



To promote healthy living and exercise, Council hosted a fitness-a-thon for the children at the Tom Stone Care and Education Centre in Berkeley Vale. Pictured are children going through the obstacle course.

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

16 September 2009



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MEETING NOTICE

The EXTRAORDINARY MEETING of Wyong Shire Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Wyong Civic Centre, Hely Street, Wyong on WEDNESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2009 at 5.00 pm,

for the transaction of the business listed below:

OPENING PRAYER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES

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Kerry Yates
GENERAL MANAGER

1.1 Mayoral Report for Past Term

TRIM REFERENCE: F2004/06511 - D01946229

AUTHOR: BG

The last 12 months have been rewarding and challenging as Council has continued to move forward with a number of major projects aimed at securing the Shire's future.

Projects such as the Mardi to Mangrove Link, the Estuary Management Program and the Shire Strategic Vision have all moved ahead.

It has been rewarding to see seven new Councillors come into the Chamber following last year's local government elections, and assisting them to come to grips with the complexities of such a large organisation. An organisation with a \$405m budget.

I would like to thank my fellow long standing Councillors Doug Eaton and Greg Best for taking the time to help our new Councillors. I also wish to thank the staff for their efforts in assisting the new Councillors come up to speed with a number of major Council projects in a relatively short space of time.

To the seven new Councillors; Cr Bill Symington, Cr Emma McBride, Cr Lisa Matthews, Cr Doug Vincent, Cr John McNamara, Cr Lynne Webster and Cr Sue Wynn, I would like to say thank you for your hard work and dedication to Wyong Shire.

To my Deputy Mayor, Cr McNamara, I would like to thank you for your hard work behind the scenes.

I wish to make special mention of our General Manager, Mr Kerry Yates, and thank him for his wonderful support.

Mr Yates should be congratulated for helping Council through the challenging period of the global economic crisis. There are a lot of councils out there who have lost a great deal of money because of investments gone wrong in the current economic climate. But Kerry's conservative investment strategy put Council in an excellent position to weather the economic storm.

Mr Yates recently informed Councillors he will not be seeking to extend his contract and will be retiring effective 30 June next year. I know all the Councillors will join with me in wishing him the best of luck for the future, and for his tireless efforts as General Manager in helping the Council move forward.

I would also like to thank the Directors and Managers within Council for their support during the past 12 months.

These talented and hardworking individuals have never knocked back a request to meet with me and talk me through some complex issues. These people are the genuine experts in their field and we, as Councillors, should never underestimate the value of their expertise.

Council's outdoor staff cannot be overlooked for their service to the community in the field. I have visited the Charmhaven and Long Jetty Depots on numerous occasions in the last 12 months in an informal capacity to rub shoulders and have a chat with the staff. Again we are blessed with many hardworking and dedicated people in these roles.

Finally, but certainly not in the least, I wish to thank my PA Sue Sampson.

Sue, through her hard work and professionalism, has kept the Mayor's office organised for the past 12 months and I wish to express my sincere gratitude for her dedication and efforts to help the staff and the public. She makes the job of being Mayor a lot easier. Thank you Sue.

With Sue's organising skills and diary management, in the past 12 months as Mayor, I have:

- Attended 24 Council meetings and 53 committee and board meetings together with 44 briefing and inspection days
- Attended 250 meetings with staff and 24 staff recognition functions
- Had in excess of 100 appointments with ratepayers, residents and developers
- Attended more than 40 meetings with representatives of other levels of Government including local members, Ministers, the Premier and Prime Minister
- On three occasions, I have officially represented Council as Mayor in Canberra at National Local Government meetings.
- I have represented Council as Mayor at approximately 250 events throughout the Shire

I would also like to thank the Councillors who have represented the Mayor, and Council, at various other functions throughout the Shire in the past 12 months.

And so to the issues and achievements of the past 12 months.

Management Plan

Council continues to meet the challenges of such a growing shire. If you put a map of Wyong Shire over Sydney, it would go from Hornsby in the north to Sutherland in the South and as far west as Parramatta.

We are faced with many diverse issues, not the least being infrastructure, to cater for our growing population. This year, Council approved the biggest budget in history – a \$405m business plan.

