – There are certain exceptions applied through Local Law as to how the Local Laws are enacted and when the two organisations merge both local laws will apply until this has been reviewed and updated to the singular entity document.

Mr Crosby – Will it become clear to the community as a whole as to what area and rules applies to who?

Mayor Ballard – Until the review is performed and updated the existing will apply and when it is reviewed it will be advertised.

- Mr White – Within the statistics it is noted that the number of dwellings has increased but the electors have decreased.

Mr Cook – Without poring through the ABS data to provide you this information which is readily available to everyone I can't answer that. Each community changes every year and please note that this is electors and not population. Not everyone registers to vote as was seen in the last election where a large number of people were turned away as they had not registered.

Mr Robinson – Also the statistics clearly show that the number of people living within households now is less than before so even though we have more houses there are less people in them.

- Mr White – The Elected Members numbers on page 5 it states that there are nine elected members and a publicly elected head.

Mayor Ballard – Thank you for that this error has already been fixed.

- Mr White – On page 8 should the score for objective 1.1 is 5 should the colour not be blue.

Mr Cook – Thank you I will fix this now.

Mr White – Is the prospectus document available for the public?

Mr Cook - Yes it is and copies are next to you to take if you wish.

- Mr White – On page 9 in Economic Development in point 1.4 the comment was to raise awareness of Narrogin but the average score was 66% and as such what was being done to improve that score?

Mayor Ballard – The promotion of Narrogin occurs everywhere where Aaron and I go to all key stakeholders and the TV advertising is coming up again soon and I have been working with the Vietnamese Consular General to promote Narrogin.

- Mr White – On page 24 under legislative review the last paragraph it states that All Local Laws were reviewed during this period; however on page 16 it states that the Local Laws project continues due to time constraints.

Mr Cook – The statements are correct as the review was undertaken and the action plan that was prepared was set into motion. However this action plan project has been delayed as stated.

- Mr White – I like the way that the presentation has been done as it is easy for people to review and see what has been achieved and what the issues are but clarity, spelling and sentence structure is not good and should be reviewed more prior to the document being released. For example the Disability Services Report.
- Mr Cook – Thank you for the positive comments and I accept responsibility for the document as I prepared it and a lot of time and energy does go into its preparation and these matters will be reviewed. If Mr White is able to furnish me with his comments I will consider the amendments and correct where required.
- Mrs Beaton – I wanted to also say that the format is very user friendly and the numbering system speaks to the community so that they know how well Council has achieved its goals during the period. I was also going to offer that I would be happy to provide advice as to potential corrections in the document.

Mr Cook – I am happy to receive these comments and will duly consider them if received quickly so that the document can be replaced on the website with the minutes.

- Mrs Beaton – I also wanted to ask about a comment from the previous Chief Executive Officer that nobody ever reads the annual report but I know that this sort of report people do not rush out to get; however, this is an excellent document and speaks to the community and it's easy to follow and I would like to see that the community are exposed to this report. People will not sit in the library to read and a document this size is hard to read over the internet and I would like to suggest that Council send copies to every organisation in the Town and see it coming from the advertising budget and would be great advertising of Council.

Mayor Ballard – We can take that on board but there are at least 40 sporting clubs to start with let alone all other organisations.

Mr Cook – Thank you for your positive comments; however, I don't feel that it would be an effective use of Council resources and would be very time consuming. Mr Seale in his letter to me last week requested similar in that the document be updated and advise the community on a regular basis. I feel that an outcome of the two could be merged where the report could be updated say every 6 months and then advertised that it's available on the web.

Mrs Beaton – How many copies have been printed for tonight and can I take these to provide to people in the community to raise the awareness due to the excellent nature of the document and the fact that it could be the last opportunity?

Mr Cook – Again thank you for the warm comments regarding the document and yes you can take all copies printed if the attendees will furnish you with them.

- Mr Crosby – On page 15, I would like to congratulate the staff on providing the statistics on these measures and can relate to them, but could it be possible to quote the actual savings?

Mr Cook – Thank you and I did try to do this but it is difficult to apply and it did not make sense to me when I calculated the figure. I can look at other methods in the future.

- Mr Little – I would like to comment on how you are going to encourage people to the Town and when I was on the Board of BHP we set up systems to encourage people to the Towns with Turn Key business operations as they are the life blood of any town and can a committee be established of business people to discuss these matters to encourage the development of business and employment.

Mayor Ballard – We have a meeting with Curtin University regarding the potential Bio Fuel plant that is being tested now. Council is also working on the Agri Business district which is a stand-alone area that will accommodate these types of noxious industries.

Mr Cook – We have also strongly discussed the potential of establishing a Business Incubator in Narrogin for small business/trades, working with developers in regards to residential development and business development within the CBD and the rationalisation of the CBD. There is quite a bit going on and Council is unable to write about this in any detail as a lot of it is confidential at this point in time.

Mr Little – So there is no point in me going and doing what I think should be done.

Mr Cook – No that is not the case. The Town of Narrogin would welcome discussions with any potential business or industry and we would like to try to assist them in their

endeavours where possible. As such, I suggest that if you know of any business interested in locating in Narrogin that they contact Council.

Moved: Mr Seale

Seconded: Mr Crosby

That the Annual Report for the period of 13/14 be accepted as presented.

CARRIED 11/0

3.3 DEALING WITH OTHER SUCH BUSINESS AS THE MAYOR OR A MAJORITY OF ELECTORS PRESENT MAY DECIDE.

- Mr Little – I would like to ask one thing Mr Mayor, having been out of Council and Council procedures for many years when I and Mr Seale attended the last Ordinary Council meeting that out of everyone sitting here only two Councillors approached and we were not offered as much as a glass of water or cup of tea and everyone shot off to their room. In the East Pilbara we used to have 50 to 60 people at every Council meeting and they would be offered and cup of tea or beer after the meeting, but if that is not something that is to be offered.

Mayor Ballard – Thank you for your comments.

- Mr White – This may be superfluous point, but the way that your position is addressed should be Mayor Ballard not Mr Mayor and I feel that this is the correct way and I have been perplexed in the wrong salutation for your position.

Mayor Ballard – Thank you for your comment.

Cr Kain – I take Mr White's comments seriously but quite often at other meetings the chairman is called Mr Chairman and I am guilty but it is more of a slip of tongue than disrespect.

4 CLOSURE OF MEETING

Meeting was closed at 8:01pm and the Mayor invite all present to the committee room for a refreshment.

