



WALGA

Great Southern Zone of WALGA

MINUTES

of an Ordinary meeting
(2 voting delegates per council)
and Zone Strategic Planning Session

held on

Friday 18 February 2022

Venue:
Shire of Denmark
953 South Coast Highway
Denmark

1. OPEN: 10.09am

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners by Shire of Denmark President, Cr Ceinwen Gearon.
Cr Gearon left the meeting at 10.11am.

2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Cr Chris Pavlovich
Annabel Paulley

Zone President and Chairman of the meeting
Zone Executive Officer

City of Albany
Broomehill / Tambellup
Cranbrook
Denmark
Gnowangerup
Jerramungup
Katanning
Kent
Kojoonup
Plantagenet
Woodanilling

Mayor Dennis Wellington, Cr Paul Terry and CEO Andrew Sharpe
Cr Michael White, Cr Doug Barritt and Acting CEO Rob Stewart
Cr Philip Horrocks, Cr George Pollard and CEO Linda Gray
Cr Janine Phillips, Cr Donna Carman and CEO David Schober
Cr Fiona Gaze, Cr Greg Stewart and CEO Bob Jarvis
Nil
Cr Liz Guidera, Cr John Goodheart and
Cr Scott Crosby, and CEO Adam Majid
Cr Kevin Gale, Cr Alan Egerton-Warburton and CEO Grant Thompson
Cr Jon Oldfield and CEO Cameron Woods
Cr Stephen Jefferies, Cr Russel Thomson and CEO Kellie Bartley

Total of 19 out of a possible 22 voting delegates were in attendance at the start of the meeting.

Guests

Cr Karen Chappel, WALGA Acting State Council President - via video conference (VC)
Nick Sloan, CEO, WALGA - via VC
Narelle Cant, Principal Special Projects and Acting Executive Manager Communications, WALGA - via VC
Natasha Monks, CEO, Great Southern Development Commission
Vivienne Gardiner, WALGA RoadWise Road Safety Adviser

Apologies

Cr Andrew Price, Cr Julie Leenhouders and CEO Martin Cuthbert, Shire of Jerramungup
CEO Julian Murphy, Shire of Katanning
Cr Kate Johnston, Shire of Kent
Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

REMINDER: All delegates present at a Zone meeting shall vote, as per Zone Standing Order 28.1

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – ZONE AND WALGA STATE COUNCIL

4.1 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY ZONE MEETING – 19 NOVEMBER 2021

MOVED Cr Liz Guidera

SECONDED Cr Russel Thomson

That the minutes of an ordinary meeting of the Great Southern Zone of the WALGA held on Friday
19 November 2021 be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

CARRIED 19-0

4.2 MINUTES OF THE WALGA STATE COUNCIL MEETING – 1 DECEMBER 2021

MOVED Cr Scott Crosby

SECONDED Cr Jon Oldfield

That the Minutes of meeting of the State Council of WALGA held on 1 December 2021 be received.

CARRIED 19-0

5. WALGA UPDATES & REVIEW OF WALGA STATE COUNCIL AGENDA – 2 March 2022

5.1 Status Report from WALGA to the Zone

The status report dated February 2022 was received and noted.

5.2 WALGA State Council President's Report – Cr Karen Chappel

WALGA President's report dated March 2022 was received and noted.

5.3 State Council Representative's Report - Cr Chris Pavlovich

Cr Pavlovich gave a verbal report.

Cr Pavlovich attended his first WALGA State Council meeting in December 2021, and he sits on WALGA's Infrastructure Policy Team - a subject which is relevant to the Zone.

5.4 State Council Special Meeting Agenda – 23 February 2022

Review of submissions on the Local Government Reform Proposal by Member Councils.

Note: If a Member Council did not provide their submission, it was taken that the tabled WALGA proposal was endorsed.