It must be noted that this places Council as the eighth largest in the country as far as its budget is concerned. The councils above us are six from Queensland and the City of Sydney Council. Unlike our Council, all of these have a fulltime Mayor and Councillors, which makes things a lot smoother and easier. I feel that's something our State Government needs to consider when it comes to large regional councils such as ours.

Some of the major commitments contained in this year's budget include:

- A water, sewerage and drainage capital works program of \$145.2m. This money will be spent on projects including: Mardi-Mangrove Transfer System; Mardi Dam Transfer; Mardi High Lift Pump Station; Mardi Power supply upgrade; drainage construction works proposed to be undertaken at various locations across the Shire.
- \$12.3m for open space capital improvements including: \$5.1m for Woongarrah Sporting fields; \$4.1m for Hamlyn Terrace fields and courts; \$520,000 for a new playground at Canton Beach; \$400,000 for six new netball courts at Wyong's Baker Park.
- \$7.6m for the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Program. Works to be undertaken include: construction, planning and maintenance of stormwater treatment measures and drainage systems in urban areas, around lake edges and in coastal areas; work to redress impacts of stormwater on bushland and natural wetlands; restoration of rivers and creeks; improving boat access and recreation facilities; work on Buff Point shared pathways and stormwater community education programs.

- \$4.5m for the Warnervale Link Road and \$1.8m for Minnesota Road at Warnervale.
- \$1.65m for rebuilding and refurbishment costs for Surf Life Saving Clubs including investigation, design and approval costs.
- \$1.2m for improvements to Council's Holiday Parks at Toowoon Bay, Norah Head, Canton Beach and Budgewoi.

Mardi to Mangrove Link

The Mardi-Mangrove Link Project is a major investment for both Wyong Shire and Gosford City Councils. It is the largest water infrastructure project on the Central Coast since Mangrove Creek Dam was built in 1979-82. We have also attracted Federal Government money for this project - \$80.3m from the Water Smart Australia Program - which will assist Council and our water rate payers with funding the project. I thank the Federal Government for their valued contribution.

This money was secured during my previous term as Mayor and has come to fruition during my current term in the office.

The Mardi-Mangrove Link Project has made great progress in recent months. We have locked in the pipeline route through Yarramalong Valley, concept designs for the whole Project are complete, detailed designs are about 80% complete, and compensation negotiations with affected landholders are also progressing well.

We also placed the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) document on public exhibition and are assessing that and some written submissions, and we have gone through an Expressions of Interest (EOI) process for construction companies as the first stage of the tender process - and are now working with a shortlist of four companies to move the process forward. We hope to go out to tender in October, award a construction contract in December and start physical construction in the New Year.

I am proud of the community engagement that I have been involved with in regard to this Mardi-Mangrove Project. I have spent many hours attending open days and open houses and talking to the locals in the Yarramalong Valley to impress how vital a piece of infrastructure this is for the entire Central Coast. To these residents, I say thank you.

With all these milestones being reached, therefore, we are very much on track to complete this important project by mid-2011.

Job Creation

Work continues at Warnervale on the construction of the Bluetongue Brewery and the Primo Facility.

I was delighted to meet up with the representatives of Primo back in July to witness the first sod of soil being turned on a project that will create around 50 fulltime local jobs.

The Bluetongue Brewery construction is also on track and this exciting development will in time be one of the great tourist attractions in the Shire, as well as catering for more than 100 local jobs.

This Council's major focus has been on job creation issues, given the above average unemployment rates of our area, particularly in the area of youth unemployment.

During the past 12 months, I have taken every opportunity as Mayor to stress to State and Federal Ministers how important job creation issues are for this Council, and our community, and stress the high and unacceptable rates of the Shire's youth unemployment.

Following a trip to Canberra earlier this year, I again raised this issue and the result was that in July, we received a visit by Parliamentary Secretary for Employment Jason Clare, who attended a jobs summit at Council.

The result of that summit was our region being recognised as a Priority Employment Area enabling us better resources to help protect jobs and create new employment. The Federal Government also created a regional employment coordinator position that will play a vital role in linking locals to employment opportunities.

