

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING
THURSDAY 06 OCTOBER 2016
MOUNT SURPRISE HALL

Mayor Devlin opened the meeting at 9:54am.

ATTENDANCE

Mayor Warren Devlin (WD)	Paula Ransom (PR)
Cr Warren Bethel (WB)	David Fitzgerald (DF)
Cr Will Attwood (WA)	David Munro (DM)
Rebekah Hill (RH)	Susie Fitzgerald (SF)

Community Members: Total of 3 people attended from the Mount Surprise Community

APOLOGIES

Cr Tony Gallagher	Russell Dennis
Michael Kitzelmann	Callum from Mt Surprise Police Service
Cr Troy Barnes	Lester Boroski
Pam Blackburn	Joe & Rebecca

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY, EWAMIAN PEOPLE

We respectfully acknowledge the Ewamian People - the traditional custodians of this land where we meet for the Community Consultation Meeting in Forsayth. We pay our respects to the Ewamian People, especially the Elders, past and present and acknowledge their traditional customs and laws and recognize their continuing connection to this Country. We look forward to a long and continuing relationship with the Ewamian People and value any opportunities in strengthening relationships and partnerships through collaboration by respecting their Country.

CHARLESTON DAM / GEORGETOWN WATER RESERVOIR

The Federal Government has announced that council has been successful in being awarded a grant under the National Stronger Regions Fund for the construction of Charleston Dam. Final design and consideration of environmental requirements (fish ladder) are being worked through. Council are waiting on the contract for the grant. Once this has been received and signed works will commence with an expected start date March 2017 and expected project completion Oct 2017. This will increase the liveability for residents in the area and maybe even attract new families. The recreation facilities will be good once the dam is complete and everything is up and running.

The Georgetown Water Reservoir has been awarded funding under the State Government's Building Our Regions Grant. It is approximately a \$500,000 project. Council is currently evaluating tenders with works expected to commence early in the new year.

The Mayor recently attended a meeting where Tinaroo Dam was cited as a failure and being uneconomically viable due to the cost of upkeep being more than the incoming amount from water revenue. There's value in Tinaroo dam, although not directly making a profit for the water infrastructure owner, the community and local businesses have benefited due to the increase of tourists to the area, boat races, the opening of a resort, multimillion dollar houses going up, etc. The economic and social growth in the area has been extensive due to the dam. It could be called a success even if it doesn't seem to make money for the owner.

KENNEDY HIGHWAY, HANN HIGHWAY, GDR (WRUP)

Unofficially over the next four years council has secured around \$30million worth of works and flood claims.

Q. With the Charleston Dam being given the go ahead, is there any more push with TMR to get the Georgetown – Forsayth road done?

Yes.

WIND FARM AND HYDRO PROJECT

The Mayor visited Kidston last week with Genex directors Michael Addison, Simon Kidston, ARENA representatives and foreign investors. The Solar Power has now been approved and Genex has been successful in obtaining a \$4million grant for the hydro feasibility study.

The Solar is being built soon, with the hydro following in the next few years. About 500,000 solar panels will be installed. Infigen is on hold now until the new transmission line is built.

IRRIGATION PROJECTS

The State Government is not renewing its contract with Ifed regarding the water allocation. At the moment Council is working to support the Gilbert River and Einasleigh Plateau Irrigation Projects.

CHANGES TO CONTRACTING PRACTICES

Council has simplified the contracting tender applications to be delivered through LG Tender Box online. This is a positive step as the decisions are made by the team in Brisbane which keeps Council at an arm's length from the process.

Dave and Sue Fitzgerald attended the Contractors Session on Wednesday 5th October to learn about the process and are heading to Georgetown this afternoon for a one on one session to step them through the site. So far it seems alright from Dave's perspective; it will just take people a while to get used to doing things online.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Council has acquired some jumping castles that will be available for hire by community groups, businesses and residents. The jumping castles we now have includes a 5.5m high Slide, 7m long Human Foosball, and two jumping castles – one smaller with a slide on the side and one with activities inside.

Q. Has council come up with a hire rate yet?

A report will be going to the next council general meeting to decide on the hire cost.

The Over 30's Cricket match is coming up. We still need to do a community event with the drought funding. Football has been postponed until next year.

Q. Has there been a power upgrade at the football field in Georgetown?

Yes, Ergon has completed the upgrade and Georgetown All Sports Association currently has an application in with Sport and Recreation for lighting that is the right lux for such an event.

Council is still planning to do a film festival. This could work best in the first quarter of 2017. That should give people enough time to think through their concepts and do the editing needed.

GENERAL BUSINESS AND DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Etheridge Shire Advertisements

Council would like to tie the film festival in with the filming of some tv ads. The idea is to get some creative content at the TerrEstrial in the form of short films. These will play on an outdoor tv mounted in the undercover area outside the TerrEstrial in the evenings as entertainment for tourists and we will play short advertisements of what Etheridge Shire has to offer in between the films. The Mayor would like to see ads to promote the region akin to what we see on Impaja.

Everyone's looking at their screens – we've got to be inside looking out. Look on YouTube and check out Jordan Abby – Forsayth. Mind the language.

For just \$15,500 we could have 3500 30second ads play on Impaja over 6 months.

Q. Wouldn't we target away from our area?

We are looking to invest \$50,000 into advertising our region.

It would be wise to not put all our eggs in one basket but to spread the advertisements out over different channels – same target audience but different communication/tv channels.

Geotourism

When we set up the Geotrail it would be good to have camping areas, not free but leased by retirees that can sell wood, groceries, etc on the side.

Q. Could the setup of these camping areas be done by a work for the doll program?

There's not that many people in our shire that would be eligible to do this as majority of people on the doll here are pensioners but the ideas there. Employers are responsible for upskilling their workers even if its work for the doll.

Fencing the Town Common

Everyone in Mount Surprise seems pretty happy with the cleaning up Dave's completed out at the dump. Cattle in the township are still an issue. The people of Mount Surprise are looking forward to having the fence erected as promised by council at the previous 2016 Community Consultation Meeting.

Dave Fitzgerald can build the fence as an extension of his town maintenance position. It doesn't need to go out to tender. Council will action the meeting report that has previously been approved and install the fence. It would be best to fence the town with four wires. Once we have fenced the town common then we can look at land tenure.

CONCLUSION

Mayor Devlin closed the meeting at 10:55am.