

Minutes of the executive meeting of the Beyond Bolac Catchment Action Group 28-Jan. 2015

Meeting opened at 10.08 am

Attendees: President Dave Allen, Secretary Michelle Casanova, Treasurer Nolene Fraser, Executive member Bill Weatherly, Facilitator Bill Sharp, Richard Jamieson, Robert Nicholls, Una Allender. Late arrival John Malin.

Apologies: Beth Mellick, John Malin

Motion to accept apologies: Moved: Richard, seconded Bill S.

Minutes of the previous meeting: changes to the draft minutes were read out.

Motion to accept minutes of last meeting. Moved: Richard, Bill S.

Business arising from last meeting:

- 1) Phytoplankton and Nutrients in Lake Bolac: Bill S. had sent around the results of a soil test on the dried sediment samples collected via hovercraft. Michelle explained some of the values in relation to the concentrations of N and P, and salinity. Discussion followed about the role of N and P, inflows and sediment load of nutrients. Bill W. suggested we get the author of the report on algal blooms in the lake (Peter Lind) to speak at the next meeting. Bill W. suggested a summary of the lake conditions and nutrient levels be written and posted on the website. **Action:** Michelle to write the algal bloom report for the web site. **Action:** Bill S. to ensure it is posted on web site. Kim Russell (CEO of Southern Farming Systems) had a conversation with Bill S. about working on nutrient control on a catchment basis, rather than as a single "lake" issue. Nutrient deposits in lakes are of interest to them because it means loss from agricultural systems (Una). There is potential for a closer relationship with SFS. There has been in the general public the idea that lake could be cleared out of sediments. Measure of cubic m required to be shifted makes that impractical. Disposal of that volume material on land or downstream would be deleterious. Nolene: On the day we dug the boat out of the lake there was white sand below. Discussion of lunette development, sediment history of the lake.
- 2) Damage to the Lakeside Native Grassland and Wildflower Plantation: No apparent action has been taken to address the vandalism. Nolene: there has been communication with Deidre Andrews (Ararat Council), Police have photographed the damage. A good relationship with the council will facilitate the use of prisoners from Langi Kal Kal for grassland maintenance works (weeding). **Action:** maintain a good relationship with Ararat Council in communications.

Correspondence:

Bill S. reported there have been emails to Kim Russel (SFS) and Peter Lind (speaking at next meeting). An email from Beth requested financial details for projects. Treasurer Nolene is working on providing these.

Treasurers Report:

Nolene now has MYOB her computer, she will see Trevor Link this afternoon to see how to use it. All the previous data is loaded.

Forms concerning transfer of treasurer and executive have been handed in, so people can sign cheques. \$68,176.96 in the current account. Suggestion that a significant proportion go into a term deposit. Current term deposit is with Warrnambool Bendigo Bank (\$54,165.50). New rules require changes to accounts be minuted. Nolene suggested a new 2 month term deposit to streamline the finances, the new deposit can be joined with the old one when it matures. New rules require 31 days notice for early withdrawal. 7 day window at maturity. Discussion about quarantining a buffer for Facilitator wages: can that be in a separate deposit? Rob: new rules not significantly different from the old ones, but might lose interest on the whole term if early withdrawal. Issues are about access to funds and loss of interest.

Motion:

Two new term deposits be created, based at Lake Bolac branch of Bendigo Bank : one term deposit of \$25,000, with a term of 1 year; one term deposit of \$20,000 with a term of 2 months. When the current term deposit based in Warrnambool matures, that the balance of that be rolled into the second term deposit based at Lake Bolac. **Moved** Nolene, **seconded** Rob. Carried.

The first term deposit is a contingency amount to ensure continuity of facilitation (should this not be funded in the future). The second deposit is working funds, deposited to gain the best return.

There have been two significant deposits since the last treasurer report: CMA: \$16592.40 for wetland grants, DEPI: \$41,251 for facilitation.

Paid accounts to Lake Bolac PO \$14.00, TRG accountants in Ballarat \$1122.00 for transfer of accounts to MYOB and for auditing, LB info centre for room hire \$250.00, Landmark soil test on Lake Bolac sediments \$101.20, and for MYOB program \$289.00 refunded to Nolene. Nolene will provide a written report at next meeting.

