Tuggeranong Community Council Inc General Meeting – 2 March 2010 Draft Minutes

Present:

See attendance record of 2 March 2010. The President informed members that the planned guest speaker, Professor Gabrielle Cooper from University of Canberra, was unfortunately unable to attend due to an important family commitment at short notice and an alternative presenter had been arranged.

Apologies:

Greg Downing, Brendan Smyth MLA, Dugald Holmes, Bill Reid, Jill Faulkner, Steve Doszpot MLA.

Approval of February 2010 Minutes:

Accepted: Jan Petrie Seconded: Carole Traise

Matters Arising from February 2010 Meeting:

No issues were raised.

President's Report (Mr Darryl Johnston):

President, Darryl Johnston presented the following Report:

"Welcome to another meeting of the Tuggeranong Community Council, tonight at our new venue, the Southern Cross Club (Tuggeranong). Thank you to the management and staff of the Southern Cross Club for making us so welcome. We look forward to a long and strong relationship with our new hosts.

Since we last met The Council has been concentrating on two major issues this past month, proposals to introduce Random Roadside Drug Testing in the ACT and developing a submission or issues paper to be presented to the Chief Minister. I have been in further communication with Professor Gabrielle Cooper from the University of Canberra about her research into random roadside drug testing and seeking her guidance and advice into developing an on-line community survey on the topic. She has kindly provided initial feedback on the proposed survey questions but believes they require further work. The questions have been reworked and sent back to her for further comment and I am awaiting a response.

Council members and others have also been working up a submission or issues paper to be presented during a forthcoming meeting with the Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope. I wish to thank everyone who has provided input into this document. It is entitled "Talking Tuggeranong" and draws attention to issues of concern to many Tuggeranong residents from transport, to planning issues, law and order, and the environment. The document will be presented to the Chief Minister later this week and placed on the TCC website for public consumption.

The TCC has also provided feedback to the ACT Government's "Options for an Expanded ACT Electricity Feed-in Tariff Scheme". Thank you to Jon Armstead for his input. Executive members also attended further community consultation meetings on the proposed Southside Cemetery and second Vice President, Richard Hedges, is representing the Council at tonight's Neighbourhood Watch Public Meeting at Calwell.

I am pleased to see that there have been developments with the establishment of the Council's Sub Committees. As I expected some of the initial committees are small in number, namely the Environment and Transport Committees. As a result, the Environment Committee has been amalgamated with the Planning and Development Committee and the Transport Committee has been amalgamated with the Community and Services Committee. Another reason for the amalgamation of the Committees is because there are many cross-over issues. I expect that as the Committees grow in number they will be able to split and stand on their own. Nomination forms for these Committees are available on the front table for anyone interested.

I understand that the amalgamated Planning, Development and Environment Committee has held an initial meeting and I hope to see some positive things coming from them in the near future. I encourage those who have nominated to be part of the Community and Services Committee, which has now been amalgamated with the Transport Committee, to make contact with one-another and organise a meeting soon.

Finally I wish to remind members that you are invited to participate in a Workshop to develop a future strategy for the Council. The workshop will be held at the Tuggeranong Community Centre commencing at 8.30am on Saturday, 13 March. Morning tea will be provided and it is scheduled to conclude around midday. Thanks very much."

Accepted: Rusty Woodward Seconded: Alison Ryan

Treasurer's Report (Mr Eric Traise):

Current bank account balance is \$15,400, including a new Investment account for \$10,005. Expenditure was reported for the usual regular administrative and general office expenses totalling \$302, with income of \$22 received since the previous Meeting.

Accepted: Jan Petrie Seconded: Albert Orszaczky

Other Reports - Police:

Sergeant Rod Anderson, OIC Tuggeranong Police Station, attended the meeting and presented the usual report on crime statistics and information on other local Police activities during the past month. He provided the following details:

