

Minutes of the meeting of Riverina Water County Council held on Wednesday 22 April 2020

The meeting of Riverina Water County Council was declared open at 9:36am.

Present

Councillors Greg Verdon (Chairperson)
Councillor Pat Bourke (via Zoom)
Councillor Yvonne Braid OAM
Councillor Greg Conkey OAM (via Zoom)
Councillor Vanessa Keenan (via Zoom)
Councillor Tim Koschel (via Zoom)
Councillor Doug Meyer OAM (via Zoom)
Councillor Tony Quinn

In Attendance

General Manager	(Andrew Crakanthorp)
Director of Engineering	(Bede Spannagle)
Manager Corporate Services	(Emily Tonacia) (via Zoom)
Manager Human Resources & Governance	(Simon Thomson)
Community Engagement Officer	(Josh Lang)
Executive Assistant to the General Manager	(Melissa Donges)

Acknowledgment of Country

I would like to acknowledge the Wiradjuri people who are the Traditional Custodians of this Land. I would also like to pay respect to the Elders both past and present of the Wiradjuri Nation and extend that respect to other Community members present.

Apologies

An apology for non-attendance was received and accepted from Councillor Paul Funnell on the Motion of Councillors T Quinn and D Meyer OAM.

Declaration of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests

Andrew Crakanthorp declared a non-pecuniary interest in CONF-1 Performance Review – General Manager the reason being it is in relation to his role at Riverina Water and vacated the chamber during its consideration.

Confirmation of Minutes

20/025 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors D Meyer OAM and G Conkey OAM

That the minutes of the meeting of 26 February 2020 having been circulated and read by Members, were confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

CARRIED

Correspondence

Local Government: NSW Weekly Circulars: previously forwarded to Councillors by Constituent Councils

Staff Consultative Committee: Forwarding a copy of Minutes of the meeting held 19 March 2020

20/026 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors D Meyer OAM and T Quinn

That the correspondence be received.

CARRIED

Information Paper

Information paper including reports for the Board's information sent under separate cover.

Chairpersons Minute

CM1 COVID-19 Financial Assistance

Simon Thomson left the meeting at 9:41am

20/027 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors D Meyer OAM and V Keenan

That Council:

- a) Calls on the Federal Government and NSW Government to urgently deliver comprehensive and multifaceted financial support and stimulus packages to local government to enable them to continue to operate effectively and provide essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic**
- b) Calls for the packages to include the following measures:**
 - i. Increasing Financial Assistance Grants payments to 1% to help councils maintain essential functions and services, acknowledging the increased costs and mounting revenue losses arising from COVID-19 (and drought and bushfire where affected) as well as giving councils capacity to provide hardship assistance to businesses and residents**
 - ii. Immediate financial assistance to support council employees, especially in early**

- education and care
- iii. Providing stimulus funding to councils for projects that will help sustain council operations and boost local economies. This could be achieved through increasing or bringing forward funding under existing funding programs or introducing new programs
- iv. Increased access to TAFE, VET and other apprenticeship opportunities that council staff can undertake to address skill shortages, especially for staff in non-essential services who are unable to be redeployed
- c) Commends the NSW and Federal Governments on their stewardship during this crisis and commits to working in partnership to protect community health and sustain local economies through this crisis
- d) Write to the local Federal and State Members Michael McCormack MP and Joe McGirr MP, Prime Minister the Hon Scott Morrison MP, NSW Premier the Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP, Federal Treasurer the Hon Josh Frydenburg MP, NSW Treasurer the Hon Dominic Perrottet MP, NSW Local Government Minister the Hon Shelley Hancock MP, Federal Minister for Local Government the Hon Mark Coulton, Federal Opposition Leader the Hon Anthony Albanese, NSW Opposition Leader Jodi McKay MP, Federal Shadow Minister for Local Government Jason Clare MP and NSW Shadow Minister for Local Government Greg Warren MP to confirm their support for increased financial assistance and stimulus funding for local government to help councils maintain essential services and employment during the COVID-19 pandemic
- e) Endorses Local Government NSW's sector-wide campaign to obtain financial assistance, employment support and stimulus funding for the local government sector
- f) Advise LGNSW President Linda Scott of the passage of this Chairperson's Minute

CARRIED

Open Reports

R1 **Extension of time to pay water accounts**

20/028 **RESOLVED:**

On the Motion of Councillors T Koschel and G Conkey OAM

That Council endorse the actions of the General Manager in extending the period of time for customers to pay their water accounts by up to two weeks.

