

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Peel-Harvey Catchment Council held in the boardroom of the Peel Development Commission in Mandurah on Thursday 12 August 2004 commencing at 9.00am

Present: Jan Star Chairman  
Morris Bessant  
Marilyn Gray  
Klaus Hirschberg  
Tony Hiscock  
Brian Joynes  
Shane Kelliher  
Murray Love  
Bob Pond  
Martin Reeve-Fowkes  
Christine Steer  
Maxine Whitely  
Ian Wight-Pickin Executive Officer

In Attendance: Kristy Gregory  
Peter Hick  
Fran Jones  
Damien Postma  
Kim Wilson

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**1. Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies were received from Neil Guise, Andy Gulliver and Garry Heady.

**2. Confirmation of Previous Minutes**

On the motion of Bessant/Pond, the minutes of the previous annual meeting held on 14 August 2003 having been distributed were taken as read and confirmed.

**3. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman looked back over what was covered in her annual report last year to check what had been achieved.

Accreditation of the Regional NRM Strategy and Investment Plan had not yet been achieved but the draft Strategy had been completed and the public comment period completed. The Investment Plan was being developed and would be considered by SWCC this month prior for commencement of the public input stage.

A local Peel-Harvey Catchment Plan had been prepared and was out for consideration by our stakeholders. She thanked Martin Wells for a job well done.

Some significant works on the major river systems commenced in October last year after Alex Hams and Jesse Steele commenced the Rivercare project. Their

work is progressing very well and further funding for Rivercare action had been obtained.

Most of the Local Governments in the catchment had come on-board with the Water Campaign and funding for that project has been extended. The State Water Taskforce has given money to ICLEI to recruit other Councils as part of the State Water Strategy. Damien Postma was thanked for his efforts on the Water Campaign and many other PHCC matters.

Substantial progress with the Water Quality Improvement Plan and supporting projects under the Coastal Catchments Initiative had been achieved. The CCI has redirected the agencies attention to the Peel-Harvey and the PHCC had played a strong coordinating role during the year though we still await a WQIP. The Chairman thanked the agencies involved.

There had been anticipation of working with both the State and Local Government on emerging biodiversity projects in the catchment - in particular the southern extension of Bush Forever. However, the PHCC had made more progress than State or Local Government did in the past year. Peter Hick had successfully completed his biodiversity project well ahead of commencement of the southern extension of either the State's Bush Forever or Local Government's Perth Biodiversity Project. She thanked Peter for a ground breaking result which had captured interest from outside the Peel-Harvey catchment.

A greater involvement with Greening Australia (WA) and the World Wide Fund had been foreseen because the Chairman had thought that was an area where a lot could happen. It had, however, not progressed nearly as far and as well as she had hoped. A few meetings had been held with WWF and they were now hosting the regional marine facilitator assisting the South West and other Regions with their Regional Strategies. In the same vein, Greening Australia was hosting the regional biodiversity facilitator assisting with the South West Regional Strategy. She had hoped to progress matters further specifically with regard to the Peel-Harvey. WWF wanted to involve the PHCC in a State pilot wetland project for which they have funding and Damien was organising another meeting with them and Birds Australia soon that might get the desired result.

She had anticipated the PHCC assisting with implementation of the environmental components of the Peel 2020 proposals. Peel 2020 had progressed slightly slower than anticipated with the final report only recently been completed. However, all the partners representing the triple bottom line in the Peel Region, were working together to add value as a partnership.

She had also anticipated assisting with implementation of some of the recommendations of the Economic Development and Recreational Management Plan for Peel Waterways, particularly the concept of a Waterways Institute. While others have had centre stage on the main Ec & Rec Plan, the PHCC had

been involved in meetings throughout the year to progress the Waterways Institute concept. The Consultants have completed their study on the Waterways Institute and their final report was with the PDC. This had advanced well and the PHCC remained ready to assist with implementation of the concept.

Progress with the Peel Regional Park under the Peel Region Scheme had been slow, but the committees have finally been established for both the Inlet and the Park and the PHCC had cross membership with those committees.

There had been no progress on the incorporation of the three northern Councils of the catchment though the PHCC has included them in the Strategy preparation and consultation, and in our membership.

