



Gateway to the Manning!

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Minutes of `Johns River Community Progress Association Inc Committee Meeting. Saturday, 8th March 2008

Meeting: Opened by President Glen Ferrero (GF) at 2:15pm.

Apologies: Chris Bawn (CB) and Rod Heath (RH).

Failure to Apologise: Kerri Williams (KW) and Tony Galati (TG)

GF as President was presiding member, and welcomed David (DS) and Bruce (BS) for their attendance. Bruce tendered Rod's apologies due to Johns River Market considerations, and GF asked if anyone had heard from either Kerri or Tony about why they were not present. Nobody had.

NEW MEMBERS:

GF noted that Paul and Cheryl O'Brian were welcomed to the membership at the last meeting and were now full financial members. GF also nominated Ms. Floie Paton of 6 Thomas Street Johns River. GF attested that Floie has been a long-term resident of Johns River and has had deep and abiding connections within the community, and a son, Ron, who lives here and works from here. GF was pleased to recognise that Floie has offered a refreshingly varied opinion, differing from some in the village, on the rights of truck drivers to come into the village areas and so offers the diversity to the village opinion pool. GF moved that Floie's application be accepted, and all were in favour, the movement was passed unanimously.

AGM AGENDA & PROPOSALS

GF Presented a letter containing two proposals from current members Joe Malvicino, seconded by Paul O'Brien. Their proposals, dated 4 March 2008, for consideration at the upcoming AGM, reads:

"That the members elected to the Post Bypass Committee [with Council and the RTA] be elected for the full term of the project in order to maintain continuity.

"That the Committee also be elected for the term of the project, so that a more stable and effective completion of the Post By-Pass Project can be done."

The two members continued in closing to say that they felt the proposals would help in getting a "better outcome for the project than if we change [delegates] at various times".

GF certified that their proposals will be forwarded to the Secretary for the next meeting Agenda (currently scheduled to be the AGM).

BS asked about the agenda, and GF responded that it will go out to members three weeks (21 days) prior to the meeting, as is required by the Johns River Progress Association, Inc. Rule of the Association (available online at www.johnsriver.com.au).

BS inquired about coordinating the timing of the AGM with any possible Special General Meeting to deal with a possible appeal by TG. GF answered that the timing of that special meeting, if it happened, would simply coincide with the AGM to satisfy the time requirements of the rules, and also so as not to bother the membership with having to deal with separate meetings on separate dates.

BS opined that the Presidents report presented at the AGM should include information on attendance and the agendas of the last six months of Management committee meetings. All present agreed that all reports should be fully factual and complete.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE LAST MEETING MINUTES.

GF certified that all committee members present at the last meeting on 20 February 2008 have read those minutes meetings and they in turn have certified they were true and correct. GF proposed we accept, BS seconded, all were in favour of accepting. Meeting minutes to go online, handed to the Media Officer.

DATE FOR AGM

President apologised he was unable to meet the previous meeting date agreed at the last meeting of the Management Committee, then set to 30 April 2008. GF said he would be unable to attend due to a sudden work commitment change of plans. GTCC

Councillor Mr. Richard Wilson will be available to chair the meeting for the new Sunday 6 April 2008 date. No members have indicated any objections to this date as yet.

MEETINGS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT & BUSINESS

The Management Committee discussed the recent meeting with the local member for Port Macquarie, the Hon. Mr. Robert Oakeshott, with JRCPA Treasurer and Public Officer, Chris Bawn (CB).

GF said it was good we had the meeting and that Mr. Oakeshott's views are straightforward and that the meeting enhanced the professionalism of the Association.

BS asked if CB asked Mr. Oakeshott about the tabling of a petition independently started by TG last year (prior to the formation of the JRCPA). Mr. Oakeshott responded that there was only a reference in Hansard, stating that the petition had been tabled, although the content was actually in an archive somewhere.

Mr. Oakeshott said he would give the JRCPA as much support as needed.

GF suggested that now our Mr. Vaile (Federal Member for our Lyne electorate) was back in town, we should initiate contact with Mr. Vaile to enhance our local government coverage and support. The committee agreed to do a letter for Mr. Vaile to enquire about a meeting, and GF stated he will ensure the letter goes out in the near future.

DS asked if Mr. Ray Stack, OAM, has yet to reply to the Association from our invitation sent recently to work together to ensure the businesses and residences he owns in the village received coordinated and optimum consideration. He had not replied as yet, and GF said he would follow up and report to the committee in the near future with possible reasons for Mr. Stack's delay in replying.

EXPULSION OF VP A. GALATI

GF said that we have still not had any responses from Mr. Galati addressing any of the issues about which we had received many complaints from community members.