CARRIED

R2 Draft Delivery Program 2020/21 – 2022/23 and Draft Operational Plan 2020/21

A motion was moved by Councillors V Keenan and D Meyer OAM

That:

- a) In accordance with Sections 404 and 405 of the Local Government Act 1993, the draft revised Delivery Program and draft Operational Plan be placed on public exhibition and that it also be available to be collected on request from the Administrative Office, Hammond Ave Wagga Wagga
- b) Council increase the consumption charge by 2.5% in 2020/21 and also apply the same increase to Fees and Charges

An AMENDMENT was moved by Councillors T Quinn and Y Braid OAM

That:

- a) In accordance with Sections 404 and 405 of the Local Government Act 1993, the draft revised Delivery Program and draft Operational Plan be placed on public exhibition and that it also be available to be collected on request from the Administrative Office, Hammond Ave Wagga Wagga
- b) Council not apply any increase to the Access Charge, Consumption Charge and Fees and Charges in the 2020/21 Draft Delivery Plan and Draft Operational Plan

The AMENDMENT on being put to the meeting was CARRIED and became the Motion.

20/029 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors T Quinn and Y Braid OAM

That:

- a) **In accordance with Sections 404 and 405 of the Local Government Act 1993, the draft revised Delivery Program and draft Operational Plan be placed on public exhibition and that it also be available to be collected on request from the Administrative Office, Hammond Ave Wagga Wagga**
- b) **Council not apply any increase to the Access Charge, Consumption Charge and Fees and Charges in the 2020/21 Draft Delivery Plan and Draft Operational Plan**

CARRIED

R3 Councillor Superannuation Discussion Paper

Simon Thomson returned to the meeting at 9:48am

20/030 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors D Meyer OAM and T Koschel

That Council make a submission to the Office of Local Government in response to the Councillor Superannuation Discussion Paper and make comment (on matters discussed by the Board) and on the need for any future decision to note the “dynamic” that exists (as it relates to fees for councillors) in relation to this matter

20/031 RESOLVED:
On the motion of Councillors V Keenan and T Koschel

That Council's submission support Option 3 as included in the Discussion Paper

CARRIED

R4 Proposed Local Government (COVID-19) Splinter Award 2020

20/032 RESOLVED:
On the Motion of Councillors V Keenan and T Quinn

That Council endorse the actions of the General Manager in advising Local Government NSW that Riverina Water be covered under the proposed splinter award.

CARRIED

R5 March 2020 Quarterly Budget Review

20/033 RESOLVED:
On the Motion of Councillors T Quinn and D Meyer OAM

That the Quarterly Budget Review for the period ended 31 March 2020 be received and adopted.

CARRIED

R6 Privacy Management Plan and Privacy Policy

20/034 RESOLVED:
On the Motion of Councillors P Bourke and T Quinn

That Council:

- a) Note that the Privacy Management Plan and Policy 1.20 – Privacy were placed on public exhibition from 20 February to 19 March 2020 with no public submissions received**
- b) Adopt Policy 1.20 – Privacy and the Privacy Management Plan as exhibited**

CARRIED

R7 Policy 1.13 – Enterprise Risk Management

20/035 RESOLVED:
On the Motion of Councillors V Keenan and D Meyer OAM

That Council review and adopt Policy 1.13 – Enterprise Risk Management.

CARRIED

R8 Draft Policy 2.6 – Water Restrictions Policy

20/036 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors D Meyer OAM and P Bourke

That Council:

- a) That Council Endorse the draft Policy 2.6 - Water Restrictions Policy and place it on public exhibition from Thursday 23 April 2020 until noon, Friday 5 June 2020 and invite public submissions on the draft policy during that period**
- b) Receive a further report following the public exhibition and submission period:**
 - i. Addressing any submissions made in respect of the proposed Policy 2.6 - Water Restrictions Policy**
 - ii. Proposing adoption of the policy unless there are any recommended amendments deemed to be substantial and requiring a further public exhibition period.**

CARRIED

R9 Local Government NSW 2020 Annual Conference

Simon Thomson left the meeting at 10:40am

A motion was moved by Councillors P Bourke and T Koschel

That:

- a) Council be represented at the Local Government NSW 2020 Annual Conference
- b) Council's delegate be the Chairperson and the General Manager (as an observer)
- c) Nominations be invited from any other Councillor to attend as an observer
- d) Council determine motions that it believes are of concern and should be discussed at the conference

An AMENDMENT was moved by Councillors G Conkey OAM and V Keenan

That:

- a) Council be represented at the Local Government NSW 2020 Annual Conference
- b) Council's delegate be the Chairperson and the General Manager (as an observer)
- c) Council determine motions that it believes are of concern and should be discussed at the conference

The AMENDMENT on being put to the meeting became the Motion.

Further debate ensued on the Motion.

The Motion on being put to the meeting was LOST.

Councillors V Keenan, D Meyer OAM and T Quinn foreshadowed their intent to lodge a rescission motion during the meeting.