I was delighted when Council voted in June to approve two developments worth a combined \$500m, with the potential to create up to 1,000 local jobs.

Staff have also approved two new Aldi supermarkets in the Shire, one at Wyong and the other at Toukley, while a Franklins store has also been approved at Toukley.

Council will continue to work hard to provide local employment opportunities for our growing population.

Estuary Management Program

Council achieved a \$20m commitment from the Federal Government to implement the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan. Together with matching funds from Council, this brings over \$40m to the project over five years.

In my previous term as Mayor and as the current Chairman of the Estuary Management Committee, I lobbied the former Federal Member for Dobell Mr Ken Ticehurst and then the current Member, Mr Craig Thomson, hard for Federal Funding.

We were able to sign the deal last December and a recent tour by the Estuary Management Committee around the Shire saw the amount of work going into the program to help improve the quality of the Shire's prized assets – our Lakes' system.

Council has well and truly started the momentous task of implementing the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan to address the real issues impacting our wonderful Lakes system. More than \$2m has been spent on Tumbi and Saltwater Creeks to restore the creek banks and arrest the erosion problem, reducing the amount of sediment ending up in the Lakes.

Council has also achieved approval for significant work to restore creek banks of Wyong River and Ourimbah Creek, and we started saltmarsh restoration on the Lakes' foreshores to restore natural process and remove the "black ooze" that is so commonly seen around the foreshores.

In addition to the \$2m spent restoring creek banks, Council also completed in excess of \$1m in works treating stormwater before it enters the lakes. We have removed weeds and restored more than two hectares at Terilbah reserve, restoring a significant corridor linking the coast to the lakes, and Council recently voted an approval for a major upgrade of the Picnic Point boat ramp. Council staff are also continuing the installation of recreational facilities including barbecues, picnic tables, seating and play equipment around the lake's foreshores.

I would like to thank our Estuary Management Manager Sian Fawcett for her hard work and dedication to this important program.

Shire Strategic Vision

A major achievement over the last year was formulation of a community-based Shire Strategic Vision that establishes the direction for the community over the next 20 years.

As Mayor, I am proud to lead the development of the first Strategic Plan in Council's 62 year history. This is the first time the Shire has pulled together a vision of the future and taken a look forward 20 years.

This is a vision developed by the people of Wyong Shire and not the State or Federal Government. Our residents have told us what future they want and next year, Council will have the important task of putting the plan into action, along with developing a Long Term Financial Strategy, looking at how we will set about funding the Shire of the future.

During June and July the Vision document was the subject of an extensive community engagement process that confirmed the Vision as the plan to maintain our future quality of life. This was a major achievement for the new Council and will serve as the focus for much of our activities over our current term of office.

The Community and Council are greatly in debt to the significant efforts of the Community Liaison Group in establishing this landmark Vision.

During the past year Council published the first State of the Shire report which expanded on the previous State of the Environment report to also include important information about the current state and future direction of our economy, community and governance as well as the environment.

This comprehensive report will now be produced annually to serve as a guide as to how well we are achieving the Shire Strategic Vision while maintaining the sustainability of our economy, community and environment.

Daniel Smith and his team continue to work hard and I congratulate them on their efforts to date.

Community Facilities

Council has continued to build facilities for our growing population in the last 12 months.

Late last year, I had the pleasure of travelling down to Canberra where Council received \$1.5m from the Federal Government's Local Infrastructure Grants scheme. In June, I went back to Canberra and helped to secure a further \$648,000 that is ready to be used once the \$1.5m is spent.

This money allowed Council the opportunity to work on five projects; a shared pathway at Mannering Park, a shared pathway at Buff Point, six new netball courts at Baker Park Wyong, a disabled toilet block at Saltwater Creek and a new playground at Canton Beach. All these projects will be completed by September 30.

Council also awarded a contract for the Woongarrah Sports Fields to service one of the fastest growing areas in the Shire. This facility is now under construction.

Rehabilitation of the old Bateau Bay landfill, which includes the construction of a sports facility, is also due for completion in December 2009.

Council has also completed more than 2km of shared pathways, which have proved extremely popular with locals and tourists alike.

