



COUNCIL MEETING - April 27, 2005

Venue: MINYERRI

Minutes: Andrei Koeppen (CEO)

Attendance:

David Daniels (President)
Dallas Kingsely
Anita Thompson
Gerry Ashley
Walter Rogers
Allan Watson
Daphne Daniels

Apologies:

Kevin Rogers (Vice President)
Robin Rogers
Bobby Ngungamatjbarr
Shelia Joshua
Peter Lansen

Previous Minutes:

Motion: Accepted as a true and correct record of Council Meeting

Moved: Walter Rogers

Second: David Daniels

Presentation by Joanna Streton from Indigenous Co-ordination Centre (ICC) on Shared Responsibility Agreements (SRA)

Joanna talked about SRA's and said they were about communities taking responsibilities for certain things. She said the Federal Government's focus is on children and that they were looking for long term change. The Government is saying kids should be healthier, better educated and have better for job futures. They are looking at a 20 to 30 year plan. SRA's are based on discussions with Countrymen about what they need in their communities. SRA's are agreements between the Government and clans, families, women groups, or any other group or association. She talked about the Cattle Business as an example and said decisions need to be made about ownership and structure. Walter Rogers might operate the butcher shop but a registered Aboriginal Corporation representing all cattle farmers in Yugul Mangi might run the meatworks. These things need to be decided. An SRA usually involves a grant of money, or a loan. But the Government want some sort of payback or return on the investment. For example, Ngukurr's community might agree to remove the car wrecks, or clean up the litter problem, or improve education by encouraging more kids

to complete Year 12, or by improving their houses, or by quitting smoking - or at least cutting down on smoking. These are some of the things a community can do in return for investment in their enterprises.

Other priorities discussed by Council included housing for single people, housing for the aged, housing for indigenous staff. A possible SRA might include Governance and Financial training for Councillors. There was a suggestion by Joanna that the Fred Hollows Foundation be approached to form a partnership with Council to assist with a café or bakery. The Government likes to see partnerships with third parties. There was a suggestion made by Walter Rogers that an SRA be developed to purchase the Roper Bar Store, however Joanna said this would be better done by the Indigenous Land Council (ILC). There was also a discussion about CDEP and it was noted that the Government's new direction means CDEP is no longer a lifetime job.

Action: CEO to present new CDEP Guidelines to May Council meeting.

Action: Joanna to return on Tue 2nd May to start draft agreements.

Agenda Items;

Sharon Warke.

Endorsement of long service leave and final settlement for Sharon. CEO raised the matter of Sharon's resignation after 9.5 years of service and suggested she be paid her long service entitlement despite falling 6 months short. It was noted that Sharon had made a significant contribution to Ngukurr and would be sadly missed. Council acknowledged Sharon's efforts and all spoke highly of her work. CEO noted that Max (ESO) agreed to stay on for some weeks after Sharon, to train new ESO, in return for Council 'doing the right thing' by Sharon.

Motion: to endorse Sharon Warke's ten year's long service entitlement.

Moved by: Walter Rogers

Seconded by: Gerry Ashley

Housing Committee.

CEO briefly discussed the need for a housing committee as outlined in the Housing Management Plan as approved by Council in March 2005 and submitted to NT Government. Ngukurr's Housing Committee would be comprised of one or two people from top camp, middle camp and bottom camp. They do not include Council members. Housing Committees help ensure new houses are distributed fairly and according to policy. They also provide feedback on issues to Council. They work with the Housing Office and report to Council each month. Council were referred to Housing Management Plan and Housing Policy as endorsed at March 2005 meeting for more detail.

Motion: to approve the establishment of a Housing Committee for Ngukurr

Moved by: Anita Thompson

Seconded by: Daphne Daniels

New House

KBR requested confirmation from Council (see correspondence folder) that the tenth NAHS house would be specially designed for the Esmerelda Thompson's family. Esmerelda is severely disabled child (10 y.o) and Council had previously (November 2004) received a request from a Darwin Doctor that a suitable house be provided to her and her family. The allocated site would be Lot 409. The house would be a similar style to the nine cement block homes recently constructed.

