

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF THE LITCHFIELD COUNCIL  
HELD ON THURSDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2015  
AT COUNCIL CHAMBERS, BEES CREEK ROAD, FRED'S PASS.**

**ATTENDANCE**

<b>Present:</b>	Frank Crawley	Official Manager
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<b>Staff:</b>	Ben Dornier	Acting Chief Executive Officer
	Valerie Urbain	Finance Manager
	Graeme Francis	General Manager Projects
	Glen Minaker	Thorak Operations Manager
	Jannah Wright	Acting Council Secretary

<b>Public:</b>	Mathew Salter	Howard Springs
	Marlene Watt	Humpty Doo
	Belinda Brustolin	Howard Springs
	May Leitch	Acacia Hills
	Will Green	Acacia Hills
	Russell Anderson	Berry Springs
	Christine Osborn	Bees Creek
	Tony Hardwick	Humpty Doo
	John Kearney	Humpty Doo
	Peter Cole	Humpty Doo
	Sam Burt	Humpty Doo
	Neil Murray	Darwin
	Peter McLinden	Howard Springs
	Alderman Jeanette Anictomatis	Fannie Bay
	Helen Galton	Darwin City
	Anna Malgorzewicz	Acacia Hills
	Mary Walshe	Humpty Doo
	Judy Cole	Humpty Doo
Dani McDonald	NT News	

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OFFICIAL MANAGER

  
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ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**1. OPENING OF MEETING:**

Official Manager Frank Crawley opened the Meeting at 6.30pm, welcoming members of the public and asking if anyone would object to the meeting being recorded. The Official Manager then welcomed Ben Dornier as Acting CEO and thanked the City of Palmerston for their kind assistance.

**2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

**Nil**

**3. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**Nil**

**4. PUBLIC FORUM**

- Sadness was expressed over recent events at the Council. A question was raised as to how no one was unable to pick up the redistribution of funds from 'Reserves' in the financials. The Official Manager noted that in the December budget adjustments, there were significant transfers out of the contingency reserves (\$515,000) and plant replacement reserves (\$199,000). This should have elicited some questions and would be an early warning sign of over-expenditure.
- A question was asked regarding the Waste Management Consultant listed in the Creditors Report. Why were they paid \$20,000 in last month's Finance report? Concerns expressed about the amount of money 'bleeding' out of Council over time, on waste management. The consultant was utilised as a specialist in implementing new waste systems (kerbside collection) and is no longer working on behalf of Litchfield Council. This is in-line with a resolution passed at the last Council Meeting that all work on Kerbside Waste Collection would stop until a comprehensive community consultation has been undertaken.
- The possibility of rewriting the minutes past inaccuracies was raised, specifically the financial implications from December stating 'the net effect of the financial review is a surplus of \$385,900'. The current agenda now shows a debt of \$515,000 or more on the December agenda item. The Official Manager explained that we cannot make retrospective changes but the transfer from reserves masks the over-expenditure.
- Concern expressed regarding the regular hiring of consultants that led to over-expenditure. This was clarified as an undertaking of the CEO, rather than Councillors.
- Comment made on whether Council had approached the Northern Territory Government on the subject of obtaining a sewer upgrade for Howard Spring. A question was raised to Council as to whether they had known about the upgrade

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and had been involved in any planning. Answered by member of the public; NTG is undertaking gradual upgrading of the village centre infrastructures. This is not in the budget for this year but will probably happen next financial year. This does not go through Council; it is a Northern Territory Government initiative.

- Query about the contract of the CEO. The Official Manager explained that anything to do with the CEO's contract or the termination of the CEO's contract has to be confidential.
- Disappointment was expressed at the comments in the NT News over recent activities of Council. It was requested that the over-expenditure of Council monies should be addressed by the (suspended) Councillors who made the budget decisions, as the Official Manager may have drawn conclusions without the appropriate understanding of community's needs. The Official Manager stated that the comments to the NT News were in response to specific questions and contained facts and figures.
- Question to the Official Manager regarding the final report and if it would contain guidance on how Council should be run (ie. what level of responsibility the Mayor and Councillors actually have). The Official Manager responded that he is unable to discuss what will be contained in his official report.

## 5. ACCEPTING OR DECLINING LATE ITEMS

It was **Approved** that the Official Manager accepts the late item, Minutes of the Special Council Meeting of the Litchfield Council, held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2015.

## 6. NOTICE OF MOTION

Nil

## 7. CONFIRMATION OF MINTUES

### 7.1 Minutes of the Council Meeting held Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015.


The Official Manager called for confirmation of the minutes of the Council Meeting held Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

It was **Approved** that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015 are confirmed by Council with nil amendments.

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**7.2 Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015.**

The Official Manager called for confirmation of the minutes of the Special Council Meeting held Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

It was **Approved** that the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015 are confirmed by Council with nil amendments.