As Mayor, I am pleased that Council voted early on to make the Wyong Cultural Centre a priority item during our four-year term. To that end, we selected a site for the proposed centre and have prepared a design brief for the project.

Other significant achievements

One of the major achievements during this term of Council was the resolution from both Gosford City and Wyong Shire to move forward with the formation of the Central Coast Water Corporation.

Last month, both Councils met informally to discuss an Expert Advisor's report on the formation of the Water Corporation before running concurrent extraordinary meetings to adopt the Advisor's recommendations.

During my previous term as Mayor, and again during this term, I have met a number of times with the various State Government Water Ministers and have always dug in my heels, as Mayor, until the right agreements could be reached.

Finally, following meetings with Minister the Hon Phillip Costa in February and August, I was confident of finding a way forward to form the corporation and protect both Council assets and Council staff. At our recent meeting in August, he has offered to address Council's concerns.

This has been a battle over a number of years and once amendments are made to the legislation, we will have the right model to move forward, which protects our assets and jobs.

I would also like to thank the United Services Union, whom I have formed an ongoing relationship with as Mayor, for their ongoing support.

The fact we are moving forward with the formation of the Corporation also highlights another achievement in the past 12 months and that's building a strong relationship with our counterparts in Gosford.

I have a strong working relationship with Gosford Mayor Chris Holstein and presided over the first ever joint meeting of both Wyong Shire and Gosford Councils, where the recommendations were immediately adopted by simultaneous meetings of the two Councils. There are a number of issues both Councils have found some common ground with and we will continue to work with Gosford and move forward for the benefit of not only Wyong Shire, but the entire Central Coast region.

After a strong submission from our Planning Department, Council successfully obtained Ministerial approval to levy developer contributions at a reasonable level to allow for the provision of facilities to our growing community, particularly around the Warnervale Area.

This is confirmation that Council has not been overcharging developers as some claimed, and that our charges are entirely necessary to provide the infrastructure necessary to cope with the Shire's ongoing population growth.

Our successful submission means we are able to go almost \$15,000 above the State Government's cap of \$20,000, which means we can continue to provide facilities in the future including the proposed Warnervale Aquatic Centre for example.

Council also received federal funding to allow for construction to start on the northern section of the proposed Warnervale Link Road, and I was pleased to meet Federal Member Craig Thomson on site at Warnervale for this important announcement.

Council also adopted The Entrance Peninsula Planning Strategy, which aims to revitalise The Entrance Peninsula from The Entrance North to Long Jetty.

Finally, Council has been informed the Rudd Government has brought forward \$2,394,982 of Wyong's 2009-10 Financial Assistance Grant paid to the Council in June.

The grant is on top of the money available to Wyong Shire from the Government's *Roads to Recovery* program (\$1,026,135 in 2009-10) and the *Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program* (\$2,177,000 since November 2008).

Overall, Council will receive \$9.7m in Financial Assistance Grants from the Rudd Labor Government in this financial year, meaning those trips to Canberra to lobby on behalf of Council have been well worth the effort.

This is a wonderful result and Craig Thomson should be congratulated for his commitment in helping us secure this funding which will go a long way to securing Wyong Shire's Future and greatly assist Council in providing infrastructure and services to its community.

The future

While a lot has been achieved over the past 12 months, there are many issues that still need to be addressed.

The top priorities are ensuring the Warnervale Town Centre, Employment Zone and Train Station come to fruition and the upgrade of The Entrance Road through Long Jetty and the Pacific Highway through Wyong.

I remain concerned the proposed Warnervale Town Centre and the new train station were seemingly ignored in the most recent State Budget. Council has been told work on the Warnervale Train Station, the key part of the proposed new Town Centre, will not even start until at least 2013.

For the people of the growing Warnervale region to wait at least another five years for the promised and much needed new train station is very poor and Council will continue to do everything in its power to bring the timing of this forward, as the station directly affects the ability to construct the Warnervale Town Centre which thousands of new residents to the fastest growing area in the Shire have been promised and are crying out for.

The State Budget also contained \$13.8m allocated to help improve the local roads network including:

- \$6.7m for network development
- \$6.1m to maintain the Wyong road network
- \$532,000 for traffic and transport management
- \$347,000 for road safety.