Motion to accept treasurer's report: moved Nolene, secd. Bill W. carried.

General Business

1. (Information) Project Platypus does not have to pay the \$400 fee for Langi Kal Kal Prisoners to work, but individual people have to pay. UA – understand that at present prisoners can work on fencing for any district grant funded projects for free.
2. Landcare hero nomination form was circulated. Left to individuals to follow up.
3. “Down the Fiery Creek” video grant application: Jane Walker (indigenous programs CMA) contacted Una indicating there is money (\$10,000) for a project, from Landcare Australia (from a philanthropic group) which fits with the ‘Down the Fiery’ video project. Una completed initial application and they liked the concept. Now there is a form to fill in, Jane will fill in, based on a prior application by the Eel Festival to the Bendigo Bank.
Motion: that BBCAG facilitate application: moved: Una. Seconded: Nolene, carried.
4. Helen and Geoff Handbury fellowship program: Judy Patterson contacted us about finding a suitable project. This might contribute to the project in 2, above. **Action:** Una and Nolene to follow up.
5. Bill has had factual information about diversions from the Fiery Creek delivered from the CMA. ‘Upper Burnt Creek diversion’. Bill tabled the document and will send it electronically to this committee. Suspicion and hearsay about diversions have been contentious within the community in the past. Total diversion to Upper Burnt Creek (for Beaufort water supply) is 419 ML/year (0.2 ML/day). There was discussion about the rules concerning timing of that diversion, and its consequences on the creek and the lake. **Tabled:** for discussion at the next meeting when everyone has read the report. Bill S. has exchanged emails with Angas Ramsey (SRW) who indicated that the diversion can be significant at times of low flow. BBCAG has not had contact with Central Highlands Water who allows diversions.
6. Making the most of Swamps project: Michelle has applied to the Ian Potter Foundation for funds to look at best management of swamps for biodiversity and economic values. Needs access to swamps in the local district, and some indication that best-practice management will be implemented. She will contact the CMA to see if they will incorporate the findings into their ‘Bush tender’ and ‘wetland tender’ programs. Una suggested she approach SFS for access to sites and implementation in the longer term. **Motion:** that BBCAG facilitate this project. Moved: Michelle. Seconded Richard. Carried.
7. Richard: commented on concern about pest plants (St Johns Wort: out of control in Napier NP) and animals (calici virus: rabbits are out of control): roadside burning (sufficiency of roadside fire breaks): Discussion about Vic Landcare Council and Farm Tree and Landcare Association. **Motion:** that BBCAG support a nomination of Richard to the committee of management for the FTLA, moved: Bill W. seconded Rob. Carried.
8. Advice for next meeting: Bill W. to investigate the best way of making our biological data more available to those in the catchment, as well as contributing to the Atlas of Living Australia. Bill W. to report on this at next meeting.
9. For our 10 year review (coming up). Suggestion of a questionnaire for members about our effectiveness and role in NRM around Lake Bolac. Generally rejected. Suggestion of a forum on ‘Enterprise profitability’. Discussion around a review of strategic plan, and formulation of a new one. Suggestion that we engage Geoff Park to facilitate. To be further discussed at next meeting.
10. Western Highway duplication Project. There is concern about the destruction of habitat and removal of vegetation by Vic Roads in the highway duplication project. Some vegetation types have been altogether removed, many large habitat trees removed. A letter from Ararat Landcare Group about this to Vic Roads, Minister for Roads, Ararat Advertiser, Pyrenees Advocate and all candidates for Ripon drew an informal response from Vic Roads in Ballarat pre-election and a formal letter has since been received. There is a meeting in Ararat (7pm Friday St Andrews Uniting Church Hall opp Marian College, Ararat) that will be attended by Vic Roads and the general public, to have an intelligent and informed discussion about environmental issues arising from the duplication of the highway as far as Stawell. Members of BBCAG are welcome to come along.

Next meeting 18 Feb. 2015, 10 am. LB information Centre.

Meeting closed 12 noon.