WALGA CEO Nick Sloan spoke about the five (5) Local Government Reform proposals which were strongly opposed by Local Governments, being:-

- 6.6 Audit Committees – 89% opposed
- 4.3 Introduction of Preferential Voting – 81% opposed
- 4.4 Public Vote to Elect Mayor or President of Band 1 and 2 Local Governments – 67% opposed
- 4.5 Tiered Limits on the Number of Councillors – 65% opposed
- 3.5 Chief Executive Officer Key Performance Indicators – 66% opposed

Note: A motion on this item was adjourned until later in the meeting to allow for consolidation of information. Refer to motion below.

5.5 Matters for Decision – Zone consideration required

Consideration of the 2 March 2022 WALGA State Council Agenda - Matter for Decision.

Item 5.1 Short Term Accommodation Regulatory Scheme.

MOVED Cr Paul Terry

SECONDED Cr Janine Phillips

That WALGA makes a submission on the *Draft Position Statement: Planning for Tourism*, as follows:-

1. Does not support the adoption of the draft position statement, and indicates that substantial engagement should occur with the local government sector as an integral part of developing a revised draft position statement, to be subject of further formal consultation prior to WAPC consideration of that revised draft position statement.
2. Notes that a significant proportion of the detailed policy direction in the draft position statement is inconsistent with the over-arching policy measure, which is that - "Local government are best placed to plan for tourism within their communities, with local knowledge of tourism activity, opportunities, constraints, including potential impacts and what requirements, if any, should be placed on tourism proposals".
3. Expresses its disappointment and concern that the draft position statement was developed without any significant engagement with the local government sector, or with individual local governments that have significant tourism industries and knowledge and experience of tourism issues.

4. **Calls for the intergovernmental working group to be re-formed to guide the integrated development of a regulatory regime that allows local governments to make decisions about the regulation of short-term accommodation uses in residential areas, with the State supporting and enabling that local level regulation, importantly through the establishment of a state-wide registration scheme.**
5. **Calls for the intergovernmental working group to include diverse local government representation to ensure that the experience and knowledge of the sector informs the development of the regulatory regime.**
6. **Sets out that the state-wide registration scheme for short-term accommodation and peer-to-peer platforms should include the following features:**
 - a. **All hosted and un-hosted short-term accommodation must be required to be registered with the scheme before being able to advertise the property, and platforms must publish the registration number as part of the marketing and booking services;**
 - b. **All peer-to-peer platforms that seek to let short-term accommodation must be regulated through the scheme as a host platform;**
 - c. **Obligations of registration for both hosts and platforms must be clear and appropriate infringements and compliance tools should be embedded in the regulatory framework;**
 - d. **Local Governments must be able to maintain the ability to require the provision of additional information and impose additional licencing or operational requirements, depending on their circumstances, including both town planning and Local Government Act (Local Law) regulation;**
 - e. **Local Government's must be able to set fees commensurate with the cost of providing the service for any role undertaken as part of the scheme;**
 - f. **Local Governments must have access to all necessary data collected by the scheme to adequately manage the potential impacts of short-term accommodation providers and to ensure local requirements are being met by hosts; and**
 - g. **Unless Local Governments have 'opted-out', accommodation cannot be registered under the state-wide registration scheme without the prior obtaining and periodic renewal of a 'certificate of local government authority'. 7. Sets out that individual local governments should have the capacity to make their own decisions about whether there are any exemptions from the need to obtain development approval for 'unhosted accommodation'.**

CARRIED 19-0

5.6 Matters for Noting – for Zone information. Received.

5.7 State Council Status Report

5.7.1 Cost of Regional Development

Cr Egerton-Warburton advised that the Shire of Kojonup would like WALGA to be more proactive on reducing headworks charges in regional areas.

5.7.2 Regional Telecommunications

Cr Russel Thomson advised that Telstra was promoting that it had spent \$30 million across Australia installing backup power at mobile stations. Does not equate to much in WA but with the recent fires, now would be a good time push for more Telstra funding to be put into upgrading WA sites.

Cr Pavlovich advised that this matter was ongoing with WALGA's Infrastructure Policy Team.
Cr Kevin Gale advised that satellite communications are available but they are very expensive. He suggested that WALGA could look into this as a temporary measure after fires until the mobile stations are back up and running.

