LOCKHART RIVER
ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL
ABN: 55 631 460 952

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting

of

Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council

at

Lockhart River Council Chambers

Date: **Thursday 3rd of April 2025. (March meeting)**

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MINUTES

Present: Mayor Cr Wayne Butcher
Deputy Mayor Cr Alister Bowie
Cr Krystal Dean
Cr Steven Bally
Cr Dorothy Hobson

Apologies Nil

Visitors: nil

Opening and Venue: Mayor Cr Wayne Butcher opened the meeting at 10:45am.

Conflict of Interest: Mayor Butcher flagged a potential new conflict of interest for his register. He declared he may be seeking sub-contract opportunities under contract 8238-1 which is the road shoulder stabilization work west of Garraway crossing and the stabilization of town streets. Cr Butcher committed to keeping Council informed of his intentions once tender recommendation has been received from the independent reviewers. Councilors were encouraged to review their circumstances and make amendments to their disclosures, as necessary.

Issue: Minutes of the meeting of the 20th of February 2025 were tabled and discussed.

Resolution 1: That the minutes of the meeting of the 20th of February 2025 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Moved: **Cr A. Bowie** **Seconded:** **Cr S. Bally**
All in favour **Motion passed**

Issue: **Visitor – Principal Kathy Ona**

Principal Ona talked Council through her initiative to have school finish at 1:50pm on Fridays to better harmonise with community workforce flows.

Resolution 2: **That Council endorses the change in hours of school operations as proposed by Principal Ona, to enhance functionality and workforce flows.**

Moved: **Cr K. Dean** **Seconded:** **Cr A. Bowie**
All in favour **Motion passed.**

Issue: **Financial Report for February and March 2025**

The Finance Reports for February and March 2025 were tabled and discussed with guidance from Stanley Mugwiria, Corporate Services Director.

Resolution 3: **That the Financial Reports for February and March 2025 be accepted as tabled.**

Moved: Cr W. Butcher **Seconded:** **Cr D. Hobson**
All in favour **Motion passed.**

Issue: **Visitors – CEQ CEO Michael Dykes and Community Liaison lead Fred Gela**

Council welcomed the visitors and thanked them for the sponsorship of the shirts for our last Paytham Malkari Festival. Fred and Michael lead general discussions around the operation of the Freddie Moses Retail Store and future planning for the area. Council offered investment opportunities in supporting our food security plan for the farm and potential fishing ventures to supply the community with locally sourced fruit and vegetables and sea food. Michael noted CEQ would enjoy receiving proposals of this nature for their consideration going forward. Council flagged the potential to partner on freight discounting via CEQ freight arrangements and sought CEQ opinion on the potential transfer of trusteeship of the reserve area to Council. Mayor Butcher advised dates for this year's dance festival and put CEQ on notice Council will approach them for sponsorship. Mayor Butcher thanked them for their visit.

Resolution 4: **That Council writes to DATSIP seeking transfer of the trusteeship of the reserve over the store complex and introduce the proposal to the Technical Working Group for decision.**

Moved: **Cr S. Bally** **Seconded:** **Cr W. Butcher**
All in favour **Motion passed.**

Issue: **Community Safety Plan**

The latest draft of the Community safety Plan by Rick Dutton which includes AMP amendment and survey results was tabled. Good discussion took place as Council provided their opinion on approach and the need to not allow alcohol management to be the sole focus of the plan. It should encompass all community risks and solutions to manage them.

Issue: **Budget 2025 – 2026 Financial Year**

Council budget preparation includes working with all Council's business units to define their aspirations both capital and recurrent for the coming financial year. The CEO will garner input from all unit leaders and bring the findings to Council in preparation for budget consideration.

