

Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance Inc

Board meeting – MINUTES

Wednesday 7 February, 6.00 – 7.30pm

Landcare and Sustainable Living Centre, 80 Toronto Road, Booragul



Present:

Alliance board members: Gabrielle Clappison, Stephen Dewar (arrived 6.11pm), Jo Lane, Jean McGarry, Bruce Robertson, Mackenzie Robson, Natalia Soeters (arrived 6.12pm)

Greater Charlestown SNG: Barney Langford (departed ~7pm)

Council staff: Andrew Bryant, Manager Community Partnerships (departed ~7pm)

Rachelle McConville, Sustainability Engagement Officer

Apologies: Bruce Tozer

Meeting started at 6.02pm

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

Gab acknowledged the Awabakal as the Traditional Owners of the land we are meeting on and expressed gratitude for their continuing care for our environment.

2. Register of interests

Board members are required to immediately declare any: direct or indirect pecuniary interest; or any non-pecuniary conflict of interest; or potential perception of a conflict of interest in any matter before the Board. [Register of Interests](#).

Two new entries noted:

- Mackenzie noted in November 2023 that he is employed as the ALP Lake Macquarie Local Government Campaign Manager, so may need to withdraw from discussions relating to the 2024 local government elections.
- Natalia noted in January 2024 that she is a volunteer with the Hunter Community Alliance (HCA) in their transition research action team, so may need to withdraw from decisions relating to the HCA.

Gab noted the new entries, and encouraged all board members to declare any conflicts of interest.

Barney declared that he is a member of the Australian Labour Party and the Hunter Community Alliance.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

3. Meet the board - Andrew Bryant, Manager Community Partnerships

Andrew was welcomed to the meeting and he gave an overview of the range of community facing services in Council's Community Partnerships department, including Landcare, Sustainability Engagement, Family Day Care and others.

- **Community Strategic Plan.** With Council elections due in September 2024 and a new 4 year Council term, Council is currently preparing to update the Community Strategic Plan.

This will be a key opportunity for Sustainable Neighbourhoods and other community members to contribute and have input into Council's priorities.

Consultation will start this month with a community satisfaction survey and 100 voices summit. A wider community engagement process is scheduled to start in May-July, in order to prepare a draft plan to present to the new Council late 2024. Expect exhibition period Dec/Jan and then adoption in early 2025.

- **Resolving volunteer conflict.** Question about resolving conflicts between volunteers and Council, and seeking to include a grievance policy / procedure included in Council's Volunteer Strategy.

Andrew noted the Volunteer Code of Conduct and day to day procedures / guidelines that are specific to each volunteer program as a basis for guiding appropriate behaviours. Also Council's general guidelines to manage conflict between Council and community members. Can look at any gaps within these resources.

Actions in Volunteer Engagement Strategy include quantifying and demonstrating the value that volunteers contribute and to recruit new volunteers, including appreciation and recognition of volunteers and their contributions. Also supporting different volunteer programs to learn from each others strengths (eg Landcare, SN, Libraries, Events, Sports facilities).

- **Council and Alliance.** Question regarding connection between Council and Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance. Independence of the Alliance from Council influence. Project ideas held up because SN groups don't have the guidelines or authority to do what they want.

Acknowledge strong partnership between Council and SN Alliance, and unique level of support for Alliance as a community group with promotions, resourcing and Secretariat time. Great community grassroots model.

There is recognition that bureaucracy can get in the way of some SN projects, and Council is keen to simplify processes where possible.

Barney noted from his previous experience as a Councillor that some years ago there was an attempt by some Councillors to withdraw support from Sustainable Neighbourhoods, but that was thwarted by strong support from a majority of Councillors at the time.

4. On Track – Project proposal – Greater Charlestown SNG

Barney presented a proposal from Greater Charlestown SNG. Environmental art project with community-created artworks from natural and 'waste/trash' materials to be located on and adjacent to the Fernleigh Track. Intend to convey environmental values and mining heritage along Fernleigh Track, engage with community and promote activity along the track.

The project will also be highly visible and a valuable way to promote Sustainable Neighbourhoods.

A draft project plan was circulated to board members via email. Barney is currently working with Council staff and other stakeholders to develop and confirm details.