Motion: that the tenth NAHS house be designed and constructed at Lot 409 for Esmerelda Thompson and her family

Moved: David Daniels

Seconded: Dallas Kingsley

Essential Services Officer and Plumber

CEO said an advertisement for the ESO had been placed on the internet (www.seek.com.au) and that several applications had been received. After screening these, two were selected as suitable. One was an electronics engineer and diesel mechanic (with ESO experience), the other a plumber. CEO indicated Council required a plumber also and sought endorsement to engage both applicants. The ESO position is funded by the Power&Water contract and the plumber's position is funded by the housing maintenance budget - which had been substantially increased through rent rises.

Motion to employ Alex Petersen, the selected candidate for the ESO position and to employ Tony Dell, the preferred candidate for the Community Plumber's position.

Moved: Walter Rogers

Seconded: David Daniels

Community Services Manager

CEO indicated the resignation of Sharon Warke had left a vacancy for the Community Services Manager and sought Council's approval for Roz Koeppen-Yakas to take over the role in an acting capacity until a suitable replacement could be found. Roz had worked in the role previously, over the six week December - January period and was familiar with the agencies who provided funding for Aged Care, Child Care, the Library, Sport & Rec and so on. Roz is a qualified teacher with 20 years experience, as well as a background in small business. The temporary appointment also alleviates the Staff housing shortage for the time being. Roz is available until late July 2005.

Motion: that Roz Koeppen-Yakas act as Community Services Manager until a suitable replacement can be found.

Moved: Walter Rogers

Seconded: David Daniels

Accountant

CEO felt that Yugul Mangi Council required the services of an Accountant to assist with financial management. A restructure of staff would soon be presented to Council and this would include an Accountant's position. Approval was sought from Council to proceed with the advertising of the Accountant's position on www.seek.com.au. Actual recruitment would be subject to Council approval and issues such as accommodation would need to be resolved. Expected salary would be \$50,000 per year.

Motion: to proceed with advertising for an Accountant for Council

Moved: Walter Rogers

Seconded: David Daniels

Vehicles

CEO raised the issue of vehicles. The recent secondment of the Sport & Recreation troopy by David Daniels for Urapunga had left the sniffers program and the swimming pool without a vehicle. CEO sought council approval to purchase a replacement vehicle. CEO noted that the swimming pool cannot operate unless an emergency vehicle is on stand-by. CEO also indicated a need for a vehicle for the plumber to be appointed. CEO also stated that several outstations had requested vehicles be provided to them also. There is a perception in the community that Urapunga has received several vehicles in the recent past and that other outstations are also entitled to vehicles. Minyerri representatives repeated their request for additional vehicles also.

Action: CEO to act on Council request for further information and budgets regarding vehicles and present at the next meeting.

Settlement of Dudley Daniels dispute

Council has been approached by Dudley Daniels for the return of monies, \$9,000 allegedly removed from his bank account (Dudley Transport) by the former CEO, Lynn Mott, and transferred to Air Ngukurr in around 2001. The Finance Manager (Bob Savage) is aware of the problem but no evidence exists to verify the claim. However, all Council agree that the monies were taken from Dudley Transport and probably used to support Air Ngukurr. Council feel some obligation to make amends, since it was the CEO who committed the act. It was decided by unanimous vote that Dudley Daniels should be reimbursed half the amount claimed, ie. \$4500. Council suggested he seek the remaining half from Air Ngukurr.

Motion: that Council pay Dudley Daniels \$4500 in full and final settlement of his claim for funds allegedly misappropriated from his business trading account by former CEO Lyn Mott.

