

Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance

Ordinary meeting

MINUTES

Tuesday 18 February 2020, 6.00-8pm

Committee Room, Council Administration Building, Speers Point



Present	Christine Aus, Robyn Charlton, Gabrielle Clappison, Steve Dewar, Samantha Doove, Amanda Herrald, Mark Howells, Avril Lockton, Nico Marcar Rachelle McConville (LMCC)
Apologies	Jean McGarry

1. Welcome. Acknowledgement of Country

Robyn welcomed everyone to the meeting, and presented an Acknowledgement of Country.

We would like to acknowledge the Awabakal people who are the traditional custodians of this land. We would also like to pay respect to Elders both past and present of the Awabakal nation and extend that respect to other Aboriginal people present.

2. Conflict of interest

None stated

3. Board induction

- Board member introductions
Board members shared their professional experience, and personal sustainability interests and knowledge.

Board members have a diverse range of professional experience including research economist, accounting, early childhood education, human resources management, Masters of Business, marketing, animal care, hospitality, B Environmental Management, Graduate Certificate Sustainability Management, public health medical practitioner, occupational and travel health, Secondary teachers in Geography and Archaeology, agricultural science PhD, forestry science and more!
- Board members confirmed their relevant roles, agreed meeting procedures and regular meeting times.
Updated meeting procedures to include 2 minute limit for Information and General Business items.
Also discussed protocols for using 'reply all' in email correspondence. Agreement to copy in all board members to keep informed, but use judgement to have more detailed conversations with relevant members only.

- ACTION: Rachelle will update board member photos and blurbs for the website. New board members please send through a few sentences about your motivation and interest in Sustainable Neighbourhoods.
- Some suggested reading: Consensus decision making, <https://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/shortconsensus>
- A good question for your personal reflection <https://betterboards.net/hr/board-question-ways/>
- Board member responsibility to understand and regularly review Alliance's financial position. Request to Jean for:
 - Receive Treasurer's Report in advance of the meeting – to be sent out with agenda in week prior
 - Receive regular updates about current grant balances, and breakdown of grant vs 'Alliance' funds available
 - More information about basic operating expenses of Alliance – Rachelle can provide this
- All agreed to set up a What's App group for board members. Christine to set up.

4. Planning for 2020

At the December meeting, board members identified priority actions for 2020 (either existing or new) that will contribute to delivery of the Strategy. The board identified the four highest priority actions:

1. Creating a presentation / resource pack to approach potential sponsors

Already have video and Annual Report + out of date sponsor pack.

ACTION: Christine volunteered to start a presentation outlining 'About Sustainable Neighbourhoods', and we can add sponsorship benefits later.

2. Working with schools, eg distributing SN packs and holding events and talks

SN pack:

- Explain Sustainable Neighbourhoods and offer range of opportunities

Possible activities:

- 2040 screenings
- Help with community gardens
- Sewing workshops
- Plastic pollution and littering

Consider suitable content for different ages: preschools / primary / secondary.

Preference to develop long term relationships with schools and local volunteers rather than one-off visits

Potential for income – charging schools for service. Many schools and early childhood centres will have budget for this.

First steps:

- Request interest from SNG groups. What activities are volunteers interested to work on with school groups?
- Ask for suggestions from schools

ACTION: Steve volunteered to lead. Likely timeline March – May.

3. Increasing promotions, eg regular write up in Newc Weekly or similar

Draft short stories promoting Sustainable Neighbourhoods suitable for social media, newspapers and other media. Stories could be:

- Volunteer profile
- Current projects
- Celebrating SN achievements – eg Community Group of the Year Award

ACTION: Gab – has good story ideas. Nico – volunteered to write stories

Suggest developing an SN organisation page on LinkedIn. Good opportunity to raise profile and connect with local businesses.

4. Offering resilience training ie how to manage and respond to impacts of climate change

ACTION: Rachelle to schedule for training in Apr/May.

5. Citywide project

Key Strategy action to hold an event in each SN area on the same day.

Suggest Eco Angel clean up in winter eg first 2 weeks of May. ACTION: Robyn to discuss with groups on upcoming 'tour'

4. Grant update and overdue projects

Completed a review of the current grant project monies held in the Alliance bank account. A summary was circulated to board members.

