

Council's changing of the guard

By Emma Kelly

TUGGERANONG

Community Council's five-man committee will retire this week to allow new voices and fresh faces to take over.

President Nick Tsoulias, vice president Russ Morison, secretary Darryl Johnston, treasurer Frank Vrins and committee member Ross McConnell will step aside as the new executive is elected at this week's annual general meeting.

Although the councillors will no longer head the table at each monthly meeting it's unlikely their faces will be forgotten or their voices quietened just yet.

Mr Tsoulias, who has been a council member since 2002 before taking on vice presidency in 2011 and presidency in 2012, looked forward to focusing his involvement on Canberra's Greek community and Tuggeranong's business community.

"I'll be making sure the Tuggeranong community is sustainable and as a business man I'll be doing everything I can to support jobs and the economy through business," he said.

Mr Vrins, who has been a member for the past two years and as treasurer for the past 12 months, said he would become more heavily involved with Tuggeranong Men's Shed and the South East Tuggeranong Residents Association.

Mr Morison, who has been a council member for the past



Retiring Tuggeranong Community Council executive members Frank Vrins, Nick Tsoulias and Russ Morison. Picture: Emma Kelly

three years and has also served on the transport and social sub committee and the combined community councils also looked forward to pushing the South East Tuggeranong Residents Group as president.

"Like Frank, I'm involved in another couple of

organisations. We've got other things we want to do. What do they say? If you want something done give it to a busy person," he said.

This sentiment has rung true throughout the committee's last term.

The highlights are vast and

include the first chief minister's visit since the council's inception; ensuring the community's voice was heard via a number of submissions for masterplans and upgrades; petitioning to keep public service jobs in Tuggeranong and for the implementation of

My Way terminals in all town centres; and purchasing the council's first Australian flag.

Mr Tsoulias highlighted population decline as a particular priority when the committee took office, including lobbying for the faster release of key land.

"It all meant we could attract investors to Tuggeranong, while ... looking at what role the south key could play in contributing to maintenance and clean up costs of the lake ... and we got [Chief Minister Katy Gallagher] to agree to run a needs analysis for the area to try to attract more people back to Tuggeranong Valley," he said.

Mr Vrins said the achievements wouldn't be possible without a team focus. "We haven't single-handedly achieved anything ourselves - it's as a team, that's been the achievement," he said.

Mr Tsoulias said that a diverse committee and new ideas were also important to the future success of the council.

"Everyone should have the opportunity to speak their mind, everybody's views should be respected - that's what will make a healthy council," he said.

"I've always believed that whilst we've opened up a lot of doors for the next council term we haven't closed any doors. We've been very transparent with the community, ministers, government, even cross-border. I think if [council] is going to evolve you need to have continuity, but not continuity of the same people, continuity of fresh ideas."

Tuggeranong Community Council's AGM will be held on Tuesday, September 3, during which time a new committee will be elected. No current executive members will be renominating for a position.