Additionally a more recent invitation from the President had also gone unanswered, in which TG was prompted to be more harmonious and community-minded, and about the positive response of the community to the opening of a fuel outlet in the village. GF said that even with the additional two weeks of time to respond, TG had still failed to address any of the complaint issues. GF proposed

that the letter of expulsion be sent immediately, DS seconded, and the movement was passed unanimously.

REPORT FROM POST-BYPASS DELEGATE

JRCPA Delegate to the Post-Bypass Committee BS read from the minutes of their last meeting, with our presentation being minuted as follows (from the GTCC 355 Post-Bypass Committee Meeting Minutes):

"CB reported on the community Forum recently held. Members of the JRCPA and the general community were invited to participate. Results of the community survey were received and discussed. Out of the 160 surveys issued, 16 were completed and the results were posted on the JRCPA website."

"CB also circulated a colour-coded map identifying elements the community has submitted for inclusion in future plans. CB then provided a detailed presentation and summary of the 2 February 2008 Community Public Forum workshop results"

CB then presented the following presentation points to the Post-Bypass Committee:

Overall Objective: To enable the future growth and prosperity of Johns River - and surrounding locality - Post Bypass - through thoughtful planning, encouraging sustainable economic development whilst maintaining a village feel and atmosphere.

Future Growth and Planning

- Future Residential expansion – release of some crown land for housing which will drive economic growth for local businesses, increased #'s for school.
- Utilize existing GTCC land for Parks or other land use adding to the overall beautification of the area.
- Additional designated parking near community hall to support local events at hall and grounds and also to support Tourist information facilities.
- Road changes in Station street at school – to upgrade road section to include parking and safe drop off/pick up area for children.

Signage

- Speed Reduction signs – located in area for maximum support of 50kms speed zone. This supports the safety aspect for village residents – main focus on protecting children.
- Village signage on new road – effective RTA and GTCC signage north and south of village to highlight services/amenities in village. This supports HST proposal and maintains economic prosperity of village and businesses. Proposal for village to have a designated Rest Area within. Location near Community Hall with parking, facilities (playground,

toilets, etc) supports mantra of 'stop revive survive' and allows people to purchase items from local businesses – thus supporting economic prosperity of community.

- Hinterland and Tourist Drive signage – effective signage to show Tourist Drives, Hinterland attractions and businesses. Drives more tourism for area and good for 'Gateway to the Manning...'

- In village – Community Information board to highlight local attractions/services, Tourist Info board – highlighting area and region attractions/services, and effective directional signage so visitors gain clear understanding of where to go, etc.

Beautification and Amenities

- Community Toilets – located at Community Hall and Recreation Reserve – new toilets with change rooms to support local activities at hall (markets, etc) and to permit the re use of the oval for sporting teams, etc.

- New Playground – at hall for local children and tourists wishing to 'stop, revive, survive'.

- Upgrading of existing bus shelter – to redevelop current area to support a more safe environment for children and elderly residents. This will also promote the area to coach operators.

- Placement of additional garbage bins in village – to reduce the incidence of 'garbage dumping'. Various locations proposed.

- Streetscape beautification – median plantings/redesign of town centre area to enhance environment for businesses and residents. Attraction of tourists and visitors to the area with a 'first impression lasts' principle. Ensuring good old fashioned 'friendly customer service ethic' within the businesses to ensure repeat visitors to the village – supporting economic prosperity objective.

- Upgrade and beautification of existing walking areas in the village – to upgrade existing facilities to ensure the safety for the children and residents of the village. This would include upgrade of bridges, new pedestrian crossings, refuge islands, etc.

Traffic Calming

- Effective Median Plantings – to assist with the objective of unwanted traffic flow through the village – impression of limited corridor in which to drive. No room for trucks to park overnight – selection of bollards to limit this and to also include various signs preventing this activity.

- Traffic direction element – Stewarts River Road and Old Pacific Highway intersection – to review all options available here to mitigate risk of accident – keep noise to minimum – change in directional flow of traffic.

- Roundabouts considered to be a concern due to inability of various trucks to negotiate. Objective is to understand alternatives (such as point 2 above).

- 50kms village speed limit – to support village culture and safety for all residents including children and elderly.

It was reported at the community forum that members of the community forum 160 issues 16 complete results posted on the web page.

It was noted at the meeting in discussion that signage was weighted as a great concern for the community. Toilets and playground equipment were preferred to go near the hall, and also a bus shelter for the community, for Williamstown airport busses for example.

BS reported further that Greg Blaze (GB) had said bus facilities were better closer to the existing shop and facilities, for easier access. GF mentioned that the location where it is now would provide better access for busses turning and continuing their travel, whether from the north or south.

BS said this information was going to the design consultant, in a brief prepared by the Post-Bypass Urban Design Committee.