There are two overdue grants that need a plan to spend the money that is consistent with original project proposals. In both cases the Alliance will need to put a simple proposal / plan to Council if activities differ significantly from what was in the original application.

- **Dudley Community Nature Play Project** - Extension granted to January 2017
Completed: Nature Play workshop with Nicki Buchan, Resource kit completed and available
The application also included a sensory trail in the Awabakal Education Centre grounds, with signage for an eco sleuth hunt.
Grant amount: \$2,580
Spent so far: \$1,528.78
Remaining funds: \$1,051.22

Have asked the Dudley group for their ideas to spend it. Original project leader has moved, so they are seeking another volunteer to lead the remainder of the project.

ACTION: Gab to draft a proposal to use the funds for nature play activities, which we can propose to the Dudley SNG and Council.

- **Wangi Scarecrow Competition** (September 2015)
Cash funds unspent, \$430.
Scarecrow competition was delivered, but grant funds were not utilised. (In kind printing was used.)

Sought alternate proposal from group but didn't receive a response. The group formally dissolved in June 2017. Return funds to Council or alternative but related project? Maybe related to a gardening project or waste to art or a project at Rathmines?

Could subsidise purchase of good quality litter pickers for local groups. \$50 each.

5. Internet banking

New bank account has been set up with The Greater, and Commonwealth account has been closed.

Same process for accessing funding applies as previously:

http://www.sustainableneighbourhoods.org.au/uploads/6/7/0/6/6706950/managing_grant_funding.pdf

Send receipts for reimbursement or invoices for payment to admin@sustainableneighbourhoods.org.au. Signatories can then arrange for electronic payments.

6. Previous meeting minutes

Motion: That the previous meeting minutes, dated 17 December 2019, be confirmed as an accurate record, with amendment to remove Mark from the 'present' list.

Moved: Steve. Carried.

7. Treasurer's report

Missing some details for December 2019-January 2020 and closure of Comm bank account. Will chase up with Jean when she is back from leave.

See internet banking transaction record from January 2020 below. (Note balance figures corrected after the meeting.)

8. Correspondence

- Sustainable Neighbourhood News, December, January and February
- Request from Environmental Justice Australia regarding submission to the NSW parliamentary inquiry into coal ash remediation.
- Request to local groups regarding spending overdue grant funding.
- Alliance submission to Hunter Water Desal EIS submitted
- Notification from Myuna Colliery regarding their 2020 survey program
- Notification sent to Council and EPA to update Alliance's bank account details.
- Invitation to attend workshops for the Council Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2027 and provide feedback, shape.lakemac.com.au/ess
- Training survey sent to SN key contacts

- Invitation to provide feedback for first stage of Lake Mac Coastal Management Program, shape.lakemac.com.au/coastal – sent to SN key contacts
- Domain registration renewed for www.sustainableneighbourhoods.org.au
- Invitation to register a Clean Up Australia Day site – sent to SN key contacts
- Plastic Free Café materials sent to EPA for approval
- Confirmation of registration of Alliance on SEEK.com and UoN Career Hub
- Invitation to February Coastal Zone Management Committee Meeting.
- Invitation to attend Governance 101 Training – sent to SN Key Contacts

9. Requests and risk assessments

- a. Stall at Makers Place Teralba, 8 February. Approved via email

10. Strategy progress

- **Volunteer recruitment**

Current position descriptions available on website.

www.sustainableneighbourhoods.org.au/volunteer.

All positions added to the University of Newcastle Career Hub, and started listing on Go Volunteer/ SEEK website.

Waste to Art role promoted in Eco Adv, Facebook etc. Three expressions of interest received.

- **Training and networking events**

Training survey completed – 15 responses. Most popular topics:

Network events:

1. Strategies for empowerment – Date set for 25 March
2. Community resilience and disaster preparedness
3. Active transport strategy
4. Current Council projects

Training:

1. Recruiting and managing volunteers
2. Grants and fundraising
3. Changeology
4. Advocacy and campaigning

- **Visiting local groups**

Robyn + board members scheduled meetings with local groups.