Proposed activities:

- Engaging professional artist (eg [Ken O'Regan](#)) to deliver community & school workshops, oversee creation of artworks and installation. Also keen to engage with Indigenous artists.
- Artworks installed along and adjacent to the Fernleigh Track, between tunnel and Redhead station. Maybe further south as well.
- ~20 artworks on, over hanging and above the Fernleigh Track.
- Artworks made from found pieces of natural materials and/or salvaged 'junk' either from along the track or elsewhere.
- Ideally will involve all 10 SN groups creating a sculpture. Workshops with each group to create a sculpture in situ in their neighbourhood, and then it would be transported and installed onto the track. Remaining 10 sculptures to be made by local schools. Project that can bring all the SN groups together - something we can all celebrate.
- Looking at seeking grant funding from Origin community investment fund. Grant application due in 1 month, so will be getting more detail together in next few weeks.
- Meeting this week with relevant Council officers regarding logistics and what approvals might be needed.
- Artwork life estimated 3-5 years. intended to decay naturally as part of the process for people to encounter. Some materials may need to be removed. Will need to detail as part of a governance process and agreement with Council.
- Intend to establish reference group to develop ideas further.

Some questions and discussion:

- Possible links with Waste to Art, and feeling that local groups would be keen to participate.
- Particularly interested in Aboriginal components. Possible broadening of other cultural and historic themes.
- Possible safety risks will need to be considered.
- Noted that groups are also advocating for better shared pathways on the western side of the lake.
- A project plan with more detail to distribute to the SN groups will be helpful.
- Is there opportunity to improve bushland quality along the track as part of the project?
- Link with Glenrock and high visitation as well?
- Any similar projects? Eg Bondi Sculpture by the Sea. Note that the concept is about the community creating art (rather than professional artists), and represents the contribution that the community has made.
- Include recreation planners to ensure longevity of project and protection of works. (Eg from Council officers unaware of the project)
- Reiterate priority to connect and link different SN groups. Big picture and smaller details.

- See role of the board to 'champion' particular projects, rather than deliver every one. Could work for Board members to have passion projects, and support each other to deliver.

Resolution: The board resolved to support the project in principle.

ACTION: Barney will convene a meeting of SN groups to deliver a project presentation and encourage their participation and enthusiasm. Rachelle to assist.

5. Unspent funds – Nature Play grant

Dudley SNG received the grant in June 2015. Grant amount: \$2,580. Spent so far: \$1,528.78. Remaining funds: \$1,051.22.

Key deliverables included Nature Play workshops (1 of 3 completed), Resource kit (available and remains with WBASNG for use). The grant application also included a Sensory trail in the Awabakal Education Centre grounds, with signage for an eco sleuth hunt that was not completed.

Have made a number of approaches to Dudley SNG to spend the funds, with no outcome.

Alliance board members suggested a couple of ideas via email to spend remaining \$1051.22.

Resolution: Gab to utilise the remaining grant funds towards delivery of Nature Play experience(s) at Teralba Tiny Forest as part of the one year anniversary. Purchase equipment that will last and be able to be used for future nature play activities.

6. Volunteer recruitment – major campaign (10min)

Proposal from Steve: that the Alliance board and each SNG mount a media, social media, and/or public campaign to recruit members, especially in some of our groups that are struggling.

Highlight Sustainable Neighbourhood achievements and practical activities that we are involved in or are coming up this year eg Repair Cafe, Cleanup Australia Day, Solar campaign Valentine. Board members are to support individual SNGs.

Need to boost volunteer numbers to replace volunteer attrition, and most groups struggle to have enough volunteers. Converting contacts, supporters and participants to active members and volunteers.

Encourage all groups to prioritise publicity for all of our activities and events. Eg social media, community noticeboards. Noted value of citywide projects in terms of increasing visibility and promotions.

7. Circular economy education campaign (10min)

Proposal from Steve: Due to the NSW State Government priority on plastic pollution, etc, the Alliance will concentrate on promoting the Circular Economy, recycling, repairing, reusing, etc.