Additional subjects discussed involved the cleanup of several sites in the village, such as in front of the park area and school. The community were not in favour of roundabouts due to truck stopping. Roundabouts are generally only provided in urban areas according to GB, and the village will not require such.

Ben Phillipson had noted the style of roundabout at this location would be expensive to construct.

GG had noted the data provided by the JRCPA was invaluable and would greatly reduce the research times and costs for the consultant. GG had resolved to follow up on the Timberline disrepair issue. GF says nothing to date has been done and additional photos of the site were taken by DS proving this.

GB in the By-Pass Committee meeting had said the signage shown on the draft proposal from the Progress Association was a bit too much for the village atmosphere. In response to this, GF said signage was however important for destinations emanating from the village, including Diamond Head and the surrounding National Parks.

BS opined how good the facilities were at Little Nelly and Star's Creek rainforest boardwalk, both of which could be highlighted in an information bay for travellers in the village.

GB, on the matter of funding, had said costly plans and suggestions were not always able to be achieved. GB had said that on previous occasions, the RTA had only given limited funding to upgrade pavement. For John's River, BP continued that the RTA must see the village is returned to a low speed environment. The bypass consent requires this work must be completed, which included signage and traffic calming. An assessment will be done by the RTA on the pavement quality prior to handover.

CB questioned if funds allocated and designation for an RTA rest areas might be transferred to JR for the construction of toilets, now that Stoney Creek rest area had been omitted from the plan due to funding shortfalls and budgetary considerations.

The Association was thanked by GG and others for providing the survey data and the Chairman Richard Wilson had thanked the Association for its continuing cooperation and input.

BS mentioned that it was asked who (on the JRCPA) the consultants for the council should contact, and it was responded at that meeting that jriver@midcoast.com.au should be used to contact GF or DS.

GF directed that Bruce have that changed to media@johnsriver.com.au in the future. GF was curious to know why the consultants wanted to contact the President rather than the delegates.

BS noted that the council person for this was Robyn, and that a draft brief is expected from the post bypass committee in the near future so she can turn this over to the consultants.

DS proposed that our delegates be first contact points for the RTA and Council for post-bypass design issues. Robyn asked if the brief from the GTCC to the consultants, including amendments as discussed, was ready to be issued, as she would 6 weeks.

GF noted that \$20,000 had been allocated by Council already for a toilet, although this had not been funded.

WEBSITE AND PUBLISHING SERVICES

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was presented from siteware, who are currently doing the website and print publishing.

CB had requested at the 3 February committee meeting that siteware handle advertising from community businesses and residents for the website. BS read and signed the MOU, which outlined the services they currently provide and wish to maintain for the Association in the future and on behalf of the Association. GF and DS withheld comment due to conflict of interest. The MOU was signed and DS

certified that a copy will be available to all members on the JRCPA website.

THE RTA URBAN DESIGN PLANNING ROLE

DS reported on his research into the 2006 Project Approval by the Minister for Planning the Hon. Frank Sartor, MP for the RTA's Moorland to Heron's Creek project proposal.

At Item 37 (pg 17) of that approval by the minister, the RTA is directed to provide "*expert advice*" for "*urban design plans ... for the bypassed commercial areas of Johns River*".

In Table 6.1, item 13.1a, the RTA is further directed to "*prepare an Urban Design and Landscape Plan before construction commences*" with the Community Liaison Group (CLG) and the GTCC; and to "*include design treatments for ... pedestrian and cyclist elements including footpath location, paving types and pedestrian crossings*" and "*fixtures such as seating, lighting fencing and signs*".

As to responsibility, Item 3.2 states that the RTA "*will implement the Urban Design and Landscape Plan*".

DS also highlighted a map of the study area for the "*bypassed commercial areas*" as agreed to by the RTA, Council and the JRCPA on the Post-Bypass Committee.

BS and GF said, that as CLG members, they did not remember the RTA discussing design plans for "*pedestrian and cyclist elements including footpath location, paving types and pedestrian crossings*" or "*fixtures such as seating, lighting fencing and signs*" at the CLG meetings as far as urban design plans for the bypassed commercial areas.

In analysing these statements, the Committee surmised that the RTA is now fulfilling its responsibility to provide expert advice by it's participation with the Post-Bypass committee.

DS commented that experts were never cheap, and asked if BS, as JRCPA delegate to the Post Bypass Committee meeting, would please ask how much the RTA was contributing, if anything, to experts for the urban design plans for the bypassed commercial study area.

BS said he would try, but the RTA had still not answered questions from two months ago about the amount of funding the RTA would provide to Council for either planning or for rehabilitating the road in the study area.