Councillors V Keenan, D Meyer OAM and T Quinn withdrew their foreshadowed rescission motion

R10 Continuation of the Community Grants Program

20/037 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors D Meyer OAM and P Bourke

That the Board:

- a) Endorse the continuation of the Community Grants Program for further one-year period during 2021/22 by way of allocating \$500,000 in the 2021/22 Operational Plan**
- b) Review the grant guidelines annually as required:**
 - i. based on Riverina Water's financial performance, and;**
 - ii. to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the community and the goals of Council**
- c) Review the Community Grants Program following the appointment of a new Board in October 2021**

CARRIED

R11 Naming of Meeting Room

Councillor T Koschel left and returned to the meeting at 10:50am

Simon Thomson returned to the meeting at 10:50am

20/038 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors V Keenan and G Conkey OAM

That Council be furnished with the report as resolved in December 2012 which stated: "that a comprehensive report be submitted to Council on the means of recognition of people that have made a significant contribution to Riverina Water County Council".

CARRIED

R12 Morven Reservoir

20/039 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors T Quinn and D Meyer OAM

That Council authorise the General Manager to sign the Plan of Subdivision and necessary documents in relation to Lot 2 DP1092125 and Lot 2 DP431081 to:

- a) Acquire the land surrounding the existing Morven Reservoir;**
- b) Create an easement for water supply; and**
- c) Create a right of carriageway**

CARRIED

R13 Railway Access Licence

20/040 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors D Meyer OAM and Y Braid OAM

That:

- a) Council refer the dispute (as described in the report below) to the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Transport, as prescribed by the Transport Management Act (NSW).**
- b) The Riverina Joint Organisation and NSW Water Directorate be involved in supporting Council's representations**

CARRIED

Questions and statements

The following questions and statements were made by those present:

- 1. Cr V Keenan congratulated staff in relation to their dealings with COVID-19 and thanked the General Manager for his regular updates to Councillors.
- 2. Cr P Bourke thanked staff for their assistance and IT support during this changed time.
- 3. Cr G Conkey OAM endorsed the comments by Cr V Keenan and also thanked the Chairperson for his updates to Councillors.
- 4. Cr G Verdon endorsed the comments made by other Councillors in relation to staff and their adaptation to the situation with the pandemic and continuing work as per usual during this difficult time. He also thanked staff and Councillors for the support he received during his personal grief recently.
- 5. Andrew Crakanthorp advised Councillors that a new staff member in the position of Project Engineer will be commencing with Council shortly.
- 6. Emily Tonacia gave an update to Councillors on the meter reading upgrade.

April 2021 Board Meeting for Riverina Water County Council

20/041 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors P Bourke and T Koschel

That the April 2021 meeting of Riverina Water County Council be held in Urana.

CARRIED

Closed Council

Pursuant to section 10A(4), the public were invited to make representations to the Council meeting before any part of the meeting is closed, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.

No members of the public were present or made representations.

20/042 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors G Conkey OAM and P Bourke

That the Council now resolve itself into a Closed Council, the time being 11:05am.

CARRIED

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, in the opinion of the General Manager, the following business is of a kind as referred to in section 10A(2) of the Act, and should be dealt with in a part of the meeting closed to the media and public.

Confidential Reports

CONF1 Performance Review – General Manager

Andrew Crakanthorp, Simon Thomson, Josh Lang, Emily Tonacia and Bede Spannagle left the meeting at 11:05am

20/043 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors Y Braid OAM and D Meyer OAM

That the report on the Performance Review of the General Manager be reviewed and Council endorse the recommendation made by the General Manager's Performance Review Panel which noted the General Manager's performance overall to be very pleasing.

CARRIED

Andrew Crakanthorp, Josh Lang and Bede Spannagle returned to the meeting at 11:08am

CONF2 Advertising and content opportunity – Wagga Wagga.tv

Emily Tonacia returned to the meeting at 11:10am

Council considered a Confidential Motion on CONF2 Advertising and content opportunity – Wagga Wagga.tv that was put to the closed meeting and was LOST.

Record of voting on the Motion

For the Motion

Councillor T Quinn
Councillor T Koschel
Councillor G Conkey OAM

Against the Motion

Councillor Doug Meyer OAM
Councillor Y Braid OAM
Councillor V Keenan
Councillor P Bourke

Simon Thomson returned to the meeting at 11:15am

CONF3 Update on Water Treatment Plant contract

Councillor T Quinn left the meeting at 11:27am and returned to the meeting at 11:30am

20/043 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors T Koschel and G Conkey OAM

That Council endorse the strategy to complete the water treatment plant project as outlined in the attached report.

CARRIED

Reversion to Open Council

20/044 RESOLVED:

On the Motion of Councillors T Quinn and Y Braid OAM

That this meeting of the Closed Council revert to an open meeting of the Council, the time being 11:32am.

CARRIED

Decisions Read Aloud

The General Manager read aloud the decisions of the Council made whilst the meeting was closed to the public.

This concluded the meeting of Riverina Water County Council which rose at 11:35am