- Slight increase of 2 in confirmed burglaries during February compared to January.
- Reported incidents of property damage decreased by 29 this month compared to January.
- Confirmed incidents of assault remain static for this month compared to previous months.
- Stolen motor vehicles decreased by 10 during February compared to January.
- A total of 38 arrests were effected by Tuggeranong Police during February for offences ranging from breach of bail conditions and outstanding warrants, through to other offences such as assault, drug possession, theft, burglary and other property related and traffic offences.
- Police conducted 406 Suburban Policing Strategy patrols within the Tuggeranong patrol zone during February.
- ACT Policing is seeking witnesses to an overnight robbery near the Isabella Plains shops on 11th February. The 14-year-old male victim left a bus and walked a short distance before he was approached by a man demanding his phone, keys and bag. The man, who had also been on the bus, then made off with the property in the direction of the Isabella Plains Primary School. The victim was not injured during the incident and no physical violence was used. A description of the offender's appearance and attire was provided.
- Police are also seeking witnesses to another robbery, which occurred on Pocket Avenue, Banks late at night on 18th February. A young male victim on a bike was approached by a male in his late teens requesting some change. Four offenders were involved and left with the victim's bicycle and backpack. A description of a vehicle seen in the vicinity of the robbery was provided, which may be of assistance with police enquiries.
- A 14-year-old girl on 25th February in the grounds of a South Canberra school after she assaulted police. Police were called to the school after staff raised concerns with the girl's behaviour and whilst attempting to take the girl into protective custody it is alleged that she hit one officer and bit two others causing significant bruising and grazes. It is also alleged that she spat on all three officers. The person will appear before the ACT Children's Court at a later date on assault police charges.
- A 28-year-old Theodore man and an 18-year-old Fadden man were arrested following executing three search warrants on 25th February, with a third man from Banks to be summonsed. Police allege that the three men are responsible for the assault and aggravated robbery of two male victims in Civic earlier this month. The incident occurred in the early hours on 7th February in City Walk when two men, aged 26 and 22, were confronted by a group of 5 or 6 males, who demanded the victims' mobile phones and wallets. The victim refused and was assaulted and robbed. When the second victim attempted to intervene, he too was assaulted and robbed. The offences were captured on CCTV cameras, which assisted in identifying the alleged offenders. The two main offenders will appear in the ACT Magistrates Court later this month, both charged with aggravated robbery and assault, with the third man to be summonsed to appear at a later date on the same charges.

- Police bicycle patrols have commenced in South Canberra to enable the patrol of areas that are not accessible by vehicle and are time consuming on foot. They provide a highly visible police presence and enhance the ability to be more accessible to the public.
- Home Security Reminder: Hot weather conditions during the summer months prompts many
 residents to leave windows and doors open to allow homes to cool down overnight. Unfortunately
 this provides greater scope for opportunistic offenders to enter premises and commit thefts and
 burglaries during night-time hours. Police remind householders to remain aware of appropriate
 security measures during this period.
- <u>Fire Season</u>: All ACT Policing members have been tasked to remain vigilant during the summer period in relation to suspicious persons and activities particularly in more remote areas. The ACT Policing Rural Patrol based at Tuggeranong Station has been particularly active in this regard conducting regular patrols of rural ACT areas looking out for signs of bushfire and/or suspicious persons and vehicles. A new Fire Danger Rating system was released with the commencement of the bushfire season on 1st October 2010. Further details relating to that rating system and bushfires in general can be obtained from the ACT Emergency Services Agency at www.esa.act.gov.au or call Canberra Connect on 132281.

Questions from the floor:

No matters were raised by members.

President, Darryl Johnston, invited Colin Petrie (Vice President) to present a report on the outcome of the Public Consultation Meeting held on 25 February for the proposed Southern Cemetery. Colin indicated that the session was conducted by Hamish Horne from the ACT Cemeteries Authority, who had addressed our February Meeting on the topic, and he fielded various questions from the group of about 20 attendees, including the following:

- Have other sites than Long Gully Road / Mugga Lane been considered?
 Yes, sites in Symonston and adjacent localities which are similarly close to residential areas.
- How close to residences will the southern border of the Cemetery be?
 Approximately 300 metres, although exact location of crematorium building is yet to be determined, but expected to be close to Macarthur Ridge rather than close to the road.
- What is the extent of the emissions from the Crematorium and what impact is expected on Macarthur homes?
 - It is expected that they will produce plumes of relatively large particles with low toxicity, but obviously subject to prevailing seasonal wind conditions which are likely to adversely impact on Macarthur residences.
- If delays in clearing funerals is linked to availability of chapels as claimed, why not build more chapels or hold more funerals in churches in the traditional manner?
 - It was stated that all Australian cemeteries have crematoria on site.
- If the Mitchell Crematorium is under utilised as indicated, why not hold services elsewhere and transport bodies to Mitchell in refrigerated trucks instead of building another Crematorium?