11. Current projects

- a) **2020 Lake Mac Awards**

Congratulations to Sustainable Neighbourhood volunteers for winning both the 2020 Community Group of the Year and Environmental Leader Awards.

Nico Marcar - Lake Mac Environmental Leader Award 2020 for outstanding contribution to the Lake Macquarie environment

Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance – 2020 Community Group of the Year

Congratulations also to the whole Sustainable Neighbourhood network for your contribution to making us the 2020 Community Group of the Year!

More info at www.sustainableneighbourhoods.org.au/lake-mac-awards-2020.

We won a hand crafted vase for the group prize, but are not sure of suitable place to display it. Suggestions welcome.

b) Plastic Free Cafes – Choose Reusable

All the cafes Toronto and Warners Bay had reusable cups and metal straws February 10 for Valentines Week. Pity we only had 600...cafes wanted more. Hope posters go up. Social media all covered...plus articles Newcastle Weekly, Star and Lakes Mail. Did interview with 2NUR and Jenny Marchant Monday Breakfast, February 10. Emphasis is on cutting down on cups to tip and to stop littering. If we get more cups in June, can include a few more cafes!

c) ReLeaf Lake Mac

Grant application in progress. Project brief:

ReLeaf Lake Mac - Which Plant Where Community Education project aims to build adaptive capacity and deliver adaptation action in the Lake Macquarie Local Government Area (LGA) by educating the community on which plant species best mitigate the impacts of climate change, are most resilient to climate change, and the co-benefits of urban planting. The project will utilise the outputs from Which Plant Where (WPW) program - a collaboration between Macquarie and Western Sydney Universities (<https://www.whichplantwhere.com.au/>) and in conjunction with Council and Landcare will develop an LGA-specific recommended species list for the residents of Lake Macquarie.

The ReLeaf Lake Mac Community Education Project aims to bring this knowledge to the 200,000 residents of Lake Macquarie via:

- Community workshops
- Digital communication campaign
- Information stalls at farmers markets
- Landcare Groups
- Free plant giveaways

ACTION: Project team will circulate draft grant application to board prior to submitting.

d) Waste to Art

Project meeting in Feb. Confirmed dates for 2020:

- Main exhibition at SEEN, Saturday 10 October – Sunday 6 December
- Selected works displays at Launchpad spaces at Charlestown and Belmont libraries, Saturday 6 June – Saturday 1 August
- Display at Living Smart Festival (date TBC in September)

Currently updating project plan and promotional materials, ready to open registrations in March.

Volunteer roles available including Managing the Launchpad displays, Promotions and communications, Registrations.

e) Power and Pollution Conference 8 February

This was a very constructive conference without any of the alarmist hyperbole...emphasis was on solutions to climate change and the problems of power stations and pollution. Dr Amanda Cahill from Next Economy Queensland really emphasised the need to have dialogue with people in regional areas, rather than talk down to them, the word "transition" can worry people. Scott McCardle from Latrobe Valley Authority pointed out how the new jobs have developed in that area by discussing directly with people in the region after Hazelwood closure. Prof. Michael Askew pointed out the mix of power generation possible. Finally, the afternoon session focused on the ongoing problem of the ash dams and heavy metal Pollution. Lisa Evans pointed out several ash dams have collapsed in the US. An Obama Law has brought in rules for cleaning up the Pollution. No coal mines should be dug under Eraring's ash dam. The coal ash could be used as aggregate for construction.

f) Coastal Management Meeting 6 February

Great news from Belmont wetlands...Australia Day weekend restricted to 276 annual pass holder cars, down from 1,000. Generally people took away their rubbish with them. Dune rehabilitation at Hunter Water at Belmont Effluent Plant Belmont. Might help if desal plant goes ahead. There is a Coastal Management Program on Shape Lake mac.

