

**Conjola Community Association Inc.**

**General Meeting**

**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019**

**Management Committee**

President:- R Kerves	Vice President:- D Treloar
Secretary:- E Caswell	Treasurer:- F Shanahan
Community Liaison:- K Bird	Public Officer:- M Brungs
Infrastructure Co-ord:- D Treloar	Environmental Co-ord:-C Ashford
Media & Grants Co-ord:- F Shanahan	Technology Co-ord:- B Hackett

**Attendance:-**

D Simpson, L Simpson, R McKelvey, H and L Van der Haas, A Hopkins, S Dunn, J and J Dale, B Hackett, J Henderson, K Henderson, C Brungs, M Garetti, A Gardiner, P Fitzsimons, Prof. K Black, R Lonsdale, K Bird, L Rutledge, A Rutledge, G Nelson, K Henry, M Nove, L Travis, N Travis, C Murphy, L Murphy, L and H Gillies, J Wood, A and P Golland, M Devitt, K Gartner, G Taylor, K Duncan, J Camilleri, R Cokin, P White (SCC Cnclr - Deputy Mayor), T Jones, K Webster, B Guise, R Davies, P Perry, L Hubbard, D Bird, F Skinner, D Skinner, K and G Fardouy, L and M Browne, H Geslak, A and J Jessop, R and J Jones, D Chapman, B and E McKinnen, R Walton, G and H Chaplin, S and K Dodimead, M Furness, R Furness, I Spiers, T Maddick, D Clifton, R and J Keelan, L Hobbs, A Colvin, E Macmillan, D Taylor, D Gratzer, S Camilleri, B and M Collison, G Phillips, D Jones, P Webster, D Webster, M Guise, G Adams, Greg Phillips, R Kerves, E Caswell, F Shanahan, D Treloar, M Brungs, C Ashford ,A Findley(SCC Cnclr - Mayor), K Gartner (SCC Cnclr)

**Apologies:-**

Mark Albiez, David Ardron, Nola Atkins, Kurt Austin, Adam Ballard, Barry Barnes, Dorothy Barnes, Bel Beck, Suzanne Betts, Kathy Blake, Donna Brooks, Greg Brown, Jye Brown, Maree Brown, Glenn Butt, Glenda Byers, Greg Byers, Betty Byrd, Greg Carroll, Leeann Chant, Kim Coleman, Robyn Coote, Ron Coote, Simone Cordy, Vanda Correia, Haylee Dale, Jamie Dale, Tom Dale, Margaret Dalziel, Darren Dee, Tracey Dennis, Gina Dimech, Diana Dodd, Marea Dreis, Bo Duke, Michelle Duncan, Gail Duncombe, Wayne Duncombe, Andrew Dunkerley, Karen Dunkerley, Natasha Eaton, Jennifer Edgell, Groves Family, Amy Fennell, Christopher Fennell, Linda Fennell, Mandy Fennell, Stephen Fennell, Barry Fenwick, Sandra Fenwick, Janine French, Craig Frew, Jacqui Frew, Virginia Frew, Warren Frew, Bianca Fuller, Brian Fuller, Joanne Fuller, Coralie Galle, Julie Gander, Stuart Gander, Sharryn Goff, Gail Gossage, Ian Graham, Alan Gratzer, Dagmar Gratzer, Edi Gratzer, Robert Gratzer, Amanda Hackett, John Hales, Kevin Hamilton, Lesley Hamilton, Carol Hands, Megan Harapa, Sabreena Mary Harris, Danny Hartley, Nerissa Hartley, Scott Heatherington, Mardi Hempstead, Chris Hennessy, Jamie Heweston, Karen Hooten, Kay Howe, Nicola Howe, Janette Hudson, Peter Hudson, Cheryl Ann Hunter, Mark Hunter, Alan Jones, Deb Jones, Graeme Jones, Ian Jorgenson, Shane King, Steven Krinks, Keith Lambert, Denise Langtip, Jeff Langtip, Jan