BS did state that it looks like Council is the controlling body to get the consultants on-side. DS said that given the fact that the RTA was directed by the minister to provide expert planning advice for the

bypassed commercial areas of Johns River, he assumed the minister would not have meant to issue an unfunded directive.

DS further stated that it would be good to know whether the CLG could have been consulted about the urban design plans prior to the commencement of the construction project. GF said that all of the urban design and landscaping planning consultation so far had actually been only *within* the bypass corridor, and not for any areas in the bypassed commercial study area.

THE STUDY AREA AND SIGNAGE

The Committee inspected the study area agreed to by the RTA, Council and the JRCPA, which outlines the bypassed commercial area of Johns River, and residential areas from Wharf Road in the north, to where the new bypass corridor departs the old highway towards Camp Obadiah in the south. The study area extends from the eastern margin of the bypass corridor in the west as it intersects the existing Stewart's River Road, and to the SRA rail property to the east.

BS immediately noted that the study area did not include the regions which were vital to the signage issue.

GF and DS quickly concurred, noting that the "Stop Revive Survive" type signs, and other signs already discussed at the post-bypass committee at the very least would be placed well outside of the outlined study area.

GF said that the study area should go at least back to the highway where the slip road commences, if not before to allow for signage distances. He also stated that signage such as blue signs, of the "Stop Revive Survive" type were subject to an RTA approval process for those blue sign, as well as some of the brown signs indicating National Parks, or other main recreational attractions.

BS said the village could easily be a credible "Stop Revive Survive" area since Stoney Creek was not available any more due to a lack of funding.

He stated that San Croix was bad for getting back on the highway for both northbound and southbound access, and since Johns River has the separate ingress and egress, it is a far safer alternative.

GF said that the Ross Glen northern portion of those rest areas would not be reopened after the construction completion either. The local fire brigade or even the Progress Association could easily run the "Stop Revive Survive" facilities.

MEDIA OFFICER REPORT

As media officer, DS reported that we had a call from the editor of the Manning River Times. On behalf of the community, DS thanked her (Toni) for their recent 2-page spread in the MRT, which currently appears on the website's News page.

DS showed BS on the computer about the MRT article. BS viewed. Toni also expressed an interest in doing an article about there being no broadband service in Johns River and surrounding area. She said a reporter would call on Monday to further investigate the matter. She also mentioned that the MRT would be starting up new section to cover Johns River and the northern Manning, harkening back to the days of The Champion newspaper, which was eventually folded into the Manning River Times back in the 1950s.

DS also had a call from The Land publication (also available at the Johns River General Store). The reporter from their Richmond office began by asking about how the bypass had been bad for Johns River. DS reported that he kept to message, and headed him off several times during the interview by saying how very pleased the community and association generally were with the responsiveness of our local Councillor Richard Wilson, as well as the GTCC Director of Planning Graham Gardner and the RTA's Dick Whibley.

The report seemed abnormally focused on the costs of the bypass project in general, asking how much the Johns River portion would cost, how much the urban design process was costing, and repeatedly asked for negatives about the bypass. DS did comment that of course highway businesses needed to redirect their trade after a bypass and that our store operator, along with key business owners were working hard to realign their trade to more "destination" custom.

Mr. Frank Araldi at the general store had a similar call from the same reporter, and was also pitched the same story idea with 3 or 4 leading questions looking mostly for unfavourable input.

DS directed The Land reporter to the JRCPA website for further information, and when the reporter asked about the name of the urban design consultants, DS directed him to GG. The reporter promised David that he would forward a PDF or copy of the article on publication.

GF brought up the fact that the most recent Manning Valley tourism brochure failed to mention our local museum, operated by curator Tony Galati. He proposed that our local museum could be included in a list of attractions in the area to enhance tourism to our community. GF proposed that we start a Heritage subcommittee for the region to promote us as a gateway to the Manning. DS and BS agreed this was a good idea for consideration at the next general

meeting of the membership. GF said he would at least send a letter to the GTCC Manning Visitors Information Centre via e-mail in regard to representing our facilities in a more progressive light including the museum and other tourist drives in the region.

DS reiterated by saying that all forms, from nomination to proxy and others are now on the website.

PRESIDENT PERSONAL NOTE

GF noted that he had accepted a position with a community organisation on a part-time basis. As Outreach Officer for ACON, Inc., GF reported he would be visiting Mid-North Coast communities up and down the coast promoting their programs.

BS asked if this would affect his ability to serve as President of the JRCPA, and GF responded no, not at all, it was 3 days per week and did not conflict with his position as President.

MEETING CLOSED

DS looked hungry, so at 1518 the meeting was closed.

Minutes confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting held.



R G Ferrero

President of JRCPA Inc.

These minutes were reviewed by all members present for accuracy, and approved by the presiding member.