

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY 07 DECEMBER 2016**  
**FORSAYTH CWA HALL**

Mayor Devlin opened the meeting at 9:20am.

**ATTENDANCE**

Mayor Warren Devlin	Thelma Klein
Cr Troy Barnes	Paul Fogarty
Cr Warren Bethel	Cynthia Haigh
E. J. McFarlane	Cr Will Attwood
Dudley Fitzsimmons	Rebekah Hill
Tracie Priestley	Cr Tony Gallagher
Ian Carol	Michael Kitzelmann

*Community Members: Total of 7 people attended from the Forsayth Community*

**APOLOGIES**

Harrie Bate

**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 / 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. Council is hopeful to have a solar plant to run the pump station.

**Q.** Is Charleston Dam the name of the dam?

Council is open to suggestions from community regarding the name of the dam.

**Q.** Will the Charleston Cemetery be affected?

No the Cemetery will not be inundated.

**Q.** The Cemetery has been mentioned as a feature; what other features are council planning on?

Boat ramps, picnic tables, green grass however not right to the water's edge so as to avoid duck lice.

**Q.** What is council planning to do regarding the trees?

Council is planning to rake them up in the wet season and burn them while the wet's still here and will go out to quotes soon for the tree clearing.

**Q.** Will rates go up?

No increase is planned.

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.

Council has been invited to submit an application to upgrade Forsayth's water filtration system.

### **KENNEDY HIGHWAY, HANN HIGHWAY, GDR (WRUP)**

The Gulf Development Road has finished under budget.

On the Hann Highway we will be sealing 3kms between the Lynd and Mt Garnet for which we will have \$3.2million which is the final stage of the Kennedy Highway. TMR are looking to reprogram however the Hann Highway Action Group, Advance Cairns, Etheridge Shire Council and Flinders Shire Council have been the ones that lobbied for the upgrade so Etheridge and Flinders are trying to secure the work for local contractors.

In regards to the Forsayth-Georgetown Road, we will be sealing about 8/9km and are currently working with TMR. The plans have already been completed. Crews are programmed to being work on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

**Q.** How come in Etheridge Shire the single lane on the Gulf Development Road (GDR) is left alone – this is possibly the worst major connection road around Queensland?

Works will be commencing next year on the GDR. The Mayor has been in conversation with the Director General and has been assured another opportunity to nominate the GDR as a Beef Road which will bring \$30mil worth of development on the road. There are 6 state owned roads within our shire which limits Council's autonomy when it comes to upgrading and or maintaining roads. We can only do what TMR directs us to do.

### **WIND FARM AND HYDRO PROJECT**

Genex has the finance for the solar and hydro plant arranged. Onsite meetings for the tender process will begin in the new year. Genex will be prioritising the hire of local contractors wherever possible and will be co-funding Council's project to create safe passing opportunities on the Einasleigh-Lynd Rd. There will be a high voltage powerline to Mt Fox. Arrow Energy and Ergon Energy are already considering using the high voltage corridor.

**Q.** Is Genex still looking to refurbish Oaks Rush?

Yes, and they will be mulching the timber that's knocked down where the solar panels will be.

In regards to the wind farm, council hasn't had any contact with Infigen in the last couple of months. We understand the project is currently stalled because access to infrastructure is limited along with access to ARENA grants. The wind farm will be taking a backseat until the transmission line is built.

### **IRRIGATION PROJECTS**

The Gilbert River Project landholders have asked council to take the lead on coordinating the vehicle to move forward. State and Federal Government are very supportive. So far council has engaged a consultant agency.

The Mayor has had meetings with the minister to release some water allocation in the new year. Council would like to be involved in administering the allocation and are currently in discussion about implementing a 3 tier approach similar to the project they recently viewed in Tasmania.

### **GEOTOURISM**

Geotourism is a regional development initiative that celebrates man's interaction with the landscape. It makes the most of significant geological, cultural and biodiverse features of an area for the purpose of encouraging tourism and local development in a sustainable way. There are 120 UNESCO Global Geoparks currently in the world however there are none in Australia. Etheridge is aspiring to be the first successful Geopark in Australia.

## 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. This is an open process with the contract winners posted on the council website. Recently in the wet hire, electronic tender box evaluation process council received 44 tenders (160 pieces of plant). Current preferred supplier agreements cease 31<sup>st</sup> December and the new agreements commence 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017.

## 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.

Goldfields Hotel in Forsayth will be hosting a New Year's Eve Party and will be writing in to close the road and to hire jumping castles.

17<sup>th</sup> December – Etheridge Wide Community Christmas Party at the Georgetown Golf Club

18<sup>th</sup> December – The Lynd Christmas Markets

## GENERAL BUSINESS AND DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Our shire is currently having difficulty with the delivery of health services. Local people need support in their homes, both disability support and aged care. Council is not supportive of building an aged care facility (see unsuccessful Julia Creek model) but will be pursuing the in home care system for our region. The residents of Forsayth see value in having a handy person employed to drop around to elderly folks around every 3 months and do some small jobs around the house such as fix leaky taps, door knobs, change light bulbs, etc.

The District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) is now operating out of Cairns instead of Mareeba. Currently fires in the shire are at Agate Creek, Eveleigh, Routh Creek, Van Lee and Dagworth.

The Etheridge Learning Facility will stay open in 2017 despite only one enrolment in the program due to support from the State Government, Distance Education and Education Queensland.

The residents of Forsayth would like to pass on their thanks to Peter Gregory for his role in hastening the building approvals for the new toilets at the back of the CWA Hall so they could obtain the necessary grant. The current toilets will be moved to the Forsayth Gun Club in early February.

Simon Terry is planning to move the Jail Cell in February.

**Q.** Has Council planned to do anything with Dudley's Road?

Slashing will be done and some town beautification at the same time the roadworks are being done – also around Cynthia's house.

Two new fire breaks have been put in; one near Cynthia Haigh's house and another near First St.

**Q.** Can Council please update the residents of Forsayth on the progress of the creeks being named Haigh and Starlight Fitzsimmons?

## CONCLUSION

Mayor Devlin closed the meeting at 10:50am.