

Welcome and Acknowledgment

The meeting was opened at 7:35 pm by President, Glenys Patulny with an acknowledgement of country and welcome to participants.

President's Address:

- President attended several planning meeting and pop ups.
- President also provided input to the Canberra planning Action group.
- She spoke on ABC Radio about proposed growth in the north and south of Canberra.
- Many of the TCC attended the Lake Clean-up. 47 people attended with approximately half being local scouts and cubs. The event resulted with collection of 22 bags of rubbish and 16 bags of recyclables. The event ended with a barbecue put on by the TCC.
- The President and Vice President joined the Combined Community Councils meeting and attended the budget round table and raised issues like transport, better facilities etc.
- Draft District and Master Plan comments were submitted.
- Youth Engagement team has launched a Youth Survey. So far, the young people have conveyed that the condition of the Lake is one of the important issues for them.

Future Speakers:

The Council has requested our local MP, David Smith to speak about the current state of the district plan and speak about the 'Voice' proposal.

Police Report:

Southern District Superintendent, Rod Anderson sent his apologies for not attending the meeting and has advised that there were no new issues.

MP/MLA Updates:

- Nicole Lawder

- She participated in the Lake Clean-up event and helped collect a big bag of rubbish.
- Her work at the Assembly is progressing as usual. Tomorrow is International Women's Day, and she will be attending several events involved with the occasion.
- As the Shadow Minister for Environment, she attended the launch of Bush Buds.

Questions

What is the Bush Bud about?

The Conservation Council started a new initiative to preserve native animals called Bettongs (rat kangaroo). Another is the Corroboree Frog. This is a great breeding program.

- Mark Parton

- Some community members recently contacted his office regarding housing issues, and he has had face to face meetings with them.
- We currently have 2 park runs in Tuggeranong. Point Hut Pond and the Tuggeranong Lake runs. Tribute to Joy Burch who helped get Point Hut run upgraded so it was fit for purpose.
- Doorknocking in the Lanyon Valley was conducted. The major issue raised by residents was about rate rises.
- Mark commented that many people he met in Tuggeranong were not fans of the tram extension.

No questions directed to Mark.

GUEST SPEAKER(S)

- Rachel Stephen-Smith, Minister for Health Address:

She commenced by acknowledging the traditional custodians and the Ngunnawal people. The following matters were raised:

- Quite often the Health Department gets positive feedback about the Emergency Department, yet certain constructive criticism was received.
- Canberra Hospital is one of the busiest Emergency Departments in the country. Canberra Hospital largely maintained the service quality compared to its peers over the last term when others within the country did not fare well.
- We also have 5 nurse-led Walk-in Centres including one in Tuggeranong. We have more people treated through Walk-in centres every year than Calvary Hospital in the same period. They provide support for people with minor injuries.
- Working with the ACT Government on their Urgent care Division.
- Within the hospital, the acute medical unit is currently undergoing a lot of upgrades. This helps people with complex medical conditions and patients with uncertain medical conditions. This will pull specialists from the emergency unit to form a multi-disciplinary team on an ad-hoc basis to provide better care to the community.
 - Will be expanded from 12 to 24 beds.
- More nurse practitioners for the Emergency Department have been arranged. This will free the space for critical patients.
- There is a nurse walking around the Emergency Department to whom waiting patients can ask questions. She will also monitor if anyone looks in need of immediate attention.
- Funding for more advanced practice specialists has been requested and considered.
- Proposal to change the model within the Emergency Department. ACT Government committed and plan to increase the health workforce to 400 full time equivalent.
- Canberra Hospital welcomed 300 new employees and more junior officers.
- Overarching that is the Workforce Health and Planning. This is currently under review. We need to have more health professionals within Canberra either from offshore or grow professionals at home.
- We are progressing well with the Canberra Hospital building upgrades. The new Emergency Department building is very large and is certainly fit for purpose with state-of-the-art equipment.
- Latest imaging facility is being built at the outpatient Imaging Centre in Weston Creek.