Promotion/ publicising of recycling places in Lake Macquarie, facilitating recycling, alternatives to plastics, BYO coffee cups, Repair Cafe, social media buy, sell and swap. [A-Z waste and recycling guide - Lake Macquarie City Council](#)

Working with businesses to reduce plastic packaging.

Promotion of a possible "Green Shed" for sale of used products in Lake Macquarie. Eg Uralla green warehouse / like a tip shop. Advocate to Council to establish.

Some action ideas include, eg education, promotion of Repair Cafe, consistent messaging about RRRRR etc. Encourage local businesses to switch to more sustainable products. Eg Plastic Free Cafe campaign with reusable coffee cups.

FOR INFORMATION – TAKEN AS READ

Project and event reports and updates from citywide projects, local groups, other Alliance business.

8. Alliance year planner 2024

Note the Alliance Year Planner used to plan for workload throughout the year.

It includes a schedule for routine administrative tasks along with major projects and event dates, holidays etc.

Available to view as a google sheet: [Alliance year planner](#). Please have a look and keep these major dates in mind when planning projects and events.

9. 2024 SN Network gatherings are planned for:

Seeking ideas for activities, topics, presentations etc.

- Sunday 10 March, The Place Charlestown. Date confirmed.
Topics: GCSNG vision workshop, RRR actions for 2024
Rachelle and Natalia to develop a run sheet.
- May – date TBC (National Volunteer Week 20-26 May). What would you like to do to celebrate NVW?
- August – date TBC
- December celebration – date TBC

10. Waste to Art

Awards event went well with small gathering about 20 attending in December.

[Artist survey and project evaluation complete](#) and circulated to board.

The project engaged with 176 local artists and showcased 54 high quality artworks, created by community members from preschool students through to professional artists, across two locations.

Estimate the total visitor attendance was 3400+, with a digital reach of 20,000+.

Planning for 2024. Jo keen to lead again, and Astha volunteering again.

11. Waste Free Christmas workshops – Cardiff Area SNG

12. Lions Market stall – Toronto Area SNG

We had 6 volunteers and met over a hundred market attendees. This was a huge success as we passed on nearly all our goods for a small donation and made a couple hundred dollars, part of which we will give to PamperCare. The goods were collected from the bulk waste collection and individual donation of excess products from members. It is absolute proof that

“one man’s trash is another person’s treasure” and that products can be reused, swapped, sold online and sold in a “Green Warehouse”!

13. Greater Charlestown Visioning Workshop

Great outcomes from the workshop, and an effective model for groups to reinvigorate interest and energy among their members and supporters.

On Saturday 11 November 2023, seventeen members of the Greater Charlestown Sustainable Neighbourhood Group met at the Glenrock Anglican Parish Hall to discuss the future of the group. During the workshop, we reviewed the successful projects the group ran between 2014 and 2023 (see attached presentation), we brainstormed future projects, and we discussed whether the group should continue next year. The answer to the last question was a resounding yes, we want the group to continue! There was great energy and optimism in the room.

14. Hunter Wildlife Rescue Turtle Project

Gab circulated an update via email 7 Feb, following a meeting with Tania:

I believe this would be a fantastic City Wide project that could lead to wonderful collaborations with other organisations and good media coverage. Did you know all turtles rescued from Lake Mac are from fishing line injury and the turtle corridor is from Dora Creek to Fennell Bay.

- Eco Angel Clean up; World Turtle Day is 23rd May, possible clean up the weekend prior 18/19May or after the 23rd. Encourage local SNGs to organise a site, and to contact local schools to get involved.
- Workshop - waste to art; creating turtles from rubbish we have collected.
- Fish Sculpture garbage; wired outline of a large fish that fishing line can be collected to be recycled. Possibly housed at Swansea Dive Shop if no permanent council land is found. (Tania)
- Market Stalls - W/Bay, Fennell Bay, Pelican. Awareness/info campaign and registration for clean up event. (Tania)
- Leverage as a promotional & media opportunity for Sustainable Neighbourhoods
- Note also potential for equipment, rubbish removal and promotional support through Council's Eco Angel program. Eco Angel - Lake Macquarie City Council
- Possible partnerships; SNG's, Hunter Wildlife Rescue, Swansea Dive Shop, Dive shops, Oz Fish, Landcare (estuaries clean up), Fish and Tackle Stops, LMCC, Coal Ash Alliance, Hunter Community Alliance, OCCI (Ocean and Coastal Care Initiatives, Sailing and Boating Clubs (talks and possible prizes), local schools.