**8. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES Nil**

**9. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

It was **Approved** that the Council note the contents of the Chief Executive Officer's Report.

**10. GOVERNANCE REPORT**

It was **Approved** that the Council note the contents of the Governance Report.

**10.1 PA15/CSR/004: COMMON SEAL USAGE REPORT**

It was **Approved** that the Council notes the common seal report for April 2015.

**11. PROJECT OFFICE REPORT**

It was **Approved** that the Council note the contents of the Project Office Report.

**12. INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING REPORT**

It was **Approved** that the Council note the contents of the Infrastructure and Planning Report.

**13. FINANCE REPORT**

**13.1 FR15/FIN/005: FINANCE REPORT – APRIL 2015**

It was **Approved** that the Council note the contents of the Finance Report for April 2015.

**14. BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

It was **Approved** that the Council note the contents of the Business & Economic Development Report.

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**14.1 FR15/TRSPG/001LI: THORAK REGIONAL CEMETERY – MASTER PLAN – GRANT ACQUITTAL**

It was **Approved** that the Council endorse the grant acquittal of \$80,000.00 towards the cost of developing Thorak Regional Cemetery Master Plan from the Department of Local Government.

**15. CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT**

It was **Approved** that the Council note the contents of the Customer Service Report.

**16. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT REPORT**

It was **Approved** that the Council note the contents of the Information Management Report.

**17. REGULATORY SERVICES REPORT**

It was **Approved** that the Council note the contents of the Regulatory Services Report.

**18. OFFICIAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

Since the last council meeting the Official Manager has attended:

- Anzac Day Ceremony in Humpty Doo, to lay a wreath on behalf of the residents of Litchfield.
- Met with the Freds Pass Show Society regarding obtaining assistance, to be worked out on an ongoing basis.
- DCA (Litchfield division) on the 15<sup>th</sup> May. Comments made by the Chair of the DCA were that he would like to receive more input from the Council on items, and if the Council were to make comments, they would be duly considered.
- Freds Pass Show which was very good.
- Met for discussions with the consultant from TOPROC who is preparing the strategic plan and looking at what type of resource sharing and other joint activities Council may be able to undertake with TOPROC.

It was **Approved** that the Council note the contents of the Official Manager's Report.

**19. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC GALLERY**

The following was raised:

- Clarification that Council is free to make any submission to the DCA that it feels applicable.

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- Request for Planning Staff to attend a meeting on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May regarding wholesale urban development within a rural area, to get some feedback from community and position itself to negotiate on block size and impact to the public.
- Has Council sought resident's opinion on the future development for the rural area? A number of surveys have been conducted, results are on the website. Has the Council considered opinion on the Holtze development and put a proposal for consultation with the Planning Commission? Council will be engaging with the Planning Commission and would appreciate feedback from the public. It is unknown if feedback will be actively sort on the issue.
- There is a great demand in the rural area for smaller block sizes to provide for people with individual needs as they age or circumstance change, to keep them where they want to live.
- How was the tender for Girraween/Anglesey Road Roundabout able to quote a costing of \$2.5m? Response letter to be provided.
- Concern was raised regarding the development in the area of Spencely and Strangways Roads. Has consideration been put forward regarding the flood area and noted to developers? Matter to be discussed with Engineers.
- Holtze Area Plan consultation is open until 26<sup>th</sup> June, providing an opportunity for Council to engage on the development.
- It was noted that the Freds Pass Show traditionally provides opportunity for the community to discuss issues with elected members. The Official Manager did not appear to be available at the Litchfield Council stand during the show.
- On behalf of the Freds Pass Show Committee President, the show was a very successful undertaking and the committee would like to thank Council for their support, including grading of roads around the area. The committee are looking forward to working with Council in preparation for next year's show and cementing a relationship.
- A question was raised around Council's attendance at tonight's meeting of Holtze Road residents? This meeting was unknown to Council. Council will be undertaking a briefing with the Planning Commission Office next week.
- When is the Official Manager's report due? Has to be lodged with the Minister by the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

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OFFICIAL MANAGER



ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

- Is there some policy recommendations going forward to ensure this type of thing (over-spending) will not happen again? Is a budget review policy required to ensure this is undertaken? The Council can make a resolution at any time to this effect. It was requested that this could take place whilst the Official Manager was still in office.

**20. COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURNED FOR COMMENCEMENT OF THE THORAK REGIONAL CEMETERY BOARD MEETING**

**21. COUNCIL MEETING RECOMMENCED**

**22. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS** Nil

**23. NEXT MEETING:** Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

**24. CLOSE OF MEETING:** The Meeting closed at 7.25pm.

MINUTES CONFIRMED  
18<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2015

  
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