

## **VRRA-CCB Committee Meeting, 20 July 2017 7pm.**

Present: Peter Livingston (President), Angela Johnstone (Vice-president); Bob Pullinger (Treasurer), Sue Sheridan (Secretary), Peter McVay (Public Officer), Dawn Thompson, John Ross

Apologies: Ros Vickery, Irene Ross

Minutes of previous committee meeting held on 18 May. Motion to accept draft minutes – proposed Peter Livingston, seconded Angela Johnstone. Accepted.

Submission to the Better Boating Funding Program Peter Livingston reported that Council has on its radar improvements to the boat ramp at Plantation Point, with the meeting noting that safety of kids would need to be addressed if better access to motor boats was provided. The Holden St ramp needs pot holes filled and better signage to give priority for parking to boat trailers – the meeting noted that this could come from Council's maintenance budget rather than major works. Peter Livingston undertook to write to Council supporting the Plantation Point boat ramp improvements, and suggesting minor improvements to the Holden Street ramp. (Update: Letter sent 27 July)

Insurance: Council provided the CCBs with a briefing paper about the extent to which Council insurance covered the work of CCBs. The VRRA's 3<sup>rd</sup> party liability insurance provides very limited coverage re defamation, and Directors' Insurance would not protect Committee members against defamation claims.

The issue of whether the VRRA required 3<sup>rd</sup> party liability insurance was raised. Our current policy is due for renewal in November. The requirement of this insurance when applying for Government grants was a determining factor in renewing our policy last year – currently no grant such applications are in progress. The insurance cost is \$600 per annum, the major cost to the VRRA in the year. The decision as to whether we renew the insurance was deferred the Sept Committee meeting.

Dog bag dispenser: A member of the public (not a VRRA member) raised with Peter Livingston the possibility of putting in place a dog bag dispenser at Holden Street. The meeting noted that Huskisson Voice procured bags for their dispensers. Peter Livingston noted that Peter Gaffey was raising with Peter Robinson the bags and dispensers. Peter Livingston undertook to talk with Peter Gaffey about who provided the dispenser at Plantation Point and the cost. (Update: Jervis Bay Property is currently providing bags for the dispenser at Plantation Point).

Local Police and Related Activities: In response to a couple of break and enter incidents, a suggestion was raised to invite the Police Commander from Nowra to talk at the next general meeting about the key issues of concern in the Vincentia community and how the community can assist the work of the local police. Bob Pullinger undertook to telephone the

Nowra command and seek a commitment to attend a future general meeting – if this could be arranged, we would undertake publicity to inform the community of the police presentation and discussion at the meeting. (Update: Crime Prevent Officer, Tony Jory, to address next General Meeting)

Audit proposal from Booth Partners In previous year, Booth Partners did the financial statement audit on a pro bono basis. For this year's audit, they have sought a nominal fee of \$300 (commercial cost around \$1000). Request for a grant from IMB that included the cost of audit. The decision on this grant request outcome is still outstanding. The Committee resolved to wait for a decision on the grant prior to making a decision of accepting Booth Partners proposal.

Councillors' Visit: No notice has been given that Councillors were going to visit, but it was foreshadowed at the CCB Executive meeting with Council. Possible issues to raise included vegetation growth at Plantation Point that was impacting on the fence between the bush and grassed area; and storm water drainage problems throughout Vincentia and particularly as evidenced at Collingwood Beach. Peter McVay committed to talk with Council about information on the standards and condition of storm water infrastructure across Vincentia.

NBN Roll Out: There was discussion on inviting representatives of NBN and Telstra to give an update to the members. Whilst there was a diversity of opinion as to the benefit of inviting Telstra, it was felt members should be made aware whether connection of the NBN is at no cost. The benefit of the sessions held at the Vincentia Community Hall last year was quoted as a worthwhile benchmark for the community's interest in the NBN.

Letter from member suggested sharing the experience with a Walk of the Dunes: A letter was tabled suggesting a narrowing of the gap on the diversity of opinions on the Dune management could be addressed by a walk of the dunes by Renee Koonin and/or Save Collingwood Beach and the CBPG. Dawn Thompson offered to walk the dunes and share the experiences with Renee Koonin.

Vincentia Markets: It was suggested a 5 minute talk be given at the next General Meeting on the status of the markets, number of customers - 600, feedback from shopkeepers, waiving of fees by Council etc.

Frequently Asked Questions- Collingwood Beach Dune Vegetation Management Plan: Bob advised the CBPG expert is compiling a list of frequently asked questions "FAQ" to be shared with the CCB community as a means of sharing understandings of the science with management of the dunes and vegetation.

Concerns informally raised by several VRRRA members with the President and Vice President including the following:

- Perceived hostility to alternative views, particularly on Collingwood Beach;
- Perceived focus on Collingwood Beach issues;

- Subcommittee status of the CBPG;
- Need for strategic focus.

There was a wide ranging and frank discussion that included the following points:

- While participation in the CCB is open to the whole Vincentia community, currently, the VRRRA has only about 75 financial members and, as such, is arguably not representative of the whole community. 2738 resident adults in Vincentia based on 2016 Census – on a simple random sample basis, 337 persons would be required to make up a statistically valid sample. We need to do more to engage with the wider community.
- Some members and non-members perceive that the focus of the VRRRA has been on Collingwood Beach and that a) differing views to that of the CBPG are not welcomed, and b) important issues outside the Collingwood Beach Foreshore are not being addressed adequately. The accuracy of this perception was disputed by others. However, the VRRRA as a brand has been damaged within the community.
- Whilst acknowledging that the subcommittee status of the CBPG may be negatively perceived by some within the community, it should also be noted that the CBPG in its subcommittee role has acted properly and with propriety with respect to the VRRRA.
- The Vincentia CCB should act as a channel of communications between the Council and community, rather than a lobby group, particularly on contentious issues. On major issues, the VRRRA should gather all the views within the community and put these to Council to assist decision-making – this should include the percentage for and against, as well as a summary of the reasons for each. This could be done through an electronic plebiscite, possibly involving other local community groups
- The status quo is not a good option if we want to become more representative.
- The CBPG has acted to inform membership of the issues on Collingwood Beach in the absence of good information from Council and the unwillingness of other groups to participate in the CCB process

The committee agreed to form a sub-group, comprising Peter Livingston, Dawn Thompson, and Peter McVay to develop a proposal that we could eventually put to all VRRRA members to address the community's perceived shortcomings of the current VRRRA in an attempt to become a community consultative body that is more representative of the whole Vincentia community. Such a proposal could include:

- changing the name of the VRRRA;
- clearly defining the objectives and purpose of the new CCB;
- outlining a means of operation that shows the CCB seeks to accurately reflect the range of views in the community to Council rather than a single majority view;
- developing an implementation plan for changes, to relaunch the CCB.

Update: The sub-group has prepared a proposal to be put to members.

Meeting concluded at 10.20pm.