

MINUTES OF THE BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL TOURISM
COMMITTEE MEETING

**HELD AT THE BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY 6th MARCH 2018 COMMENCING AT 5.00PM**

1. **PRESENT:** Iain Field (Chairperson), Ken Spinks, Peter Lawler, Dianne Williams, Wayne Whitby, Mon Carmichael, Terri Bilske, Kathy Anderson
2. **APOLOGIES RECEIVED:** Ema Severi, Linda Nelson, German Ugartes, Shirley Matarazzo, Ken Barnes

3. **ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

The Minutes were accepted from the previous meeting.

MOVED: Ken Spinks

SECONDED: Dianne Williams

4. **BUSINESS ARISING:**

a) **One Road Great Australian Road Trips – New Television Series 2018**

Iain spoke of where this is up to with the planning. He had spoken to Lee Lorraine from the production company and had written an outline of the Food and Wine Tour – Griffith to Mildura via Balranald & Mungo

b) **Fish Restocking Program**

Discussion was had re Ken's proposal (Appendix One attached).

Actions: Iain to contact Bill Haben (Fishing Club)

Mon attending AWAG next week and will find out more information.

c) **Key Tourism Actions for 2018**

Council is yet to receive Connie's thumb drive and so doesn't have the "Key Tourism Actions for 2018" document.

d) **Selection Committee for Tourism Co-Ordinator**

Terri agreed with principle that Chair of Tourism Committee to be on Panel interviewing for new Tourism Co-Ordinator. Concern was raised about the lack of social media posts since Connie's departure but also the need to hire the right person.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

a) **Group Accommodation Options**

Mon spoke of the need for group accommodation options in the area to allow for large school groups to visit. She suggested funding under the Destination NSW – Regional Tourism Product Development Program. Discussion moved to the possibility of using Council owned Football Sheds. Already has two sets of toilets and some sort of physical divider needs to be erected on a temporary basis when in use.

Council to explore options for using the Football Shed for the purpose of Group Accommodation of School Excursions.

MOVED: Ken Spinks

SECONDED: Dianne Williams

b) Fence at back of Discovery Centre

Motion that Council investigate the erection of a fence at back of Discovery Centre to stop cars parking on the lawn. Will need gate access.

MOVED: Peter Lawler

SECONDED: Dianne Williams

c) Tourism Statistics

Kathy brought tourism statistics to meeting.

d) Tourism & Economic Development

Discussion had about including Economic Development in Tourism meetings and the need for Members with requisite economic development skills.

e) Easter Events

It was advised that there are no Easter activities planned by the Council due to the lack of a Tourism Co-Ordinator. This is an event which has grown and grown over the last few years. Fortunately, Yanga is planning some Easter Activities and these may, in some way, alleviate the problem.

Council to link Yanga Easter Activities to the website.

Meeting closed 6.15pm

Appendix One

Fish Restocking Program

At last meeting I flagged a situation developing that threatens the NSW \$ for \$ fish restocking programs.

The concept of private restocking was instigated by the Kyalite Hotel about 26 or 27 years ago. It was a unique event that attracted National TV News coverage. From this flowed the \$ for \$ program which has been a huge success but is now in danger of collapsing, bringing down a massive tourism factor with it. Traditionally there has been six approved breeding hatcheries that supplied fingerlings for the restocking program – this year there is one. There is no guarantee this will be available next year**

There are three issues affecting supply of fingerlings to NSW.

1/. The harvest traditionally runs from late September to about March the following year. The method involved hatcheries supplying (mainly fishing clubs) and delivering to, on demand. A piecemeal procedure that was labour and travel intensive – it was expensive.

2/. This year the Fisheries have placed extra and unrealistic conditions on hatcheries to legally deliver fish to the buyers. For example, hatcheries now have to do a risk assessment of not only the people receiving but also release sites.

3/. Competition from neighbouring states. Both Victoria and S.A purchase their fish from NSW hatcheries. This is done with a bulk pickup. Purpose built trucks take delivery at the hatchery thus relieving hatcheries of the lengthy and onerous harvest costs they have previously carried.

Other factors that “muddy the waters” so to speak. Hatcheries believe NSW Fisheries is not doing enough at ground roots level to support their industry. Although the promotion of \$ for \$ is glossy and “feel good” the reality could be better. The annual revenue from fishing licences is \$15 million, the spend on \$ for \$ is \$250,000. After recent black water events (caused by ill-conceived Government Environmental policies) NSW Fisheries did not create an active restocking program. This is despite hatcheries approach to the Fisheries.

The taking of brood stock from zoned areas to maintain species DNA is unnecessary and expensive. Hatcheries are claiming that micro chipping and DNA testing is fast proving this practice irrelevant.

I have not confirmed the stated figures but I believe them to be truly indicative of the situation. It is also my understanding the hatcheries have asked for a formal meeting with Fisheries, thus far this has not been granted.

I may not be at Tuesday's meeting, but I feel the committee should discuss this situation and, if in agreeance, pass a resolution asking Council to write to the Minister for Fisheries with these concerns.

The hatcheries concerned are:

Gwydir Fish Native Fish hatchery	02 67222818
Murray Darling Fisheries	02 69229447
Namoi Valley Aqua farming	02 67921212
Ray Mepham Native Fish hatchery	02 67232338
Silver Water Native Fish	02 69562122
Uarah Fish hatchery	02 69562147 **

This year Uarah is the only supplier to NSW. It has been recently purchased by a Chinese group and there is a strong rumour that next year's crop will be entirely for the Chinese market.

Ken Barnes
March 3rd, 2018