

Community Advisory Committee Minutes



Meeting held: 4:00pm, Thursday 18th December 2014 at the Education Pod (Summerlands)

1	Welcome & Apologies		
1.1	<p>The Chair declared the meeting open at 4:05pm, acknowledged the traditional custodians of this land and paid respect to the elders past and present.</p> <p>Attendance / Apologies are listed below:</p> <p>Environment Committee: Tania Maddigan, Penny Manning, Deirdre Griepsma, Tim Ealey, Joel Geoghegan.</p> <p>Community Committee: Stella Axarlis (CHAIR and Board), Michael Whelan, Deborah Holland, Stephen Fullarton, Patsy Hunt, Margaret Hancock, Pauline Taylor, Jan Fleming, Christine Grayden,</p> <p>In Attendance: Matthew Jackson (Chief Executive Officer), Dr Roz Jessop (Environment Manager), Jarvis Weston (Ranger in Charge), Hayley Smith (Executive Assistant - Minutes).</p> <p>Apologies: Andrew Paxton (CHAIR and Board), Stephen Davie (Board), Gavan O'Connor, Bessie Tyers, Jane Daly, Paul Smith, Gill Hardman, Cr. Kimberley Brown, Mike Cleeland, Anne Davie.</p>		
2	Minutes from Previous Meetings	ACTIONS	STATUS
2.1	<p>The minutes of the Community and Environment Advisory Committee (joint) meeting held 30th October 2014 were accepted as a true and correct record.</p> <p>Moved: Stephen Fullarton Second: Patsy Hunt</p>		
2.2	<p><u>Signage at the Koala Conservation Centre</u></p> <p>Comment: Patsy Hunt requested further discussion regarding her enquiry around signage at the Koala Conservation Centre.</p> <p>Note: The CEO, Key Projects Manager and Communications Executive met with Patsy in January 2015 to further discuss signage at the Koala Conservation Centre.</p>		
2.3	<p><u>Pest Animal Control (Pindone)</u></p> <p>Comment: Jan Fleming raised concern regarding the use of Pindone and the possible effects on other animals and asked if other methods of control had been (or could be) investigated.</p> <p>Response: The Environment Manager advised that there are ethical guidelines in place regarding the use of poisons and that draft strategies are currently in progress, including use of poisons.</p>		
3	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes	ACTIONS	STATUS
	No outstanding actions.		
4	Phillip Island Nature Parks Update	ACTIONS	STATUS
4.1	<p><u>General Nature Parks Update - CEO:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitation is at 396,000 YTD (vs. 374,000 last year) including 20,000 up internationally. China continues to dominate the international market. Domestic visitation is down but anticipated to increase over the peak summer period. • Comment: Deborah Holland enquired regarding the new Nature Parks boat and comparisons to the Kasey Lee (the Wildlife Coast Cruises boat). <p>Response: The CEO highlighted features including the increased variety of tours for different markets and Nature Parks interps (as well as seals), focusing on the environment, local indigenous history and the history of the Summerlands Peninsula. The boat runs more regularly (1 and 2 hour tours, all year, 7-days a week).</p> <p>Comment: Pauline Taylor enquired regarding the boat type and raised concern regarding the speed of the boat.</p> <p>Response: The CEO advised that it is a rigid inflatable boat (RIB) with 4 engines.</p>	CEO to organise with	