6. ACTION REGISTER AND ZONE PRIORITY STRATEGIC ISSUES 2021

6.1 **Action Register** – refer to the updated Action Register.

6.2 **Zone Priority Strategic Issues from 2021** – noted.

6.3 **Aboriginal Heritage Act**

Mayor Wellington raised serious concerns about the ramifications of the Aboriginal Heritage Act. Anyone who has block of land in excess of 1,100 square metres and who plans to undertake earthworks on the block will have to get approval from the Aboriginal Dept, which has yet to be set up, and pay a fee. Ramifications are quite extensive for capital works projects. Need to make submissions to the committee. The Regional Capitals Alliance has employed Duncan Ord to research this matter. WALGA advised that when the Act was passed in December 2021, there was no consultation with WALGA. WALGA has asked for a briefing on this matter and to be involved going forward.

MOVED Cr Paul Terry

SECONDED Cr Kevin Gale

That the Aboriginal Heritage Act and the creation of a Working Group for the Accredited Harvest Mass Management Scheme be added to the Zone's Action Register.

CARRIED 19-0

7. FINANCIAL REPORT

7.1 **Financial Report for the period 1 November 2021 to 31 January 2022.**

Opening balance as at 1 November 2021	\$1,809.81
Total debits	(\$2,656.11)
Total credits	\$7,848.00
Closing balance as at 31 January 2022	\$7,001.70

MOVED Cr Scott Crosby

SECONDED Cr Jon Oldfield

That the financial statement for the period 1 November 2021 to 31 January 2022 be accepted as true and accurate records of the Zone's finances.

CARRIED 19-0

8. REPORTS

8.1 **Local Government Agricultural Freight Group (LGAFG)** – Cr Russel Thomson

Cr Thomson gave an overview of a letter to be sent from the LGAFG to the Minister for Transport Rita Saffioti requesting the following:-

- An update on the Revitalising Agricultural Regional Freight Strategy and the Government's plan for the implementation of the infrastructure projects identified in the Strategy.
- Clarity on the allocation of the \$187.5m from the first package of the Agricultural Supply Chain Improvements Program.
- A timeframe for implementation of the funding under the Agricultural Supply Chain Improvements Program.
- To initiate an on-line, publicly available, mapping system of future road funding projects and priorities showing data on existing initiatives, road condition and proposed improvements.

- 8.2 RoadWise** – Vivienne Gardiner – new Regional Road Safety Adviser.
Ms Gardiner started in the role in October 2021. She is based in Albany but travels around the Great Southern to help councils achieve their road safety visions. There were 11 deaths in the Great Southern region in 2021. Ms Gardiner is encouraging collaborations to help reduce road fatalities.

The meeting broke for a refreshment break at 11.38am.

The meeting resumed at 11.47am.

9. Strategic Planning Session

Cr Chris Pavlovich explained why a Strategic Planning Session was necessary, and he explained the process of WALGA as a reminder to new and existing delegates. Cr Pavlovich advised that items to the Zone must come from Member Local Governments and not from individual Elected Members or staff opinions.

9.1 Draft Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework – previously circulated for consideration.

MOVED Cr Scott Crosby

SECONDED Cr George Pollard

That the Great Southern Zone of WALGA adopts the Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework.

CARRIED 19-0

9.2 Infrastructure and services which are important to Great Southern communities over the next 10-20 years – information from the Shires of Plantagenet, Kojoonup, Jerramungup, Broomehill-Tambellup and Gnowangerup was circulated with the agenda. Received with no further discussion.

9.3 Options from the Great Southern Zone Workshop held in Tambellup on 16 August 2019

Cr Guidera spoke about the Options to Make the Zone Better which were voted on and prioritised in the Outcomes Report from the workshop.

Option 1 Ministerial attendance at Zone meetings

Cr Crosby preferred small Zone delegations to meet the Ministers in Perth to target specific issues. Cr Gale suggested using new technology (eg. Zoom) to meet with ministers to save time.

