

FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

Council held its ordinary monthly meeting on Wednesday, 14 April, 2010 and I would like to share with your readers some of the decisions made on the day.

Draft Management Plan on Public Exhibition

Readers will have noticed from Council's weekly advertisement that the draft Management Plan for the period 2010 – 2013 is on public exhibition and can also be viewed at Council's website www.coonambleshire.nsw.gov.au

Council has again found it difficult to achieve its priorities given the very low rate pegging limit of 2.6%. It seems that Council is going backwards yearly with wages increasing between 3% and 4% and oil-based products continuing to outstrip the CPI in its cost escalation. Despite this, the plan builds on the sound economic base of this Shire and delivers services at a continuing quality that should please most people. Sure it would be great for Council to embark on improvement programs associated with rural roads, recreational facilities or employment generating proposals, but the economic reality of achievement is impossible.

Ratepayers and residents are encouraged to attend a public meeting in McCullough Hall on Wednesday, 28 April, 2010 at 7.00 p.m. when Council will present its draft management plan to the community which will allow submissions to be made in a timely manner by Wednesday, 19 May, 2010.

Economic Development Starting to Gather Momentum

Not only is the rural sector starting to recover, but other industries and businesses also seem to be pushing forward with development plans. Council was pleased to receive a deputation from a local business seeking land to expand. Council also was informed of the potential reopening of the abattoir following sale and this will provide a significant boost to employment in the Shire. Hopefully we have turned the corner and will prosper yet again!

Shires Association of NSW – Annual Conference

It seems that there is not a week goes by without some new form of legislation placing further regulation on our community. The only right of reply small councils, such as ours, have is to address our political masters following their presentations to the Shires Association conference annually. This year I will be accompanied by Crs. Karanouh and Schieb, along with the Director of Corporate Services. This conference affords Council's delegates the opportunity to not only have input into Association policy, but also to network with their peers and gain an insight into life in other councils.

Training Continues at Coonamble Pool

Council was pleased to confirm the General Manager's action in permitting the continued use of the Coonamble pool facilities for young swimmers to train for the upcoming State Titles. This was made possible by the unselfish actions of a Council staff member who agreed to supervise the training sessions.

Gulargambone Recycling

Council was surprised that only two submissions were received in respect of terminating the Gulargambone recycling collection and sorting program. Across the State there seems to be a reversal of opinion on this issue probably due to the costs associated with conducting the program and the realization that only very small inroads are being made into the waste problem.

Joint Venture with Gilgandra Shire

Council has taken the first step towards becoming involved with its neighbouring Gilgandra Shire in an attempt to reduce the cost of road works by sharing plant associated with mixing roads and the addition of stabilization material. Relevant staff of the two councils have already met to "nut out" the principles that were conveyed to and agreed by Council. It is pleasing that not only costs will be saved, but a small profit achieved.

Council Initiative to Produce Greater Control

Council has seen fit to revert to a broader committee system in an effort to get greater control and monitoring of issues relating to crime prevention across the Shire. The Committee will consider crime statistics, manage its Crime Prevention Plan, administer an interagency aimed at mitigating the instance of crime and control its CCTV camera operation. Council also formed a Parks and Gardens Committee to deal with the redevelopment of sporting facilities, establish additional recreation facilities, have a more 'in-depth' input into the Recreation Facilities Management Plan and contribute to the lowering of risk for Council associated with recreational facilities.

Coonamble Relay for Life

How good was it? Absolutely magnificent is the verdict of the whole community who lent its assistance to ensure that the Coonamble Sportsground was turned into a mini community for the 18 hour period over the weekend of 10 & 11 April. On behalf of Council and myself I heap the highest praise possible on the organizing committee who put on an event that was nothing short of amazing. Thank you.

No Meeting in May

I reported last month that Council decided in April not to hold a meeting during May because the date clashed with the public holiday gazetted for the second day of the local Show. Council's next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 9 June 2010.

Electricity Pricing – Petition

The Member for Dubbo, Mrs Dawn Fardell, has commenced a petition from communities requesting that the Government reject the IPART-approved unrealistic price rises in respect of electricity supply. Council has distributed copies of the petition to many organizations and businesses throughout the Shire to allow concerned residents to express their dissatisfaction with the proposed increases. I encourage everyone to seek out a copy of the petition and duly sign it.

If anyone has an issue they wish to discuss I am available anytime to meet with them – telephone 0407 221002.

TIM HORAN

Mayor