 It was claimed that the Crematorium is almost fully booked.
- If a cemetery and crematorium are considered necessary in South Canberra, has the vacant site adjacent to the ACT Prison been considered?
 - This possibility has not been investigated due to leasing restrictions. Why could that particular lease not be bought back by the ACT Government?
- The impact of fencing the boundary and the noise of heavy earth moving machinery on wildlife and kangaroo population in the area was queried.
 - Not considered a major concern based on the experience at the Gungahlin Cemetery where a mob of kangaroos had lived for the past 20 years.
- How would the decomposition of buried bodies affect the chemical structure of the soil in the area?
 No evidence of any alteration of chemistry at Gungahlin at present.

It was stated that the planning stage would take place during 2010/2011, followed by the construction stage during 2012/2013, with operations expected to commence in 2014.

Various concerns were expressed by members on this issue, including the following matters:

- The location of vehicle entrance to the site appears to be contentious and is unclear on the artist's impression displayed.
- Heavy machinery on site will cause damage to the area and the adjacent wildlife corridor.
- Is another Cemetery really needed Woden Cemetery expected to be fully occupied within 10 years.
- Query on timeframe for recycling of plots not applicable in the ACT.
- Concerns about the ongoing capacity of Gungahlin.

Guest Speaker: Mr Ron Collins

Darryl Johnston introduced our guest speaker, Ron Collins from NRMA, who was replacing our planned speaker, Professor Gabrielle Cooper from University of Canberra. Ron provided a brief background on his role and area of responsibility, followed by a PowerPoint presentation featuring some information on the history of NRMA and its services, including the following details:

- Established over 90 years ago, originally as an advocacy and lobby organisation;
- Membership of 2.1 million 1.5 million stranded motorists rescued last year;
- Over 1,000 employees in NSW and ACT, including 400 patrol officers;
- Separate entity from NRMA Insurance Company (IAG);
- Own Thrifty Car Rentals, also 5 Holiday Parks 50% share of Travelodge Hotels;
- ACT operations include 22 Patrols, 2 road service admin staff, 1 policy specialist;
- Average of 55,000 roadside assistance calls per year;
- Road safety statistics in ACT 76 fatalities in 5 year period 2004-2008 inclusive;
- 7,200 "on road" crashes in 2008 14 fatalities has a huge impact in such a small community,
- Comparison of road fatalities around the world.

Mr Collins provided the following basic information on drug driving:

- Definition used in the legislation;
- 3 categories of drugs of particular concern impacting on driver performance are: Depressants, Stimulants, Hallucinogens;
- Suitable testing methods available but no accurate statistics yet.

He mentioned the following statistics on drink driving offences:

- Responsible for 60% of fatal crashes (over 0.15 blood alcohol content);
- Mainly single vehicle crashes;
- 2 out of 5 offenders have a previous drink drive offence.

Ron also indicated that many accidents are also caused by "inattention", which has become quite a common problem, particularly with the use of mobile phones while driving. He confirmed that NRMA is supportive of Random Roadside Drug Testing based on the decision adopted in other jurisdictions.

Questions from the floor:

Some concerns were expressed by attendees and the following points were made:

- What proof is there that roadside testing works? No firm evidence to indicate that it actually improves road safety.
- Introduction of random breath testing certainly resulted in marked reduction in road fatalities.
- Fatigue and speed are known major factors public need to take responsibility and action to discourage known drunk drivers.
- No national standard in force and inappropriate sentences are being imposed in most cases
- Technology is likely to improve the detection process.
- Reference to NRMA Youth Trauma Forum huge impact in schools evident.
- Strong message needs to be passed on to local Government authorities, including Roads ACT.

General and Other Business:

Nora Preston suggested that we invite a speaker to address a forthcoming Meeting on the nonsmoking regulations and policy in force in local public places. The President agreed to follow up and perhaps arrange for someone from the ACT Department of Health to come along. This concern was previously raised in relation to the apparent breaches at the Tuggeranong Hyperdome and the President had suggested that the matter be taken up direct with the Centre Management.

Upcoming Events / Next meeting:

Darryl reminded members about the Workshop for the development of the TCC Code of Conduct and the "Future Directions" Strategic Plan documents - to be held on Saturday, 13 March at the Tuggeranong Community Centre commencing at 8.30am.

Colin Petrie pointed out that the new venue for this Meeting was most satisfactory and suggested that a formal acknowledgement should be sent to the Southern Cross Club, which was generally supported. A vote of thanks to our previous hosts, the Vikings Town Centre Club, had been included in the President's recent column in *The Chronicle*.

The next TCC General Meeting is to be held on Tuesday, 6 April (after Easter weekend) at the same venue, with guest speaker to be confirmed. The meeting concluded at approximately 8.50pm and members were invited to stay on for the usual light refreshments and informal chat.