Moved: Walter Rogers

Seconded: Allan Watson

Workshop

The issue of the mechanical workshop was raised by Council in a general discussion about the quality of service. CEO noted that the KIA truck would soon be repaired and that it had been in the workshop for four years. Walter Rogers noted his truck had been in the workshop for one year. David Daniels commented that he had recently taken his vehicle to the workshop with a problem gearbox and was advised it needed to be sent to Darwin for repair. He then took the vehicle to Ziggy and learnt the problem was a \$7 seal, which took ten minutes to repair. A number of councillors expressed serious concerns about the workshop and questioned the performance of the staff therein. CEO remarked that despite numerous requests, Ziggy (Council Mechanic) and Garry (CDEP Mechanic) were not operating co-operatively or working together. CEO indicated most staff contracts had now expired and that most staff were now employed on a month by month basis.

CEO sought council endorsement to refrain from offering contracts to all staff, including mechanics, until the restructure was complete.

Motion: to withhold signing or offering any contracts until the staff restructure is approved by Council.

Moved: Daphne Daniels

Seconded: David Daniels

Milwarrpar Corp and Ngukurr Store

A meeting was held by Milwarrpar Aboriginal Corporation in mid-April to discuss numerous issues pertaining to traditional ownership. Approximately twenty five traditional owners were present at the meeting, along with David Daniels (Council President) and Andrei Koeppen (Council CEO), Daphne Daniels (Council Executive Assistant) and several elected members of Council. Among the items discussed at the Milwarrpar meeting was the Ngukurr store. The meeting was unanimous in its call for the store to be transferred to Council ownership. The members felt the interests of the community, including the traditional owners, were not being met by the store and that too much division and disharmony was being created by unresolved issues of ownership and control. The members expressed their concern at the violence and unrest that this issue had caused in the past. Andrei (CEO) said that if Council assumed control of the store, then Council would immediately invite Woolworths-Fred Hollows Foundation to implement their training and support program. Council would not be directly involved in running the store but would like to see improvements in the quality of food sold, lower prices, and greater accountability of management. The Woolworths-Fred Hollows program ensures the store is operated honestly and fairly, with the best interests of the community at heart. Council have held discussions with Woolworths-Fred Hollows and all parties have agreed to wait until the issues of ownership have been resolved. Milwarrpar Corp followed their meeting with a letter to the Northern Land Council asking for their support in this matter.

This issue was discussed by Council and it was decided that Gordon Nawundulpi, as NLC Executive Member, should investigate this matter further and report to Council at the May meeting.

Action: CEO to request Gordon to investigate the matter and report to Council.

Community Corrections Officer

To date only one application had been received for the Corrections Officer's position, from Keith Rogers. Council felt more time was needed and that the position should be held open until the next Council meeting in May.

Action: CEO to present all applicants to May meeting

Police & ACPO

Minyerri representatives expressed concern at the lack of policing in their community and requested Council write to Police for an outpost to be established at Minyerri and that an ACPO be appointed as soon as possible.

Action: CEO to write to Police

Milwarrpar and Council Meetings

At the previously mentioned meeting of the Milwarrpar Aboriginal Corporation, it was suggested that at least one Djungai, one Dhalian and one Mingirringi be present at Council meetings. However, David Daniels and Walter Rogers felt these positions were already represented on Council. Council President stated Milwarrpar would be welcome at Council meetings, since meetings are public unless declared otherwise.

Action: CEO to advise Milwarrpar representative, Dawson Daniels, that Council meetings are open to the public.

Minyerri Plumbing

Concerns were raised about plumbing, especially blocked toilets, at Minyerri. CEO said the newly appointed community plumber would be available to Minyerri also.

Minyerry Housing

Concerns were raised about the quality of housing at Roper Valley Outstation. Council requested that one of the new houses to be built at Minyerri should be built at Roper Valley instead. Council felt Minyerri had sufficient new houses and that the needs of Roper Valley ought to be addressed.

Action: CEO to discuss with IHANT the possibility of one house being constructed at Roper Valley.

Liquor Commission

Council discussed the liquor permit issue and decided that more community consultation was needed. It was suggested by David Daniels that weekly community meetings be called until the issue is resolved. There was some debate about the current options, which are perceived to be either (a) that all liquor permits are revoked or (b) that all members of the community have the option of applying for a liquor permit. The mood of the meeting did not favour option (b) but the issue was not tested by vote.