Questions for the Minister:

1. *Why is the Doctor availability less in the GP and Emergency?*
 - General practice here is the lowest proportion in the country – GP density more like a rural remote area compared to other metropolitan areas.
 - Lowest bulk billing in the country.
 - As new graduates come out with a huge debt and GP salary is not enough, a lot do not choose general practice.
 - Multiple health professional recruitment campaigns rolled out making sure we can get people to come to Canberra.

Doctors in Emergency:

The government has put in \$23 million to recruit additional staff and try to do different things with the model of care instead of recruiting more doctors.

2. *Is there anything the ACT Government can do to put pressure on the Commonwealth to address this problem?*

Medicare Task Force set up to review this. Multidisciplinary teams set up to try new things to have better access to healthcare. We supported the Interchange Health Co-op (bulk billing).

3. *Why is the Garran building deemed not fit for purpose?*

The building was built in the latter half of 2020 and was never intended to be an inpatient ward or used for extended patient treatment. The mechanical and fire safety reviews declared the facility was not fit for purpose for extended patient care. It will therefore be pulled down and the area reused. Currently getting some technical advice on how best to reuse it.

4. *How long before we get an eating disorder centre in Canberra?*

There are current facilities. Looking at funding the residential service for a centre at Molonglo. We recognise that eating disorders are a serious concern.

5. *When can we expect a properly funded women's cancer centre in Canberra?*

Budget currently funds a nurse 1 FTE to fill that position – Gynaecological Oncology is a very specialist area. We will continue the work of Dr Robertson. There will still be a need for women to travelling to NSW to see some specialists.

6. *How will collaboration with other hospitals work for specialist support?*

We have a relationship with Royal Women's Care - Specialist will come to Canberra and will do one day of specialist surgery, stay for the night and be available for a specialist review next day. Strengthening Medicare funding is coming in the upcoming budget. It is an issue that the last Government did not focus on primary care.

7. *300 a year staff have joined as per your report, but how many have left?*

We have seen an increase in proportion of people leaving, partly because of burnout. Overall, we are seeing a net increase in workforce joining the health system. ACT Health has committed to a supernumerary team leader who is there to help and support other team members as part of the ratio system. Canberra Health has been co-designing a Well-being initiative with health staff.

8. *Nurse Practitioners, the 5 centres have worked well, will there be any initiative to expanding them?*

Commitment was to have one nurse practitioner on every shift across the 5 practices. The intention is not to become a primary care provider and replace routine care. The focus is on the immediacy of the care being the priority. Getting the flow through the Emergency Department. Also working with the College of Medical Practitioners

9. *Shortage of GPs around the place, but there is also a shortage of specialist in various fields. What can we do to attract specialists to the nation's capital?*

The Talent Acquisition team has been looking into specialists. Historically the ACT Health System has not consistently been good getting messages out to get more specialists. The current Talent Acquisition team is focusing on this. Specialists currently work in both public and private work and the team is strategising on how to engage visiting medical officers or specialists thereby increasing stability of our specialist workforce.

10. What is the SLA for emergency waiting time?

- There are standards in place for waiting times, e.g.
 1. Resuscitation - Immediate
 2. Life and Death - 10 mins.
- ACT is the best performing hospital in the country on urgent care.
- Challenge is that some people of category 3 need to be moved quicker.

11. With the latest Omicron Vaccines, when will the 5th and 6th shots be available?

- It's not under the ACT Government's control but with the TGA.

General Business:

Apologies

- Rod Anderson

Minutes

- Previous meeting Minutes were accepted by Beverley Flint and seconded by Robyn Rofe.

Treasurer's report

- Last month's expenditure was \$376 – operating cost including rent, etc.
- Funding is available for SouthFest.
- Total bank balance - \$36,800. – SouthFest + TCC Community account
- Report was accepted by Harvey Bell and seconded by Judy Bell.

Environment, Community Health and Wellbeing – Didi Sommer

- Bush Buds walk and launch update -
<https://conservationcouncil.org.au/blog/2023/03/02/bush-buds-woodlands-walk/>

SouthFest _ Glenys Patulny

1st SouthFest Committee meeting held last Thursday – event will go ahead in November.

PTC update – Harvey Bell

- Submission for the Territory Plan and District Plan closed last week. Harvey briefly summarised details of our submission with copies to be available on the website.

Meeting closed by the President at 9:29 pm. Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 4 April.