15. Pamper Care

Thank you to Toronto Lions Club for donating \$4000 to the Pamper Care project from their Christmas fundraiser. The funds will be much appreciated to assist people with personal care and grocery items.

Some discussion around logistics and possibilities for other SNGs to take up a similar project. Noted the level of input required, and reliance on a partner organisation like Woodrising Neighbourhood Centre.

16. Toronto Anti-Graffiti and Mural project

Successful grant from Eraring Community Fund, \$3560. Expect funds February 2024. Project includes:

- Graffiti removal around Toronto shopping area eg takeaway on cnr Cook St and Boulevard and as needed
- Installation of framed aboriginal paintings and mural by Toronto High School students, celebrating Awabakal language work by Biraban and Rev Thelkeld.
- Aiming for installation and celebratory event, Feb 2024

17. Pit Pony Park, greening rehabilitation – Greater Charlestown SNG

Planning to replace soil and mulch in two of the tree-planted areas, and then stabilise with native tubestock plants to reduce erosion. Planning for National Tree Day (Sunday 28 July 2024) to do the planting and benefit from the publicity.

Currently seeking approval from Council.

18. Redhead Village Newsletter, December 2023

Available to download from: [Redhead Village Newsletter \(sustainableneighbourhoods.org.au\)](https://sustainableneighbourhoods.org.au/redhead-village-newsletter).

19. Pelican Area name change to Blacksmiths, Marks Point and Pelican Sustainable Neighbourhood Group

The group is also working to reactivate their Facebook page to assist with local promotions.

20. Invitation to HCA Council meeting tomorrow night

Natalia noted a HCA Council meeting. Board members need to let Natalia know if they want to attend.

21. Toronto to Teralba resilience project

Noted discussion of how people can manage after a flood event.

22. Misinformation about renewable energy projects

Noted misinformation about renewable projects, especially regarding offshore wind turbines. Also potential HCA role in advocating for just transition.

FOR BOARD ENDORSEMENT (10min)

23. Risk assessments and requests

- Toronto Area SNG - Stall for wheelstop petition, membership drive and selling Boomerang Bags, Thursday 1 February. Risk assessment circulated and approved via email.
- Greater Charlestown SNG – Final report for Charlestown Pool Garden, Community Environment Grant. Circulated via email, and submitted to Council.

24. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report for November, December 2023 and January 2024.

Quarterly Report and project balances for Q2, October – December 2023. Note four overdue grants being chased up:

Grant project	Remaining funds	Action
Cardiff Pollinator Plan	\$167.00	Rachelle liaising with CASNG to finalise
Charlestown Pool Garden	\$116.00	Rachelle liaising with GCSNG to finalise. Final report submitted 22 Jan 2024.
Toronto Community Harmony Initiative	\$73.00	Rachelle liaising with TASNG to finalise
Dudley Nature Play - Community Environment Grant	\$1,051.00	See discussion item. Seeking alternate project to use remaining funds.

Resolution: The board accepts the Treasurer's Report.

Moved: Jean

Seconded: Steve

Carried

25. Previous meeting minutes

Draft meeting minutes from 29 November 2023 were circulated via email.

Resolution: Confirm that the previous meeting minutes are an accurate record.

Moved: Steve

Seconded: Mackenzie

Carried

26. Correspondence

24 November 2023 – 31Jan23

- Summary of current SNG projects and discussion points from SN celebration event – Sent to SN Key Contacts
- Dantia Lake Macquarie Grant Finder website – Sent to SN Key Contacts
- Invitation from Hunter Community Environment Centre to Chain Valley event
- Boomerang Alliance – suggested submission info to NSW Plastics Plan consultation – Sent to SN Key Contacts
- Annual Summary of Financial Affairs submitted to NSW Fair Trading
- Sustainable Neighbourhood News, December 2023
- Welcome email to new volunteer after completing the Volunteer Induction – Shared with local group, Greater Charlestown SNG
- Confirmation of successful grant and supplier setup from Origin (Eraring Community Investment Fund), for Toronto Anti-graffiti Mural project.