	<p>Comment: It was suggested that advisory committee members could take the tour.</p> <p>ACTION: The CEO agreed and advised that he would organise this with the Marketing Manager.</p> <p>Comment: Margaret Hancock relayed concern by some community members who had seen the Nature Parks boat travelling in circles at Cowes and the environmental impacts.</p> <p>Response: The CEO advised that the boat tour included demonstrating manoeuvrability and that this is the way it was designed, including the captain needing to learn how to use/manoeuvrability of the boat over time and there were no environmental impacts as a result of the boat operations. This will be closely monitored by the Nature Parks staff on board daily.</p> <p>Comment: Margaret suggested advertising prior, in future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft Churchill Island Conservation Management Plan is currently in progress by consultants Lovell Chen. The draft will be ready in February 2015 for further review by management. • TRACT consultants recently won a Victorian AILA Award in the category of Planning, for the Summerland Peninsula Infrastructure and Procurement Master Plan project. • The Nobbies (WWF) redevelopment is scheduled for opening in December 2015 with preliminary architectural drawings in progress. • The Penguins Plus upgrade has been approved by the Board, with detailed drawings in progress. • The South and North Coast Key Area Plan has been approved by the Board and is available on the Nature Parks website here: http://www.penguins.org.au/assets/About/PDF-Publications/South-and-North-Coast-Key-Area-Plan-PINP14.pdf • Construction of the new steps at Aussie Track is now complete. • The 2015 Phillip Island Nature Parks Community Open Day will be held on Sunday 1st March 2015. <p>Comment: Patsy Hunt requested more “No Smoking” signs at the Koala Conservation Centre and commented that she had recently notice more people smoking there as there are not as many signs now.</p> <p>ACTION: CEO to follow up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vicroads has agreed to decrease the speed limit along Ventnor Road at Summerlands from 80km to 60km/ph. Further negotiations are in progress regarding the section just north of St Helens Road (i.e. “the cutting”). • The CEO has requested a briefing with the new Minister for Environment, The Hon. Lisa Neville MP to brief her regarding the Nature Parks and key projects. The Hon. John Eren MP is the new Minister for Tourism. <p>The Chair congratulated the CEO on his work to date around outcomes of the staff survey, and commented on the increased moral of staff as well as positive survey results related to stakeholder engagement.</p>	<p>the Marketing Manager and invite community and environment advisory committee members to attend the Eco Boat tour.</p> <p>CEO to investigate ‘No Smoking’ signage at the Koala Conservation Centre.</p>	
4.2	<p><u>Environment Update – Environment Manager:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Environment team continues weed work focusing on thistles, and searching for new and emerging weeds such as chillian needle grass and african love grass. • With assistance of volunteers from San Remo Primary School, Monash Biological Society, NAB, and local coast action groups, 17,000 trees were planted over a period of 2 weeks including at Churchill Island, around Fishers Wetland and along the south coast. • Fox scats have been found at Cape Woolamai and Ventnor. Detection dogs and handlers from the Tasmanian Fox Program visited in early December. • Feral cat control is currently focused around hooded plover nesting areas and habitat. • The Nature Park is working with Bass Coast Landcare Network, as part of the Rabbit Working Group, to develop a rabbit strategy for the Bass Coast region. • 43 hooded plovers were recorded on Phillip Island during the recent count in November. Disturbance and predation of eggs are ongoing problems. • The annual Koala Health Check was recently completed at the Koala Conservation Centre. A total 23 koalas were counted within the reserve. • Installation of the new sprinkler system for fire mitigation purposes at the Koala Conservation Centre is now complete. • Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre staff received 116 calls over October/November regarding advice and rescues. 	<p>CEO to discuss with</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of an oiled seal response (Exercise Phoca) is in progress. A bushfire /wildfire action plan is also in progress (to be tested in May 2015). Environment staff attended various conferences over October/November, including the IUCN Congress (Sydney) and Coast to Coast Conference (Perth). <p>Comment: Patsy Hunt advised that she had seen kingfishers nesting at the Koala Conservation Centre. Comment: Deborah Holland suggested media over the summer season regarding damage caused by feral cats to target holiday makers.</p> <p>ACTION: CEO to discuss with Communications Executive.</p>	the Communications Executive possible media over the summer period regarding damage caused by feral cats.	
5	Presentation: Country Fire Authority (CFA) Bass Coast	ACTIONS	STATUS
5.1	<p>Scott Hamilton (Brigade Support Officer) and Damien O'Connor (Group Officer – Bass Coast Group of Fire Brigades) provided a presentation to the group. The presentation included short films on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bureau of Meteorology rainfall and temperature data for the previous year and forecasts of hotter days for the coming year, less rainfall and increased possibility of grass fires. CFA emergency warnings including warning levels and what they mean, and methods to access information and community updates. Fire danger ratings and what they mean. What to do if there is a grass fire nearby and how to reduce the risk of grass fires. Demonstration and importance of the 'Leave and Live' message. <p>The CFA representatives also discussed these topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFA strategies and working with other key emergency services Local CFA capabilities and appliances that service Phillip Island and Bass Coast, including types of CFA vehicles and how they assist. Collaboration with Phillip Island Nature Parks and the Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee. <p>Comment: Penny Manning and Pauline Taylor raised concern about the availability of the CFA films and other information to older people who cannot as easily access new technology and social media networks, and for busy people.</p> <p>Response: The CFA is engaged with over 60 broadcasters state-wide. The main method used to communicate warnings is radio (on Phillip Island it is 774 ABC or 3mFM). Telephone alerts are activated for emergency warnings (new technology can detect landline and mobile numbers currently in a specific area). The CFA films are also shown on television throughout summer.</p> <p>Comment: Deirdre Griepsma highlighted the importance that residents remain alert on hot days.</p> <p>Comment: Jan Fleming asked regarding strategies to stop arsonists and asked how many are in the Bass Coast area.</p> <p>Response: Authorities have a list of offenders who are monitored by Victoria Police. Due to privacy laws, their location is kept confidential.</p> <p>Comment: Christine Grayden asked regarding actions that residents should take if they find people on the beach with a fire.</p> <p>Response: Walk away and call 000. Do not engage as this may put you in Danger.</p> <p>Risks associated with drugs and bad behaviour were discussed.</p> <p>Comment: Committee members raised that sometimes when the police are called regarding a fire on the foreshore nothing happens. There was also comment that it's difficult to report fireworks because it's hard to determine the location. Deirdre commented that fire incidents have been worse over the past couple of weeks (schoolies).</p> <p>Response: Police respond to many reports of fireworks and patrols have increased.</p> <p>Comment: Tim Ealey raised that leaves in gutters is also a fire risk.</p> <p>Response: This risk is listed in CFA collateral and on the CFA website, with other ways that residents can protect their homes.</p> <p>Comment: Deirdre Griepsma raised that there is some confusion in the community regarding fire ratings and what they are based on.</p> <p>Response: Fire ratings (and "Total Fire Ban" days) are determined by scientific figures based on humidity and temperature.</p> <p>ACTION: Executive Assistant to email CFA presentation to committee members including information on fire ratings.</p>	Executive Assistant to email CFA presentation to committee members	

