



Community and Environment Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes



Meeting held at 4pm on Wednesday 9 August, Education Room 3, Visitor Centre Penguin Parade

1	Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners – Welcome, including introduction of new members & Apologies		
1.1	<p>Joint Chairs (Patrice Mahoney OAM and Jane Jobe) provided the Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners, the Bunurong, and welcomed attendees, declaring the meeting open at 4.05pm. All members new and existing, were welcomed.</p> <p>Members in attendance: Patrice Mahoney OAM Chair (Board Member), Jane Jobe Chair (Board Member), Gil Smith, Ron Day, Jill Sunderland, Penny Manning, Shane Livingstone, Gareth Kennedy, Serena Cabello, Jess Patman, Robyn Holman, Phil Wright, Nick Say, Doug Waugh, Cheryl Overton, Jim Kiley, Judy Day, Bill Young, Robbie Gray</p> <p>In Attendance: Kevin Love (Chair Board), Bev Munro (Board Member), Geoff Wescott (Board Member), Catherine Basterfield (Board Member), Maria Schreider (Research Manager), Sarah Hain (Community and Engagement Officer/Minutes).</p> <p>Apologies: Phil Dressing, Cheryl Owens, Gayle Seddon, Michael Kendrick-Wells, Jeff Nottle, Randall Joseph, Bradley Janson, Simon Woodland, Terry Nott, Nick Haviaridis (Acting Team Leader Community Safety, BSC)</p>		
3	Minutes from previous meeting	ACTIONS	STATUS
3.1	Minutes from the May 2023 meeting were adopted as a true and correct record of the meeting.	Community Engagement Officer to finalise minutes and add to - www.penguins.org.au/community	
4	Matters Arising from the minutes	ACTIONS	STATUS
4.1	No matters arising		
5	Declared conflicts of interest	ACTIONS	STATUS
5.1	No declared conflicts of interest		
6	Board Update	ACTIONS	STATUS

6.1	<p><i>Co-chair, Jane Jobe gave the following update:</i></p> <p>BOARD CHANGES</p> <p>In June, the board recognised the significant contribution of outgoing board members, Jane Foley and Danielle Auldist, who had reached the end of their term. The board was pleased to hear that Michaela Salvato was re-appointed for a further term and that Beverley Munro and Michelle Dickson were appointed as board members from 1 July 2023.</p> <p>NEW GENERAL MANAGER TOURISM</p> <p>This month we welcome the appointment of General Manager Tourism, Mark Anderson, after sadly saying farewell to Peta Wittig.</p> <p>VISITATION</p> <p>Visitation to the Nature Parks has been stronger than expected, resulting in the organisation reaching 80% of its pre-COVID revenue from admissions June YTD. Financial recovery has been driven primarily by domestic visitation. International visitation continues to grow consistently but remains below pre-COVID numbers.</p> <p>ANNUAL BUDGET AND BUSINESS PLAN</p> <p>In May, the board endorsed the organisation’s Annual Budget and Business Plan for FY24, which predicts that revenue generated from tourism operations will be sufficient to pay for all operational expenditure for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>NATURE PARKS’ STRATEGIC DIRECTION</p> <p>In 2021, the Nature Parks revised its strategy to reflect the “recovery” nature of the business as it emerged from the significant impacts of COVID-19, and the Future Directions strategy was adopted for 2-3 years. This strategy has been updated to reflect the current needs of the organisation for 2023-24 and can be found on the Nature Parks website.</p> <p>RISK REVIEW</p> <p>In June, the board reviewed and endorsed two strategic risks associated with the Nature Parks’ tourist attractions, commercial operations, visitor experience and service continuity.</p> <p>PENGUIN PARADE BOARD WALKS AND VIEWING STANDS PROJECT UPDATE</p> <p>The project has continued to finalise design works and complete planning processes, and an Expression of Interest process commenced this month to assess interest from potential tenderers.</p>		
7	Nature Parks Update – Chief Executive Officer	ACTIONS	STATUS
7.1	Catherine gave the overview of key highlights over past 12 months, this is summarised in the video link which will be shared with these minutes	Video link to be included: https://youtu.be/RuvGF-0zngI	
8	Conservation Update – Conservation Manager	ACTIONS	STATUS
	<p>Eastern Barred Bandicoot</p> <p>The population continues to spread across the island. We are working to share knowledge about how the community can support them in our backyards and to raise awareness about their behaviours and related road safety issues.</p>		

