

Tuggeranong Community Council Inc
General Meeting – 5 April 2011
Minutes

Present:

See attendance record of 5 April 2011.

Apologies:

Eric Traise, Greg Downing, Gai Brodtmann MP, John Armstead, Dugald Holmes, Nick Tsoulias, Brendan Smyth MLA.

President Darryl Johnston welcomed our guest presenter, ACT Attorney General, Mr Simon Corbell MLA. Due to his busy schedule, it was arranged that Mr Corbell would present his address on the changes to the ACT Justice System at the start of the Meeting. Darryl reminded members of the TCC Code of Conduct in relation to the usual respect to be shown to our guest presenters.

Mr Corbell proceeded to deliver his address and he provided the following information:

- ACT Government reforms to provide for “judge-alone” trials introduced in early 1990s;
- We have some of the most generous provisions nationwide, with defendants having an option to choose – more limited grounds in other States;
- over 50% of ACT Supreme Court cases are “judge alone” – highest in Australia;
- some problems involved – originally not intended to be so broadly available;
- some adverse pre-trial publicity may influence jury decisions;
- role of juries to be now reinstated for serious criminal matters;
- Bill recently introduced into Assembly for debate later this year pending further feedback from relevant stakeholders;
- likelihood of further delays not an entirely valid objection – under current system judges often reserve their decisions to consider all evidence and prepare their report;
- ordinary citizens should have the opportunity to play a role in administering justice to reflect community standards regarding such serious offences.

Questions from the floor:

Various queries and concerns were raised by members, including the following:

- What proportion of trials is currently conducted as judge only?
Majority of matters are less serious and are being heard on this basis and captured under the current system – exact figures are not to hand but estimated at 60-80 trials per year.
- Concerns about sentences handed down to violent criminals being consistently too lenient and inadequate – what can be done to rectify the situation?
Sentencing is a very complex issue and mitigating circumstances are involved in many cases and full context and available evidence is often known only to the presiding magistrate.
- Laws in the ACT are generally more lenient and generous than in NSW.
We must have confidence in the legal system. Judges are usually one of the few people who are aware of all the relevant facts of a case and in the best position to make the decisions.
- Clarification sought regarding the extent and purpose of the Bill of Rights / Bill of Responsibility.
Currently only applicable in ACT and Victoria – relevant information provided.
- Is sentencing in the ACT considered appropriate for the extent and result of the crimes committed?
More serious deterrents appear to be required.
The range of penalties is generally considered adequate. The proposed changes should considerably improve the system.

Confirmation of Minutes of March 2011 Meeting:

Accepted: Paul Armstead Seconded: Alison Ryan

- Tuggeranong Zone has experienced a spike in vehicle damage and 75% of all reported property damage was for vehicles, with reports of items being taken from vehicles almost doubling in March from February. Most belongings taken were small, portable items such as GPS units, iPods and wallets, etc. Insecure work vehicles allowed offenders access to work tools and equipment. The community is reminded to remain vigilant about removing items of value from vehicles to discourage break-ins and theft.
- During March, several ACT Police officers, including members from Tuggeranong Station participated in the AFP Bicycle Patrol Program. Members that have completed this course are able to conduct patrols on bicycle, making them a highly visible, flexible and proactive team of police officers. Bicycles provide a valuable complement to foot and vehicle patrols, improving the community's accessibility to ACT Police.
- Tuggeranong Patrol members executed a search warrant at an address in Banks, during which numerous hydroponically grown cannabis plants were located along with 3 containers suspected of containing a quantity of the drug. As a result of the warrant, a 39 year old man has been summoned to appear in the ACT Magistrates Court, facing possession and cultivation charges. The warrant was obtained with information provided by the community via Crime Stoppers.

Questions from the floor:

Members raised some concerns, including the following:

- Query regarding the statistics on burnouts – have they increased in recent months?
Some difficulty with providing accurate details due to the obvious difference between the number of actual incidents and the number being reported.

Suitable responses were provided by Sergeant Anderson. A short break was taken at this stage prior to the remaining agenda items, including the other guest presenter.

Update from Local Members:

Darryl invited the local Members in attendance, Amanda Bresnan (Greens) and Steve Doszpot (Liberals) to provide a brief report on current activities and issues of interest in the political forum.

Ms Bresnan reported on the following matters:

- Sitting fortnight activities – reference to legislation introduced for food labelling relating to the amount of kilojoules content, similar to that applicable in other States.
- Recent sod turning event at new premises for Tuggeranong Over 55s Club.
- Canberra Citizen of the Year award – Maureen Cane, CEO of Communities@Work acknowledged.
- Motion proposed on wheelchair access taxis – defeated in the Assembly.

A query was raised regarding developments with the Southern Cemetery on Mugga Lane. It was acknowledged that TCC is generally in favour of a local cemetery but considers that the proposed location is not the most suitable for a variety of reasons.

Update was also sought regarding the decision by the Health Minister to avoid naming the “dirty” restaurants mentioned in recent media reports – matter to be followed up. Reference was made to the food labelling legislation and the significance of fat / transfat content, etc rather than kilojoules.

Mr Doszpot provided the following information:

- Reference to the 4 options under consideration regarding the fate of Calvary Hospital – a further 5 options added by the Government following input received from recent community consultations. Decision to be made by the Health Minister later this month, following receipt of the final recommendations of the Committee.
- ACT Prison publicity re flow of drugs being difficult to control.

On request, Mr Doszpot confirmed that the Canberra Liberals supported the introduction of green bins.

Guest Speaker: Ms Tanya Brayshaw

President, Darryl Johnston introduced Ms Tanya Brayshaw from ACT Health to provide an update on the redevelopment of Tuggeranong Community Health Centre. She provided a brief background on the project and handed over to the Project Architect, Alan Flynn, to present the further detailed information on the development as follows:

- Preliminary sketch plans displayed for development of existing building on the corner of Anketell and Pitman Streets – endorsed by ACT Health;
- Budget of \$19 million for Tuggeranong Centre with extended and renovated facilities;
- 137 staff and basement car parking – new pedestrian crossing for access to rear of Centre;
- New renal dialysis centre and dental surgeries planned;
- Alcohol and drug counselling services, as well as mental health and pathology services;
- Exercise gymnasium for rehabilitation facilities, as well as podiatry services;
- Staff accommodation and essential shared facilities – provision for future expansion upstairs.

Questions from the floor:

Various queries were raised by members, including the following:

- Breakdown of proposed staffing sought. **Relevant details provided.**
- Will mental health services also be available?
Yes, with outreach home visit facilities to be provided – staff to return to Centre each day.
- Emergency care services not being provided.
- Concerns raised regarding the adequacy of parking.
Working closely with TAMS on this and other related traffic issues.
- Fate of the existing dialysis centre was queried.

Appropriate responses to all matters were provided by Ms Brayshaw and Mr Flynn, with further details available on the ACT Health website.

Other Business:

No items were raised by members.

General Announcements:

Darryl reminded members about the Special Meeting next Tuesday, 12 April with representatives of ACT Planning and Land Authority and the Land Developing Agency to provide details on various local Planning issues of interest – all members and their friends / neighbours are welcome to attend.

Also, reference was made to other upcoming events, namely the Kambah Village community consultation session next Saturday, 9 April (11am – 2pm) and the invitation for Morning Tea with ACT Ministers on the following Saturday, 16 April.

The next General Meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, 3 May 2011**, with guest presenter(s) yet to be confirmed. The meeting concluded at approximately 9.30 pm and members were invited to stay on for light refreshments.