	<p>Comment: Deborah Holland enquired regarding CFA's relationship with Vicroads. Response: CFA liaises with Vicroads regularly and works with them where appropriate regarding fire on Phillip Island.</p> <p>Comment: Deborah Holland asked if the Cowes CFA fire station is in the best location for operational purposes. Response: The current location is fine and traffic is only an issue at school time.</p> <p>Comment: Pauline Taylor asked if fires develop more at night. Response: Warmer nights are a concern, but normally it is easier to fight fires at night (also depends on the wind).</p> <p>Comment: Michael Whelan enquired regarding Nature Parks fire appliances and staff. Response: The Nature Parks is equipped with fire appliances and trained qualified staff.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mr Hamilton and Mr O'Connor for their presentation.</p>	including information on fire ratings.	
	The committees separated to their own meetings.		
6	Matters Arising and Advice from Committee Members:	ACTIONS	STATUS
6.1	<p><u>Churchill Island Update (Christine Grayden)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two paintings (dated approx. 1890) have been donated to Churchill Island by Joyce Hurle of Berwick. Her aunty was maid to Margaret Amess, youngest child of Samuel and Jane, first Amess owners of Churchill Island. She also donated a supper cloth embroidered by Margaret and a damask dining table cloth owned by Margaret. Christine has met with various experts regarding the historical collection and preservation and significance of the various buildings at Churchill Island for the Conservation Management Plan. <p>Comment: Deborah Holland asked when the draft plan is due to be finalised. Response: The draft will be available in February 2015. FOCIS will be presented the draft plan at its February meeting.</p>		
6.2	<p><u>Porticipate (environment consultation group for the Port of Hastings project)</u></p> <p>Comment: Patsy Hunt asked if there were any updates regarding Porticipate. Response: The Nature Parks has been advised that the project has been frozen until further notice.</p>		
6.3	<p><u>Churchill Island Cafe</u></p> <p>Comment: Patsy Hunt raised that she had recently taken friends to Churchill Island Café and that there were dirty, uncleared tables even though it was not busy, that the food was overpriced and that the service was slow. Other committee members stated that they had a similar experience and would not go back. Christine Grayden discussed negative comments on Trip advisor (although at times, there has been positive feedback). Response: The CEO advised that he would pass on the feedback to the café operator (who leases the café from the Nature Parks).</p>	CEO to pass on negative feedback from committee members regarding Churchill Island Café.	
6.4	<p><u>Cape Barren Geese numbers</u></p> <p>Comment: Margaret Hancock raised that some local farmers had expressed concern about increasing cape barren geese numbers and enquired regarding plans for control, including at what point the decision is made as to when there are 'too many'. Response: Control is the responsibility of DEPI (Department of Environment and Primary Industries). The Nature Parks conducts counts and provides data to DEPI. DEPI provides information and advice to farmers regarding control of wallabies and other species.</p>		
6.5	<p><u>Penguin Parade building</u></p> <p>Comment: Pauline Taylor asked if there is a way for visitors who do not wish to view the penguins to enter the building at night and go to the gift shop / café. Response: The CEO advised that with the current building layout, this is not possible. All plans for the proposed new Penguin Parade building include visitor centre access for visitors who are not viewing the penguin attraction. Committee members noted that day access to the centre is now free of charge.</p>		

6.6	<u>Grants</u> Comment: Deborah Holland congratulated the Nature Parks environment team on the recent grants received.		
7	Other Business		
7.1	The Chair and CEO thanked committee members for their contribution throughout the year. Committee members were presented with Christmas hampers.		
8	Next Meeting		
8.1	Next regular meeting: Thursday 26 th February 2015, 4:00pm at the Education Pod. The meeting was closed at 6:02pm.		