

**MINUTES – ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING
TUESDAY 20 DECEMBER 2005**

Minutes for the Shire of Merredin Annual Electors Meeting held in the Council Chambers, Cnr King/Barrack Streets, Merredin on Tuesday 20 December 2004.

ATTENDANCE : Cr KA Hooper – Shire President
Cr RM Crees – Deputy Shire President
Cr N Hooper, Cr W Wallace, Cr G Astbury, Cr J Simmonds, Cr J Jones, Cr M Morris, Cr J Townrow

Messrs F Ludovico, Chief Executive Officer; JA McGovern, Deputy Chief Executive Officer; W Bow, Manager of Development Services; J Garrett, Acting Manager of Works

ELECTORS : Roger Drakeford, Richard Last, Elwyn Perry, Mike Kendrick, Judy Currell, Ian Stone, T J Middleton, Les Last, J Medlen, Louise Discenza, Mario Discenza, Kevin Cahill.

1.0 OFFICIAL OPENING
The Shire President declared the meeting open at 7.30pm.

2.0 APOLOGIES
M Young, P Marley, D Morris.

3.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES
Moved Mr E Perry seconded Mrs J Currell
That the minutes of the 2004 Annual Electors meeting held on 25 October 2004 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

CARRIED

4.0 ANNUAL REPORT
Shire President Ken Hooper presented his report to the meeting.
Moved Mr M Kendrick seconded Mr J Medlen
That the Shire President's report for 2004/2005 be received.

CARRIED

5.0 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT
Chief Executive Officer Frank Ludovico presented his report to the meeting.
Moved Mrs J Currell seconded Cr J Townrow
That the Chief Executive Officer's report be received.

CARRIED

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6.0 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Chief Executive Officer presented the Annual Financial Report to the meeting.
Moved Mr R Drakeford seconded Mr R Last
That the 2004/2005 Annual Financial Report be received.

CARRIED

7.0 QUESTIONS ARISING FROM ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

CEO referred to Mr Mike Kendrick's late correspondence asking questions on Council's finances. Because of the lateness staff have been unable to develop a response and Mr Kendrick will be furnished with responses in a few weeks.

8.0 AUDITOR'S REPORT

Moved Cr J Jones seconded Mr R Drakeford
That the Auditor's Report for 2004/2005 be received.

CARRIED

9.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

Questions from Mr Les Last: Attachment 1
Questions from Mrs Discenza: Attachment 2

Carrington Way

Mr Mario Discenza – Questioned whether Recreation Centre competes with the development of Carrington Way. Development of this land should have continued following sale of Stage 1.

It was indicated that there may be significant demand for this land, however it would be a significant drain on financial resources. Council was investigating how the land could be developed cheaply to reduce the Council resource required and released quickly.

Annual Financial Report

Mr K Cahill – Commented that Annual Financial Report is difficult to understand as it is a complex document. He asked whether there could be an additional page of notes to give explanation to the figures.

CEO advised that the document provided to electors is abridged and a full detailed document was available. This document is a Statutory Report and had to be produced in its current format.

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Railway Institute Hall

Mr R Drakeford – Railway Institute Hall – Question: Can it be saved?

Shire President responded that it is not heritage listed and therefore Council cannot attract heritage funding.

Mr Drakeford read extract from letter from the National Trust dated September 2003 informing of the hall's heritage importance and the need to at least retain the front façade of the building.

CEO responded that an assessment had been undertaken by the WA Heritage Council and it had failed to meet criteria for heritage listing and therefore unlikely to receive WA Heritage Council funding. Also a cost for an upgrade presented to Council four years ago amounted to \$120,000.

J Medlen – Read extract from letter (provided by Mr Medlen).

Shire President responded the hall was advertised for relocation or demolition. Council would await responses before making a decision. Future uses of land include additional medical services.

Mrs J Currell – Ladies Darts asked for use of Railway Hall and were refused as it was regarded as a dangerous building.

Cr J Townrow commented that Railway Hall is responsibility of entire community not simply elected members.

Exhibition Hall at Recreation Ground

Mr L Last – Old Exhibition Hall - is there a plan for an upgrade?

Shire President advised that Council has been left with the legacy and has to decide which facilities to maintain at the highest standard.

Cummins Theatre

R Drakeford – Council doing a good job maintaining Cummins Theatre and Richard Salisbury-Sexton is an asset to Council for the work he does.

Shire President expressed thanks for that comment and advised that Shire staff and Community Development Team are working on activities and supporting the Theatre Manager.

Shire President also advised that Council was planning to upgrade the electric wiring within Cummins Theatre at a cost of \$17,000.

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Mercury Newspaper - Advertising

Mr R Drakeford – Questioned whether Council has a good relationship with the Mercury. The Community would like to read first hand what happens at Council.

Shire President and CEO commented that the Shire has good working relationship with newspaper and would like to reinstate a regular monthly column.

Shire Garden Staff

Mrs J Currell – Is it intended to employ more garden staff with relevant training?

CEO and Shire President described plans to review outside workforce and training processes now in place. Council will be looking to employ a trained horticulturalist within financial resources.

Roads

J Medlen: Queried roads and footpath funding budget.

CEO indicated that Council had a heavy commitment to roads and footpaths as evidenced in Council budgets over a lengthy period of time. Council had to ensure funding for roads and other infrastructure in the whole shire not only the town was maintained and improved.

Apex Park and Cemetery

Mr R Last – Congratulated Council for the upgrade of Apex Park and particularly for leaving the Apex sign. Also congratulated Council for upkeep of cemetery.

Bates Street North – Upgrade

Mr L Last – Has the Shire any plans to upgrade Bates Street North of Recreation Ground?

Shire President responded by saying that this was not in the 2005/2006 budget.

Barrack Street Carpark Entrance

Mr L Last – Is Council closing Barrack Street car park entrance to rationalise traffic flow?

Shire President indicated a two month trial would occur to gauge the effect of the closure. It was intended to improve safety in the Barrack/Bates Street intersection area.

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Apex Park

Mr M Kendrick – Apex park sign near Gabbi's – will it be replaced?

CEO advised that the sign is on the list to be replaced. CEO commented that vandalism of signs had cost Council up to \$20,000 previously, however this has fallen in recent years.

Gamenya Avenue

Mr M Discenza queried – Local traffic only sign on Gamenya Avenue.

The Shire President indicated this was an effort to reduce heavy vehicle loads but has had limited success. Reconfiguration of CBH receipt point in the future will direct traffic along Goldfields/Crooks and Gabo Roads.

Town Clock

Mr E Perry – Clock at intersection of Barrack / Bates Street not working.

CEO – Has been in disrepair for some time. Alternatives to clock under consideration.

10. CLOSURE

Shire President thanked those in attendance for taking time to attend the meeting and reminded attendees that the Extraordinary Election would be coming up in March 2006 and encouraged applications for Councillor position.

Moved Mr E Perry sec Mr R Drakeford
That a vote of thanks be expressed to Council.

CARRIED

Shire President declared the meeting closed at 9.20pm.