However, on closer look, close to \$2m of it involves yet more plans and no action.

There was \$500,000 for planning for the upgrade of the Pacific Highway through Wyong, and \$1m for planning for the upgrade of the Pacific Highway intersection at Wyong Road and \$200,000 for planning for the upgrade of Sparks Road from the Freeway to the Highway.

That's a lot of money to spend on planning and it also concerns me there was no money allocated for one of the Shire's great bottlenecks which is The Entrance Road through Long Jetty ... which is a problem I've been particularly vocal about for a number of years now.

I will continue to fight to ensure our growing public gets the road network it deserves and not more plans.

Finally, I will continue in my role, as patron of the Australian Coal Alliance, to protect our valley's and water catchment areas from long wall coal mining. There is a place for it, but that place is not in our valleys.

Conclusion

On top of my Council duties, I am involved with many community organisations including the Mariners FC, Berkeley Vale Public School and the Central Coast Dance Company. I am also patron of dozens of sporting and community organisations and these commitments resulted in my attendance at more than 80 additional functions during the past 12 months.

As can be seen by my workload, it is impossible to perform the duties of Mayor of such a large Council like Wyong on a part time basis. In the last 350 days, I have had only 70 days without some official duty to perform and it has not been unusual for me to put in 15 hour days, which happens quite frequently.

As you can see, there has been a lot achieved in the past 12 months and our goal as Councillors and as an organisation must be to continue moving forward for the benefit of Wyong Shire and its residents.

I formally move:

That Council <u>receive</u> the Mayoral report for the past 12 month term, 2008–09.

2.1 Election of Mayor and voting Procedure

TRIM REFERENCE: F2004/06511 - D01945630 AUTHOR: ED

SUMMARY

Nominations are invited for the Office of Mayor for the 2009-10 term. The election of Mayor of Wyong Shire Council must be held in accordance with Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation, 2005 and Council's Code of Meeting Practice. The Office of Mayor commences on the day the person is elected and becomes vacant when the person's successor is declared elected.

RECOMMENDATION

That should an election for the Office of Mayor be required, Council <u>determine</u> whether the vote is to proceed by preferential ballot, by ordinary ballot or by open voting.

In accordance with Section 227(a) of the Local Government Act, 1993 the Mayor of Wyong Shire Council is elected by the Councillors from among their number.

Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation, 2005, outlines the following procedures for the election of a Mayor.

Returning Officer

In accordance with the provisions of Schedule 7, the General Manager (or a person appointed by the General Manager) is the Returning Officer.

Nomination

A Councillor may be nominated without notice for election as Mayor. The nomination is to be made in writing by two or more Councillors (one of whom may be the nominee). The nomination is not valid unless the nominee has indicated consent to the nomination in writing.

The nomination is to be delivered or sent to the Returning Officer, who shall announce the names of the nominees at the Council meeting at which the election is to be held.

Election

If only one Councillor is nominated for the position of Mayor, that Councillor is elected. If more than one Councillor is nominated Council must determine if voting is to proceed by preferential ballot, by ordinary ballot (both secret ballots) or by Open Voting (voting by a show of hands or similar means). The elections of Mayor and Deputy Mayor are the only times Council can choose to vote by way of secret ballot. In all other matters open voting must be used. The election is to be held at the Council meeting at which the Council resolves on the method of voting.

Ordinary Ballot

- If the election proceeds by ordinary ballot, the Returning Officer is to decide the manner in which votes are to be marked on the ballot-papers.
- 2 a If there are only two candidates, the candidate with the higher number of votes is elected.
 - b If there are only two candidates and they are tied, the one elected is to be chosen by lot.
- 3 a If there are three or more candidates, the one with the lowest number of votes is to be excluded.
 - b If three or more candidates then remain, a further vote is to be taken of those candidates and the one with the lowest number of votes from that further vote is to be excluded.
 - c If, after that, three or more candidates still remain, the procedure set out in subclause 3 (b) is to be repeated until only two candidates remain.
 - d A further vote is to be taken of the two remaining candidates.
 - e Clause 2 of the above then applies to the determination of the election as if the two remaining candidates had been the only candidates.
 - If at any stage during a count under subclause 3 (a) or 3 (b), two or more candidates are tied on the lowest number of votes, the one excluded is to be chosen by lot.