	<p>Research is being undertaken into the positive effects their digging can have on the soil and how this can aid agriculture. Maria advised that she could investigate if this may aid the die back issue on the island.</p> <p>Wildlife Rescue Following discussion, we can now advise that Wildlife Victoria will now be the first point of call for all wildlife emergencies on the island, they will then triage the calls/incidents – so only one phone number now for people to know and use. This will be communicated to the community.</p> <p>Wildlife Plan DEECA have confirmed funding for the continuation of the coordinator role, and have allocated the funding required for the geese modelling which is vital towards helping us to understand their ecology. Despite their being high numbers on the island this species is the second rarest goose in the world, but not a lot is known about their behaviour. Work is also commencing with regards to developing brush tail possum management plans, another key action identified in the plan.</p> <p>Bush Stone Curlew Once widespread and local to Phillip Island, Bush stone-curlews are listed as Critically Endangered in Victoria. Now fox-free, and containing large areas of suitable habitat, Phillip Island (Morrow) offers a unique opportunity to protect this species. A reintroduction of Bush stone-curlews onto the Island can aid in the species' recovery in Victoria and act as a source population for recovery efforts elsewhere in south-east Australia. The reintroduction of Bush stone-curlews is in progress for 2024. Phillip Island Nature Parks has been working closely with our partners, Odonata and The Australian National University, in the recovery of Bush stone-curlews across south-eastern Australia. The KCR has one current adult pair, and there are currently 2 male juveniles with their father Peter in Aviary 1 & 1 female juvenile with its mother in Aviary 2.</p> <p>The Koala Conservation Reserve is currently home to Bush stone-curlews housed in two large aviaries where visitors can see and learn about the species and their proposed recovery on Phillip Island (Morrow). These birds have produced a couple of chicks, which will feed into the program to recover the species in the wild.</p>	<p>Wildlife VIC phone number 03 8400 7300.</p>	
8	Community Open Day – Community Engagement Officer	ACTIONS	STATUS
	<p>Community Open Day 2023 will be held on Sunday 10 September. General Viewing seats at the Penguin Parade will be available on both Sunday 10 September and Monday 11 September 2023.</p> <p>Bookings will be available via the Nature Parks website from the 15 August onwards. We encourage you to attend.</p>	<p>https://penguins.org.au/about/local-community/news/community-open-day-2023/</p>	
9	Group Update	ACTIONS	STATUS

<p>9.1</p>	<p>BCSC Dieback Survey was commissioned on 100 trees across the island, working with the Landcare group, will have some results to share at next meeting. The Urban Forrest Strategy has been adopted and is now being implemented. Nick Haviaridis, Acting Team Leader Community Safety was not in attendance to give update on the cat containment and DAMP on behalf of council.</p> <p>Mountain bike community Question was asked with regards to Nature Parks being consulted by the council about mountain bike track development and if this was an eco-tourism opportunity, Catherine Basterfield responded that she has had various discussions over the years. The Nature Parks understands and acknowledges the needs for facilities in the region, but our land management area was given to us for a purpose which is for conservation, hence there is currently no appropriate space for a designated mountain biking track on Nature Parks managed land.</p> <p>DPI The Destination Management plan is a ten-year tourism strategic masterplan for the island and DPI are currently developing a discussion paper. Safeguarding the region and preserving conservation is a key focus area that has been identified from feedback received to date Further workshops and opportunities to engage are coming up and will be shared with the committee. Also wanted to share that this year's Whale festival was very successful, about 10K people attend this year. This despite lower whale numbers being reported, perhaps due to challenging weather conditions deterring whale watchers.</p> <p>Island Voice (Phillip Island Progress Association) Ron Day advised that he again conducted local roadkill counts and during the April/May period on the Cowes Rhyll Road there were 64 kills over the two months. This included 1 dusky moor hen and an Australian grebe. He noted this period typically is a busy period with tourist volume. He also wanted to see if rakali were recorded again, there was 1 killed in the period and a total overall of 32 species making up the 64. He has been monitoring the Pyramid Rock Road over the past two months and has recorded 26 kills, 1 goose and 7 other species. Evidence of hooning on the roads and deliberate hitting of wallabies is noted.</p> <p>Westernport Water Have completed a 5-year price review process with the pricing regulator. Capital investment is now planned for the next 5 years will almost double, with a \$4million investment into wetlands/storage solutions. Also investing in waste to energy at the Cowes treatment plant. The floating wetlands project is going well, planting now flourishing and work continuing into research into carbon offsets.</p> <p>PICS Advised that the For Our Futures project ends in September, this was an amazing project. A big thank you to all those who supported and contributed to the project.</p> <p>Bass Coast Landcare Rabbit baiting is underway at the Surf Beach Sunderland Bay biodiversity project. A project update is planned for late September.</p> <p>Birdlife Bass Coast</p>	<p>Community Engagement Officer to request an update from BCSC at next meeting with regards the DAMP.</p> <p>To report incidences of hooning on the island please call 131444</p>	
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	Announced the launch of a Blue Winged Parrots project – any sightings please report to Birdlife directly to basscoast@birdlife.org.au	Image of the parrot to be circulated to the committee	
10	General Business		
10.1	The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 8 November 2023 and will be the last meeting for the year.		
11	Close of meeting		
11.1	The Chair closed the meeting at 5.45 pm		