Communication has improved with the 'topica' email system started by Damien. He has also made substantial progress with web-site development, while at the same time helping Local Government in the Strategy consultation.

Damien also helped coordinate and write our contribution to the Drainage Reform Group's White Paper. A new look at drainage is definitely on the State's agenda and the White Paper has already led to the Water Corporation adopting a Total Water Cycle management approach. Changes in drainage management will be a major issue for us we look forward to and we will try to have a role to play there.

No members had cease during the past year and the PHCC was joined in February by Stephen Lee and Brian Joynes as new members representing all of the Local Governments in the catchment.

It was also a fairly stable year for NRM Officers in the catchment although there was some staff turnover in the Mundijong Landcare Centre. Tracey and Donna transferred to the centre from the Rockingham Environmental Centre in September. Quentin joined us as centre manager at Christmas and Fran joined us after Sietske left. Apart from that, Alex, Jesse and Peter joined the PHCC during the year for specific projects. Funding again was announced late or received late, or both and all staff have been very forbearing of all this uncertainty – thank you.

There was significantly more change at the regional level where we lost both the Regional Coordinator and the Chairman in quick succession, and we are still awaiting a decision on the appointment of a new Chairman at the end of this month. The Chairman has been acting as Chair of SWCC this year, and Morris has been the extra PHCC delegate alongside Maxine. Christine, Martin and Damien have been involved in the SWCC planning. Bob has played a significant role lately in the SWCC team which has been helpful for us. In recent months, officers from Peel-Harvey Landcare Centres have also become directly involved as members of Focus Groups. Ian has also been a very valuable contributor to the SWCC effort.

The Chairman then outlined what might be expected in the coming year. Most importantly the Regional Strategy needed to be finalised and accredited and the Investment Plan approved. While the SWCC timeline had the Strategy ready for putting forward for accreditation consideration in October and the Investment Plan ready for submission at the end of November, the timing of the approval process was hard to predict particularly due to the timing of forthcoming Commonwealth and State elections. She said she could not overemphasise the enormous effort put into developing those strategies and plans. SWCC was reviewing the structure of the region and there could be changes ensuing from that as there is some recognition of the complexity, size and cost of running the current structure. She felt that this complexity showed up clearly in the Strategy.

She said that the State may well be entering a period of change for the administration of NRM at all levels, but where there is change there is opportunity. Definitely considerable funds should start to flow in the New Year and members could look towards some major action.

In closing, she thanked members and officers for their support of her and their contribution to the cause throughout the year. The PHCC has a terrific team and can look forward to the coming year with optimism.

The Chairman's report was accepted on the motion of Hiscock/Hirschberg.

**4. Presentation of Financial Statements**

Marilyn Gray reported that auditing of the financial statements could not be completed in time for the annual meeting. She noted that the 2003/04 Activity Schedule had been distributed with the agenda and she circulated the Trial Balance and Profit and Loss Statement for the year. On the motion of Pond/Joynes it was resolved to defer consideration of the financial statements until the next ordinary meeting after completion of the auditing of the books.

**5. Election of Office Bearers**

The Chairman vacated the Chair and the Executive Officer called for nominations for the position of Chairman. Jan Star was nominated by Bessant/Whitely and was elected unopposed. Jan Star resumed the Chair.

Nominations were called for the position of Deputy Chairman and on the motion of Hiscock/Steer, Morris Bessant was nominated and elected unopposed.

Marilyn Gray was nominated for the position of Secretary/Treasurer on the motion of Bessant/Hiscock and was elected unopposed.

**6. Appointment of an Auditor**

On the motion of Gray/Whitely it was resolved to appoint Ian D Pedlar CPA Pty Ltd as auditor for the 2004/05 financial year.

**7. Review of Agency Members**

In accordance with clause 6.2.3 of the Constitution, the existing agency membership was confirmed on the motion of Hirschberg/Hiscock.

On the motion of Bessant/Gray it was resolved to ask the Department for Planning and Infrastructure to nominate a PHCC contact officer and to invite them to attend meetings when matters are on the agenda that relate to their responsibilities.

**8. Close**

The Chairman closed the business of the Annual Meeting at 9.50am.

**9. Next Annual Meeting**

In accordance with clause 12.1 of the Constitution, the next annual meeting was due to be held in August 2005.

Chairman .....

Date .....