

Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance

Annual General Meeting – MINUTES

Sunday 27 October 2013, 1.00 – 1.30pm

Landcare Resource Centre, Teralba



Chair: Dot Seiffert

Present: Nathan Benson, Sandy Benson, Steve Dewar, Colleen Hegarty, John Hegarty, Norbert Lica, Avril Lockton, Nico Marcar, Jean McGarry, Dot Seiffert, Ross Woods

Observers: Alice Howe (Lake Macquarie City Council, Manager Sustainability), Rachelle McConville (Lake Macquarie City Council, Sustainability Engagement Officer)

Apologies: Robyn Charlton, Indra Deamer, Susan Denholm, Helen Gould, Dan Macdonald, Colin Mondy, Laurene Mulcahy, Kate Newman, Ken Stokes, Baz Thrower

1. Welcome and Apologies (Dot Seiffert)

Dot welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked them for coming.

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Sustainable Neighbourhoods (Alice Howe, Council)

Dr Howe addressed the meeting on behalf of Council.

- The Sustainable Neighbourhoods Program commenced in Dora Creek in July 2009, and now covers 45 suburbs and 83,000 residents. So far Council has directly invited almost half the City's population to participate and develop Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plans for their neighbourhood. Currently 3500 people are actively involved.
- A major benefit of the program has been to highlight people's values. In particular, litter and illegal dumping, protecting native vegetation and habitat, saving water in their homes, and preventing waste are consistently identified by residents as issues of most concern. Council has responded by developing new programs like EcoAngels and 'Our Super Street Sale' to provide support for the most important actions the community wants to undertake.

- The Landcare Resource Centre (LRC) at Teralba is being developed as a facility to support volunteers, and as an education centre. A masterplan has recently been on public exhibition, and is being adopted in next few weeks. It is envisaged that the centre will provide a place for education to support community gardening and home waste reduction such as composting and worm farming, as well as providing a volunteer hub for Landcare and sustainability volunteers. Sustainability staff are currently located at the centre on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.
- Thank you to Sustainable Neighbourhood volunteers for all the work you do in your communities. Council acknowledges your commitment, and appreciates the great efforts you make day in and day out.

Relating to the further development of the LRC, members noted similar models of community hubs such as the Darebin Creek Environment Centre in Melbourne.

3. Minutes of previous AGM, Sunday 21 October 2012

The minutes of the previous AGM, dated Sunday 21 October were circulated – see attached.

Motion: Members accept the minutes from the previous AGM, dated Sunday 21 October 2012, as a true and correct record.

Moved: Steve Dewar

Seconded: Jean McGarry

Passed unanimously

4. Chairperson's Report (Dot Seiffert)

Dot presented the Chairperson's report and circulated hard copies – see attached.

Some comments from members:

- The membership numbers seem to average approximately 10 financial members per group. It would be great to have higher numbers of committee members on the groups. It was noted that there is a difference between financial member (often just the committee members who come to meetings regularly), and the wider contact list of people who are interested and will turn up to events and activities.

- Extending our promotion and publicity efforts would be helpful to increase the recognition of the Sustainable Neighbourhoods network and the great work that is being done. This would also help to attract new members.

Motion: Members accept the Chairperson's report as tabled.

Moved: Steve Dewar

Seconded: Sandy Benson

Passed unanimously

5. Treasurer's Report (Jean McGarry)

Jean presented the Treasurer's report and circulated written copies – see attached.

Jean also mentioned the following:

- The Alliance has established a sponsorship sub-committee, who are currently considering partners to sponsor the cost Alliance's annual insurance and administrative costs in the future. Member groups will be consulted if any sponsorship arrangements require any action from member groups.
- An idea for the Alliance to host a prize or grants for young people to encourage education and sustainability actions. Perhaps also to develop a presentation package to use at school assemblies for awareness raising.
- Some comments from members:
- The Alliance should also consider philanthropy, rather than just depending on government. Crowdsourcing might also be a successful option.

Motion: Members accept the Treasurer's report as tabled.

Moved: Steve Dewar

Seconded: Norbert Lica

Passed unanimously

6. Appointment of Board Members (Rachelle McConville)

Dot stepped down the Chair position, and Rachelle Chaired agenda items 6 and 7. All Board Member positions were declared open, and nominations were called for.

Nominations were received from:

Sandy Benson

Susan Denholm

Steve Dewar

Norbert Lica

Avril Lockton

Jean McGarry

Colin Mondy

Dot Seiffert

Motion: That Sandy Benson, Susan Denholm, Steve Dewar, Norbert Lica, Avril Lockton, Jean McGarry, Colin Mondy, and Dot Seiffert are appointed as Board Members of the Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance.

Moved: John Hegarty

Second: Norbert Lica

Passed unanimously

7. Appointment of Office Bearers (Rachelle McConville)

Rachelle asked the newly appointed Board Members for nominations for the roles of Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Public Officer. Board Members were nominated for each of the roles, unopposed, as listed below.

Motion: Board Members are appointed to the office bearer roles as follows:

Chairperson: Dot Seiffert

Secretary: Norbert Lica

Treasurer: Jean McGarry

Public Officer: Colin Mondy

Moved: Jean McGarry

Second: Avril Lockton

Passed unanimously

8. General Business

Request from membership for assistance from Council about finding the correct staff member to talk with and understanding Council staff roles, different departments, who to contact about different issues etc. Alice offered to attend local group meetings where she could discuss frequently asked questions from members, and/or participate in a question and answer session with them to help address any confusion members might have.

9. Meeting closed 1.30pm