Lawrence, Terry Lawrence, Andrew Leighton, Jo Lovett, Kylie Lucas, Graham Lyons, Ronda Lyons, Jenny Marshall, Ann Mason, Scott Mawson, Isobel McLachlan & Family, Glenda Milham, Rick Milham, Kristy Misios, Daniel Monforte, Matika Montgomery, Diana Mosca Oliveri, David Neill, John Newby, Sue Newby, Jennie O'Donoghue, Lucy Oliveri, James Peters, Debra Polock, Mr Polock, Robert Reis, Sandra Reis, Jemma Roach, Lindsay Rowland-Smythe, Peter Ruetman, Elizabeth Salz, Sandra Sampson, Robyn Savage, Marie Sawczuk, Jai Sharman, Jo Simmons, Jarrod Simpson, Leeann Simpson, John Sotiri, Phil Stanton, Wendy Stanton, Tony Stapleton, Dick Stockwell, Pam Stockwell, Peter Stone, Rosemary Stone, Craig Stratton, Jo Stratton, Darin Sullivan, Earl Tanks, Liane Thompson, Carlene Timbs, David Tregonning, Graham Tunks, Lynne Tunks, Shez Tunks, Steve Turton, Terry Turton, Monica Veitch, Paul Veitch, Katherine Waldron, Helen Wallder, Paul West, Judy White, Les White, Leanne Whitehouse

The president of the Association, Robyn Kerves welcomed and thanked the 3 Ward 3 Councillors present at the meeting for their attendance.

**Minutes of previous meeting :-**

Read and accepted J Dale, 2<sup>nd</sup> F Shanahan

**Treasurers Report:-**

Balance as of 20 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	\$2324.45
SCC Donation	\$500
Annual subscription	\$138.31
Hire of the Community Hall	\$34
Balance as of 21 <sup>st</sup> January 2019	\$2,652.14

**1. Council charge for hire of the Conjola Community Hall**

**Motion:-**

That the SCC waiver the hiring fee of Community Halls throughout the Shoalhaven to all CCBs. -- E Caswell 2<sup>nd</sup> I Spiers **carried**

**2. Status of Lake Conjola:-**

Dirk Treloar and Robyn Kerves have been attending several meetings with South Coast State MP, Hon. Shelley Hancock, Shoalhaven City Council and various government agencies in relation to current problems being experienced by local residents and tourists.

Dirk presented a comprehensive explanation of the present state of affairs as it stands at the moment in relation to flood mitigation and that the current management is obviously failing. The recent opening of the Lake was the first planned opening in 10 years but that did not prevent low level flooding.

The question remains was the opening as a result of water quality?

We need more flexibility with the entrance management policy but government agencies actions and policies are dictated by the Interim Entrance Management Policy 2013. It is believed that any managed opening should mimic natural processes.

History shows that with the current volume of sand in the delta, scouring of the entrance is destined to fail regardless of the height of the water level.

According to SCC Consultants, in August 2015 when the water level reached around 2.00m, the highest level since the 1970's, 100,000m<sup>3</sup> of sand was transported from the entrance to just beyond the surf-line. The lake only remained open for 4 month. However, in 2016 when only 20,000m<sup>3</sup> of sand was dredged along the northern shore (which many accept was not in a natural channel location), the entrance remained open for over 18 months. Scouring will not work with the current volume of sand.

The Feb/Mar rainfall events with over 400mm of rainfall (in March alone), with the entrance open, the water level did not exceed 0.75m, whereas significantly less rain with a closed entrance has caused significant flooding.

Ideally a review of It is felt that an approach to the State Government is necessary and they be asked to look at the Entrance Management Policy and to be involved in the development of the proposed Coastal Management Plan for Lake Conjola.

There have been 8 closures in the period 1937-1998, and 13 for the period 2011-2018. Following the December 1998 dredging, the entrance remained open from January 1999 until March 2011.

Water quality is tested weekly, according to the SCC Annual Groundwater Monitoring Rept (2013-2017) Conjola Regional Sewerage Scheme, groundwater nutrient plume is expanding, with groundwater wells showing high nutrient concentrations due to the effluent trench. The Report states that a substantial change since 2012 in the nutrient plume (primarily Total Nitrates) may pose a risk to the aquatic ecosystems, and recommends precautionary measures be taken during times of entrance closure.

The Conjola Community Association (CCA) has tabled a report with Council outlining proposed changes to the Interim Entrance Management Policy – the CCA have on several occasions attempted to table the proposal but it was not until Dec 2018 that the proposal was tabled.