Option 2 Identify local and regional strengths and issues, and how councils are dealing with them

Variety of councils with different needs. How do we articulate diversity of views?

Option 3 Zone to become a regional subsidiary in its own right

Noted.

Option 4 Digital hub for meeting papers and background

ACTION: WALGA to investigate this option when it takes over administration of the Zone.

Option 5 Councils to have 'Zone Issues' item on their monthly council agenda to encourage issues to be taken through the Zone

Very few, if any, councils have taken up this option.

Cr Gale suggested creating a diagram of how the Zone works for the benefit of new councillors.

Option 6 Need to focus on priority issues at start of years and target relevant Ministers, Directors General, etc, who can provide meaningful responses and follow up until issues are resolved

Consider relevance of Zone agenda items to Zone Councils. Most councils only attend Zone because they think they should attend. Timing is an issue. Some councils take issues direct to Minister – too long to wait for Zone meeting.

Zone is not pushing issues through WALGA and using WALGA as it is intended to be used.
WALGA needs to function more independently from Dept of Local Government to represent Local Government effectively.
Councils need to join together to advocate to Ministers more effectively.
WALGA annual conference in 2022 will look at how WALGA is going to change.

Option **Only 2 Zone meetings per year – one policy setting meeting and one conference**
Suggestion to have two face-to-face meetings per year, then meet electronically to discuss WALGA State Council agenda items as required.
Cr Michael White felt that the Zone needed to meet more than twice a year to drive issues effectively.

Further discussion

Cr Pavlovich gave an overview of the Minister for Local Government, John Carey's address to WALGA. The Minister stated that resource sharing and / or regional hubs can be formed to provide services over municipal boundaries.

The Minister believes that the current 138 LGAs could be reduced to say 50 Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in WA, rather than to become more effective and sustainable.

Zone needs to look at 3 or 4 major issues per year and advocate for these.

High priority should be supporting our regional centres, such as Albany (south) and Katanning (north) to ensure smaller LGAs have access to essential services.

9.4 Natasha Monks, CEO, GSDC

Overview of big picture items over the next 10-20 years include:

- Workforce and skills shortage.
- Housing.
- Climate Change – pilot region drought resilience planning is currently being undertaken.
- Aboriginal economic development, eg. planting for carbon offsets.
- WA Regional Development Alliance – draft regional development portfolio plan. Due to be made publicly available soon. Issues include digital connectivity, headworks charges and Aboriginal economic development.
- Looking at migrant opportunities.

Cr Phil Horrocks raised concerns about large tracts of land being given over to tree planting. Need to preserve our traditional forms of farming which provide employment.

Natasha Monks advised that the GSDC was aware of this perspective.

Cr Gale said big corporations were buying up farm land for carbon offset plantings.

Cr Pavlovich said councils could use their local planning schemes to regulate land use to a certain extent.

9.5 Priorities for the Zone in 2022

Cr Guidera suggested that some of the main issues were:-

- Tourism
- Water security
- Changes in our communities and their expectations of their local government.
Eg. Dwindling numbers in schools, etc.
- Challenges – infrastructure and equitable distribution of services.

A list of potential priorities was brainstormed on a whiteboard as follows:-

- Regulations for the Aboriginal Heritage Act.
- Housing / Employment Package – advocate to State Government for policy to correct market failure in headworks charges.
- Review national Accredited Mass Management Scheme (AMMS) – Regional Transport Network / upgrades to Albany Highway – separate these items to be worked on by sub-committees.
- Reliable digital connectivity / telecommunications – important for the next 10 - 20 years for health, education, etc.
- Jobs and investment.
Need government to streamline access to overseas employees and skilled labour. Could channel this issue through GSDC to work on. Need tax reform to attract people from cities to regional areas. Do survey to ask people what would make them move from the city to the country. RDA Great Southern has done this.
People are moving to regional towns because the housing is cheaper than the city.
- Carbon farming (opportunities and risk) and plantation farming.
- Health
- Education – standard in rural areas. More important for councils in the upper Great Southern, eg. small country towns with primary schools and schools up to Year 10. Could be solved by improved digital connectivity. Start Upper Great Southern Committee to work on this issue.
- Sustainable electricity / power / alternative energy.
The move to electric vehicles, etc, means there will not be enough power in the grid to cope. This is bigger than the Zone can deal with. Cr Gale suggested having off-grid housing developments with their own power, water, etc, to take the pressure off the grid.
- Regional sharing.