Biggest issue. Committee was generally unhappy with Centennial's Sparker Survey to check bottom of lake. Proper consultation needed in future and monitoring of effects on small fish/larvae needs to be part of process in South Lake. Dolphins larger fish etc should not be affected.

g) Pamper Care Project Report

January was a busy time for the Project. We assisted 22 individuals (and their families). Three back-to-school kits were given out. Most people were in need of food. The bush fire at Awaba Conservation Area (proposed) saw approximately 43% of the bush burn. The Project assisted Awaba Rural Fire Brigade with bottled water and snacks to take on the trucks. With the bush fires and extreme heat conditions, we are assisting wildlife carers at Dora Creek and their network, with food. Pamper Care has launched Operation Tom. Thanks to Lois S for securing assistance with Woolies. Cardiff Area SNG has sponsored Microbat Boxes. I also helped obtain a water tanker, through LMCC, to assist in the care of the existing Flying Fox Camp at Blackalls Park. Thank you to all of our members that are assisting with donations for our wildlife.

h) Submissions

The Alliance has completed submissions to a number of public consultations in December and January:

- Hunter Water Desalination Plant - EIS
- Federal Government Packaging Bill
- Council Housing Strategy
- NSW Parliament Coal Ash Dam Inquiry submission

Detailed submissions are available on request.

Massive thank you to Robyn, Steve, Lyn and Nico in particular for researching and completing these applications over the 'holiday' period, and the rest of the team for thoughtful comments and contributions.

i) Hunter Water Community Advisory Group (18 Feb)

Don't think Jean was able to attend.

j) The Seeding planning meeting

Seeding event has been postponed

k) Alliance business cards now available

Simple business cards are available with SN contact details and space to include local group contacts on the back.

l) 1 million women app

Have submitted SN information to appear in the 1 million women app coming soon.

m) PASNG – addition to Housing Strategy comments

Pelican Area SNG members noted that Council's Housing Strategy seemed to focus on the west side of the Lake, and that issues related to Sea Level Rise were not addressed.

Submissions have closed, but Rachelle will send note to staff to ask to have included.

n) SES app

PASNG members have recommended the SES app for storms.

o) EPA litter conference

Board agreed for Steve to attend upcoming conference as a Sustainable Neighbourhoods delegate.

p) Grill'D fundraiser

Gab volunteered to nominate Sustainable Neighbourhoods for the Grill'D community fundraiser.

q) Upcoming events:

- Climate Crisis National Day of Action, 22 February, 2pm Pacific Park, Newcastle
- ESSAP submissions due 6 March. Encouraging SN groups to comment as individuals and groups. Robyn volunteered to lead Alliance submission. Also request an extension to the deadline as so close to workshop dates.
- Gab will be representing SN and helping Upcycle at their stall at the Newcastle Show, 6-7 March
- SN networking event - Climate Change Empowerment (Date TBC in March)
- Repair Cafe, Green cleaning and Nature Play movie screening (TBC 15 March)
- Clean Up Aus Day
- Neighbour Day, Earth Hour, Harmony Day, 28-29 March
- Community Environment Grants close 23 March

The Greater Bank Transaction list to 18 February 2020

Date	Group	Project	Description / purpose	Debit	Credit	Balance
10/01/2020			Open account transfer: Chq1 Dep CHARLESTOWN		\$ 17,500.00	\$17,500.00
15/01/2020	Alliance	Plastic Free Cafes - Community Litter Grant	600 folding cups + printing from Fresh Promotions	-\$ 4,240.50		\$13,259.50
24/01/2020	Alliance	Plastic Free Cafes - Community Litter Grant	25 A5 display holders for counter displays - reimbursement to Rachele	-\$ 102.50		\$13,157.00
29/01/2020	Dudley	Dudley Community Garden - Council Env Sust Grant 2016-17	Sign production - reimbursement to Simon Mudge	-\$ 220.00		\$12,937.00
29/01/2020	Alliance	Plastic Free Cafes - Community Litter Grant	Metal straws and money cans. Reimbursement to Steve Dewar	-\$ 147.88		\$12,789.12
4/02/2020	Warners Bay Area	Nature Play at 2019 Living Smart Festival	Transfer to Warners Bay SNG for their LSF nature play activities	-\$ 800.00		\$11,989.12
4/02/2020	Alliance	Repair Café - Council Env Sust grant	Reimbursement to WBASNG for November hall hire (scout hall)	-\$ 150.00		\$11,839.12
4/02/2020	Alliance	Repair Café - Council Env Sust grant	Reimbursement to Sam Doove for bike repair tools and Repair Café manuals	-\$ 178.65		\$11,660.47

Closed: 8:01pm