Open Voting

Follows the same procedures as for ordinary ballot excepting it is by a show of hands or similar means.

Preferential Ballot

- 1 This Part applies if the election proceeds by preferential ballot.
- The ballot papers are to contain the names of all the candidates. The Councillors are to mark their votes by placing the numbers "1", "2" and so on against the various names so as to indicate the order of their preference for all the candidates.

Count

- If a candidate has an absolute majority of first preference votes, that candidate is elected.
- If not, the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes is excluded and the votes on the unexhausted ballot-papers counted to him or her are transferred to the candidates with second preferences on those ballot-papers.

- A candidate who then has an absolute majority of votes is elected, but, if no candidate then has an absolute majority of votes, the process of excluding the candidate who has the lowest number of votes and counting each of his or her unexhausted ballot-papers to the candidates remaining in the election next in order of the voter's preference is repeated until one candidate has received an absolute majority of votes. The latter is elected.
- In this clause "absolute majority" in relation to votes means a number which is more than one-half of the number of formal unexhausted ballot-papers.

Tied Candidates

- If, on any count of votes, there are two candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for the two candidates are equal the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have received an absolute majority of votes and is therefore taken to be elected.
- If, on any count of votes, there are three or more candidates in, or remaining in, the election and the numbers of votes cast for two or more candidates are equal and those candidates are the ones with the lowest number of votes on the count of the votes the candidate whose name is first chosen by lot is taken to have the lowest number of votes and is therefore excluded.

Ballot Papers

Ballot papers will be issued at the election as required. The Returning Officer will decide the manner in which votes are to be marked on the ballot papers.

Formality of Ballot Paper

Under Schedule 7 to the Local Government (General) Regulations, 2005, the formality of a ballot paper will be determined in accordance with Clause 345, 1 (b) (c), 6 and 6A of that Regulation, as follows:

- 345 (1) A ballot-paper of an elector at an election is informal if:
 - (b) it has not been initialled on the front by an election official, or
 - (c) it contains a mark or writing that, in the returning officer's opinion, would enable the elector to be identified.
 - (6) Despite subclause (1), a ballot-paper of an elector at an election is not informal by virtue of the existence of an unnecessary mark on the ballot-paper if, in the opinion of the returning officer, the elector's intention is clearly indicated on the ballot-paper.
 - (6A) Despite subclause (1), a ballot-paper is not informal by reason only that the elector has placed one or more numbers, a tick or one or more crosses, adjacent to but outside a square or squares, if, in the opinion of the returning officer, the elector's intention is clearly indicated on the ballot-paper. In such a case, each such number, tick or cross is taken to have been placed within the relevant square.

General

To choose a candidate by lot, the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes are written on similar slips of paper by the Returning Officer, the slips are folded by the Returning Officer so as to prevent the names being seen, the slips are mixed and one is drawn at random by the Returning Officer and the candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is chosen.

It is custom at Wyong Council that each nominee for the Office of Mayor may appoint one scrutineer who is not a Councillor.

Two Nomination Forms for the position of Mayor have been enclosed with the Business Paper.

ATTACHMENTS

1 Nomination Forms for the position of Mayor Enclosure

2.2 Election of Deputy Mayor

TRIM REFERENCE: F2004/06511 - D01945658 AUTHOR: ED

SUMMARY

Nominations are invited for the Office of Deputy Mayor for the 2009-10 term. The election is held in accordance with Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation, 2005 and Council's Code of Meeting Practice.

Council's Manual of Standard Procedures requires that a Deputy Mayor be elected. Clause 10 (2) of Council's Code of Meeting Practice provides that the procedures will be the same as those which apply to the election of the Mayor.

Two Nomination Forms for the position of Deputy Mayor have been enclosed with the Business Paper.

RECOMMENDATION

That the election of Deputy Mayor be conducted in the same manner as the election of Mayor for the 2009-10 term.

ATTACHMENTS

1 Nomination Forms for the position of Deputy Mayor Enclosure