- Letter of resignation from Paul Lindsay who has been the Secretary of Sugar Valley (and West Wallsend District) SNG since its inception in 2013, as he is moving interstate.
- Standpipe meter reading to 19 January for Tiny Forest site submitted to Hunter Water
- Final report for Charlestown Pool Garden, Community Environment Grant, submitted to Council.
- Aboriginal cultural training session invitation from Council - Sent to SN Key Contacts
- Volunteer opportunities at the Coalition for Community Energy's Community Congress event in Sydney in March - Sent to SN Key Contacts
- Hunter Water exhibition re Belmont desalination plant - Sent to SN Key Contacts
- Boomerang Alliance draft submission to NSW Plastics Plan - Sent to SN Key Contacts
- Reminder re SN governance requirements and request to update Alliance board with project plans - Sent to SN Key Contacts

27. Next meeting:

Wednesday 6 March 2024, 6.00 – 7.30pm

Landcare and Sustainable Living Centre, Booragul

Items tabled for March meeting:

- Electing vice roles - Mackenzie - Proposal circulated to board members 25 January
- SN Alliance membership of Hunter Community Alliance - Natalia

28. Meeting closed 7:48pm

LAKE MACQUARIE SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD ALLIANCE

GENERAL MEETING

TREASURER'S REPORT

1 November to 30 November, 2023

Account 724181724 with Greater Bank, Charlestown Branch.

Balance

\$ 16,252.04 CR

RECEIPTS

10 Nov 2023	Cash Dep. B. O'Shan P. Care	\$	10.00
16 Nov 2023	Osko Dep Ms R.J. Halton P. Care	\$	150.00
24 Nov 2023	EFT Dep. J. Kett P. Care	\$	100.00
Total Income		\$	260.00



EXPENDITURE

7 Nov 2023	BPay Wdl Ref. 60208869 LMCC Cr Note 03143807	\$ 441.46
21 Nov 2023	Wdl Thpar Ref 12162918 Rep Café, Rathmines J. Lane	\$ 388.32

Total Expenditure \$ **759.78**

BALANCE **\$ 16,123.72**

This is a true statement of accounts for the Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhoods Alliance Inc. for the period 1 November to 30 November, 2023.

Signed _____

Name Jean McGarry
Title Hon Treasurer
Date 21 January, 2024

LAKE MACQUARIE SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD ALLIANCE

GENERAL MEETING

TREASURER'S REPORT

1 December to 31 December, 2023



Account 724181724 with Greater Bank, Charlestown Branch.

Balance **\$ 16,123.72 CR**

RECEIPTS

5 Dec 2023 EFT Dep John Ward P. Care \$ 100.00

Total Income **\$ 100.00**

EXPENDITURE

5 Dec 2023 BPay Wdl Ref. 60445193 Hunter Water Cr Note 00218273097 \$ 49.16

Total Expenditure **\$ 49.16**

BALANCE **\$ 16,174.56**

This is a true statement of accounts for the Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhoods Alliance Inc. for the period 1 December to 31 December, 2023.

Signed _____

Name Jean McGarry
Title Hon Treasurer
Date 21 January, 2024

LAKE MACQUARIE SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD ALLIANCE

GENERAL MEETING

TREASURER'S REPORT

1 January, to 31 January, 2024

Account 724181724 with Greater Bank, Charlestown Branch.

Balance **\$ 16,174.56 CR**

RECEIPTS

17 Jan 2024 Chq Dep Toronto Rotary \$ 4,000.00
Pamper Care

Total Income **\$ 4,000.00**

EXPENDITURE

24 Jan 2024 BPay Wdl Ref. 60819751 Hunter \$ 31.39
Water Cr Note 00218273097

Total Expenditure **\$ 31.39**

BALANCE **\$ 20,143.17**

This is a true statement of accounts for the Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhoods Alliance Inc. for the period 1 January to 31 January, 2024.

Signed _____

Name Jean McGarry
Title Hon Treasurer
Date 31 January, 2024