Robyn Kerves suggested that the Lake should be managed by a state authority rather than the Council. However, that is unlikely to gain traction because the NSW State Govt has recently disbanded the Lake Illawarra Authority and handed responsibility for managing the lake to the Wollongong and Shellharbour Councils.

### Next Steps

Dirk stated the next step, as passed by a motion at the Council Development & Environment Committee Meeting 21 Jan 2019, is to review the Interim Entrance Management Policy 2013

in accordance with the recently enacted NSW Coastal Management Act 2016. The approved budget is \$150,000 which CCA challenged as being too high given the significant number of investigations/studies and reports and Council documents into the Lake (refer to Council website for a copy of the Minutes of the Council D&E Meeting)

Note, Point 7 of the approved Council motion states “Any resident who believes that their infrastructure has been damaged due to increased water levels should write to Council and relevant agencies, outlining their concerns.” Contact details are at the back of these minutes. The relevant agencies are Shoalhaven City Council, NSW Dept of Primary Industries (Fisheries), NSW Dept of Planning and Environment, NSW Roads and Maritime Services

### Comments from the Floor

Prof Black - addressed the meeting and stated that he believed that the Lake should be opened at the Southern end of the entrance and all of the sand removed should remain at Lake Conjola and used to raise the level of the low level developed shoreline.

Mayor Findley – stated

- that the total cost of the entrance works was \$8000 for the 18-21 Dec 2018 works, and \$60,000 for the 8-16 Jan 2019 Works,
- that the initial works were constrained by proximity to Christmas
- that Shoalhaven Heads have a “dry notch” that can be quickly opened if flooding is forecast. Similarly the Conjola “channel” can be quickly “unplugged”,
- that water quality testing indicates the water is safe for swimming
- that opening the lake is very dependent on forecast rain

Councillor White – stated that Facebook comments are driving Council and she personally apologised to the community for the current Policy and the condition of the Lake. Paricia also referred to:-

- the many health concerns;
- that she believes the cost of the 8-16 Jan Channel was greater than \$60,000 based on an estimate she received from the contractor;
- how Conjola has been fortunate that the very heavy rainfall in the surrounding district has not occurred in Conjola, otherwise severe flooding may have occurred – eg 300mm at Montague Island in 24 hours;
- that it is unacceptable to boat owners must wade and carry children through water because the ramps are flooded;
- that it is unacceptable and dangerous for caravans and campers to have their sites to have lake water on their sites with electrical cords lying in the water;
- that the safety of residents and visitors is at risk due to the high water level;
- that it is unacceptable that Council is not listening to the community;
- that Council had approval to remove the “plug” on 16 Jan but Fisheries stated there was a risk of a “fish kill”; and
- that the community must remain resilient and united and to support the CCA.

Further information in relation to the meetings and reports can be found on our web site.

### **3. Motions Proposed at the Meeting**

- a. Informal motion proposed by Mike Brungs –

*That Council implement an Managed Open Entrance Policy for Lake Conjola*

Carried by an overwhelming majority

- b. Proposed by Robyn Kerves, seconded by Elaine Caswell –

*That the responsibility for future management of the Lake be taken from Council*

Carried

- c. Proposed by Robyn Kerves, seconded by Mike Brungs –

*That the channel plug be removed and the entrance opened within the next 2 weeks*

Carried – 2 voted against

Mayor Findley informed the meeting that Council must respond to motions within 28 days of receiving the minutes of a community meeting

**Meeting closed at 9-30pm**

**Next meeting :- 15 Apr 2019**

### **Contact Details for Council and relevant NSW Government Agencies**

NB: All agencies can be contacted online from the respective websites

Shoalhaven City Council

Email - [council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au)

P.O. Box 42 Nowra NSW 2541

Ph: 4429 3111 (Nowra) or 4422 1816 (Ulladulla)

Dept of Planning and Environment

Email – Refer to web site for registering a complaint

<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Contact-Us>

GPO Box 39, Sydney NSW 2001.

Dept of Primary Industries (Fisheries)

Email - [information-advisory@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:information-advisory@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

Locked Bag 1, Nelson Bay NSW 2315

Ph: 1300 550 474

NSW Dept of Roads and Maritime

Email – [SouthernProjects@rms.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SouthernProjects@rms.nsw.gov.au)

PO Box 477 Wollongong NSW 2520

Ph: 13 17 82