Issue: **Social Club activities**

Council continues to support the Social Club Board and Management but raise the matter of their supply chain management and over reliance on Sea Swift freight for packaged products, and the CEQ store for basic food and soft drink supply. Investigation on alternative freight routes and high volume purchasing prior to the wet season needs to be considered. CEO to continue to work with the Manager and Board on efficiencies. The installation of the complete security system must be given priority.

Issue: **Housing 10-year Capital Works Plan update and associated Housing matters**

Council was updated on the Capital Works Program and other housing matters by Building Services Director, Reggie Edmond, and the CEO. The ambitious program highlighted the need for the recruitment of more tradesmen to drive delivery and train our apprenticeship intake. The CEO advised Department of Housing was currently hold weekly Teams Meetings with Council staff on the funding agreement and capital program to support the first three houses being delivered on the new sub-division this dry season.

Issue: **Women's issues**

Cr Krystal Dean gave a short snapshot of what was happening around Lockhart for the ladies with feedback on the International Women's Day event of the 7th of March, and collaborative efforts to continue with the successful NAIDOC Ball event of last year. Cr Dean and others will advise Council on support required to make this year's event a success.

Issue: **Food Security Plan**

The framework for the food security plan was tabled for discussion noting broader discussion will be required before final draft. Council noted it and endorsed distribution to the broader community for discussion. Council noted the re-establishment of the farm will require the consent of the landowners who may want to drive the project. The Community Fishing License application is designed to enable Lockhart River fishers to sell their catch to satisfy local demand. Once the license is in place Council will host a meeting of all potential providers.

Issue: **Tender for Aerodrome Runway lighting**

The matter of the tendering process for the replacement of our Aerodrome Runway lighting was discussed. Council has successfully applied for $2.9m to complete the task and usual Council procurement policy would see an open tender called for supply and installation. GH&D have been engaged to project manage this work. After consideration, noting there are only six suppliers in Australia for these specialized services, Council may need to consider a select tender process which would see tender documents provided to these six established providers.

Resolution 5: **That Council endorse deviation from their standard procurement process to use a Select Tender process for the Aerodrome Runway Lighting Project given the constrained pool of providers nationally.**

Moved:	**Cr S. Bally**	**Seconded:**	**Cr A. Bowie**
All in favour		**Motion passed.**	

Issue: **Cemetery**

The cemetery is becoming unkept. Council proposes a clean-up be held on the last Friday of every month led by the Parks and Gardens team supported by Cape York Employment. All volunteers welcome.

A broader issue is the cemetery will unfortunately need to expand soon. Any expansion should consider installing a lockable shed to accommodate chairs/marquees, wheelbarrows, and shovels etc, the installation of toilets, and a generic water supply for greening purposes. This project may lend itself to being driven by the Technical Working Group as it will require independent funding to deliver. CEO to put the project on the TWG agenda noting a meeting is scheduled for mid-May.

Issue: **Light vehicle replacement**

Council has constantly struggled to effectively and efficiently manage the light vehicle fleet currently dominated by Hi-Lux 4WDs. Council considered the matter and recommended that, on changeover, Council move away from light vehicles and move to four door light trucks. Parks and Gardens, Road Gang, and Workshop will now look to 4WD light Trucks going forward.

Issue: **Paytham Malkari Festival 2025**

Council discussed the matter considering Laura festival not proceeding and decided this year's festival will be held on the 3rd and 4th of October. Steering Committee to be convened as soon as possible to allocate tasks and responsibilities.

Issue: **Council employees seeking travel assistance from Council via pay deduction authority**

The CEO advised of a trend from our Council workforce seeking emergency assistance from to travel to or from Cairns with debt to be serviced via payroll deduction. This is causing a problem administratively and also represents poor value for the employees noting Council can only get full fare price points and not the subsidized fare under the Local fare Scheme. There is also the risk Audit would view any transactions such as these as a loan which is not permissible under the Local Government Act. Some contractors have historically sought similar assistance. Any future requests will be denied.

There being no further matters to discuss the mayor closed the meeting at 2:40pm.