ACTION: The Zone to provide a succinct position paper and priority on each of the above items. Final version to be shared with the GSDC.

The meeting broke for lunch at 1.04pm.

Mayor Dennis Wellington, Cr Paul Terry and CEO Andrew Sharpe left the meeting at 1.04pm and did not return.

The meeting resumed after lunch at 1.35pm with 17 voting delegates in attendance.

5.4 Contined - Local Government Reform Proposals

MOVED Cr Jon Oldfield

SECONDED Cr Fiona Gaze

That the Great Southern Zone of WALGA:

1. Supports the comments and recommendations made by WALGA in its Local Government Reform Proposal Submission, and
2. Opposes the following three Reform Proposals, namely:
 - 3.5 Chief Executive Officer Key Performance Indicators,
 - 4.3 Introduction of Preferential Voting, and
 - 6.6 Audit Committees

CARRIED 17-0

9.5 Continued - Priorities for the Zone in 2022

Each council voted for their top 3 priorities from the list on the whiteboard.

The following 5 priorities received the most votes:-

- Regulations in the Aboriginal Heritage Act.
- Housing.
- Review National Accredited Mass Management Scheme.
- Reliable digital connectivity / telecommunications.
- Jobs and Investment.

ACTIONS:

- The Zone leadership team to compile a briefing note on the 5 key issues and distribute to Zone Councils against the **Policy and Advocacy Prioritisation Framework**.
- Members LGAs to review the briefing note and report to the April 2022 Zone meeting.
- The Zone to create an Action Plan for the 5 key issues at the April meeting and provide same to the WALGA State Council as required.

10. GUEST SPEAKERS LINKED TO ZONE PRIORITIES IN 2022

ACTION: Councils to decide which Ministers, Politicians, Directors General and other speakers they wish to attend Zone meetings in 2022.

Zone meeting dates 2022	Guest Speakers
Friday 22 April	DevelopmentWA regarding regional housing issues.
Friday 24 June	To be decided.
Friday 26 August	To be decided.
Friday 4 November	To be decided.

Outstanding speakers from 2021

- Ian Clarke, CEO, Albany Youth Support Association.
- Ben Headlam, Palmerston Services Great Southern – drug and alcohol issues in the region and COVID-19 impact. Also, lack of rehabilitation centre in the region. Look at presentation in 2022.
- Forest Industries Federation WA - briefing on the timber industry in WA and particularly regarding the South West Timber Hub, noting that forestry is a significant industry in the Great Southern. Look at presentation in 2022.
- Presentation by Office of the Auditor General.
August 2021 update: The Office of the Auditor General emailed the Zone on 9 August 2021 advising that it is now responsible for all WA local government and regional council financial audits. If the Great Southern Zone has any questions about our financial audit process or performance audit program/reports, the OAG would be happy to provide a presentation at a future Zone meeting.
- Dr Lenore Lyons has offered to give a short presentation to update Zone Councils on Outdoors Great Southern (formerly GSCORE).

11. REMAINING ZONE MEETINGS FOR 2022

Friday 22 April

Shire of Gnowangerup

(No joint meeting with Regional Road Group due to meeting being held in Ravensthorpe which is not in the Great Southern Region)

Note: WALGA to take over meeting administration from June meeting onwards.

Friday 24 June

Shire of Jerramungup (1-day mini conference)

Friday 26 August

Shire of Katanning

Friday 4 November

Shire of Woodanilling (AGM and ordinary meeting)

(Joint meeting with Great Southern Regional Road Group)

The meeting closed at 2.21pm.