



# Community and Environment Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes



Meeting held at 4pm on Thursday 23 June 2022 at the Penguin Parade Visitor Centre

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners</b>		
1.1	<p>The Co-chairs opened the meeting at 4:05pm and acknowledged the Traditional Owners, of the land on which the meeting was taking place, the Bunurong.</p> <p><b>Members in attendance:</b> Patrice Mahoney OAM Chair (Board Member), Jane Jobe Chair (Board Member), Michaela Salvato (Board Member), Jeff Nottle, Gayle Seddon, Gill Smith, Terry Nott, Jill Sunderland, Warwick Tempany, Phil Dressing, Jim Kiley, Doug Waugh, Shane Livingstone, Bill Young, Linda Cuttriss, Michael Kendrick Wells.</p> <p><b>In Attendance:</b> Kevin Love (Chair Board), Catherine Basterfield (Chief Executive Officer), Jessica McKelson (Conservation Manager), Peta Witig (General Manager Tourism Operations), Sarah Hain (Community and Engagement Officer/Minutes).</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Bill Cleeland, Mike Cleeland, Cr Halstead, Fiona van Meurs, Bradley Janson, Robbie Gray, Cheryl Owens.</p>		
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes from previous meeting</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
2.1	Minutes from the March 2022 meeting were approved as read.	Community Engagement Officer to finalise minutes and add to - <a href="http://www.penguins.org.au/community">www.penguins.org.au/community</a>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Matters Arising from the minutes</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
3.1	The committee raised the importance of ensuring the minutes were completed and are shared with the committee efficiently.	Community Engagement Officer to ensure timely distribution of minutes.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Declared conflicts of interest</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
4.1	No declared conflicts of interest were raised with the agenda.		

5	Board Update	ACTIONS	STATUS
5.1	<p><i>Chairs, Patrice Mahoney and Jane Jobe provided an update of the 23 June Board meeting, sharing the following Board highlights:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Penguin Parade Boardwalks and Stands Redevelopment</b> project – draft detailed designs were progressing, and the Board welcomed the recent announcement of \$5Million in funding from the State Government for this project.</li> <li>• <b>Strategic Risk Review</b> – as part of its regular review of strategic risks, the Board endorsed two Nature Parks’ risks related to the Penguin population and their environment.</li> <li>• <b>Governance</b> – as part of its oversight of compliance and governance, the Board endorsed the revised Public Interest Disclosure Policy, Public Submissions and Responses to Inquiries Procedure and the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.</li> <li>• <b>Organisation Structure</b> – the Board received a progress update on the organisational changes.</li> <li>• <b>Food and Beverage</b> – the Board noted the transition of its food and beverage services from Delaware North to Create Catering on 1 August 2022.</li> <li>• <b>Environmental Investigations</b> – Following recent rock falls near cliffs on Phillip Island, the Nature Parks engaged a geotechnical engineer to undertake investigations at various locations. The Board received an update from Management of key findings within the geotechnical report and noted that key recommendations for risk mitigation had been provided by the engineers.</li> </ul>		
6	Nature Parks Update – CEO, Conservation Manager	ACTIONS	STATUS
6.1	<p><b>Nature Parks Update, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)</b></p> <p>The CEO shared the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CEO would be taking long service leave for three months, commencing on 3 July 2022. The General Manager, Tourism Operations would be Acting CEO during that time and the Projects and Planning Manager, would be Acting General Manager Tourism Operations.</li> <li>• The CEO reported on the Nature Parks COVID-19 recovery journey, highlighting positive visitor numbers and busy holiday periods. The CEO reported on the Nature Parks recovery strategy that it had received a Letter of Comfort from the State Government until November 2023.</li> <li>• The CEO reported on visitation and the market segments, noting that some international visitation had resumed, though not in any great number.</li> <li>• The CEO reported on the Nature Parks new catering partner, Create Catering and the outlook for a strong summer.</li> <li>• The CEO reported on the Nature Parks recovery strategy, which highlighted certain areas of the business which required investment and the need for the organisation to align its resources to enable it to achieve its strategy. The changes, the first of this type, the organisation has ever made, impacted the Nature Parks Education and Gate Ranger teams. The CEO reported on the impacts to the teams and that the organisation would continue its education focus with self-guided resources</li> </ul>		

	<p>and experiences and the Summerland Peninsula lock up process would be transferred to an external security contractor.</p> <p><b>Conservation Update Conservation Manager</b>  The Conservation Manager shared the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record numbers of Little Penguins were observed crossing the penguin beach, with over 5000 penguins crossing in a single night in May.</li> <li>The retirement of the Research Director. The Conservation Manager reported on the Research Director's achievements and wished him well in his retirement.</li> <li>The Nature Parks would be hosting the Island Ark Symposium in September. Several Traditional Owners and delegates were invited, and all are encouraged to attend.</li> <li>The Conservation Manager reported on efforts to locate the fox on Phillip Island, noting the team had been following up calls from the public, collaborating with landowners and monitoring traps. The Conservation Manager provided special mentions to the fox detection dog, <i>Jazz</i> who helps detect fox scats and other evidence in the field.</li> <li>The Conservation Manager clarified that Nature Parks had received permission to re-introduce Bush-stone Curlews to the Island. Unfortunately, one of the recently acquired male birds had to be euthanised due to health issues. Following the receipt of further birds, the captive breeding program would commence.</li> </ul>	Community Engagement Officer to share Symposium information.	
7	<b>Community Engagement Projects – Community Engagement Officer</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
	<p><b>Shearwater Campaign Wrap Up</b>  The Community Engagement Officer reported on a successful campaign, with 25 businesses signing up to turn their lights out. The campaign achieved fantastic media coverage, and very high engagement online. The campaign included a strong focus on social media and engagements ranged from 11K to almost 70K per post.</p> <p><b>Seal Spotter</b>  The annual SealSpotter challenge ran for three weeks from the 8 June. The challenge calls upon everyday citizens to help protect Australian Fur Seals. This contribution to seal research is vital for ecosystem monitoring, and for the ongoing protection of this species. Over 13K of images were counted with participants from all over the world including Australia, Spain and Hungary!</p> <p><b>Surf Beach Sunderland Bay Biodiversity Project</b>  To protect significant coastal vegetation and cultural heritage in this area from the impacts of rabbits, the construction of a rabbit-exclusion fence in conjunction with a rabbit control program and targeted revegetation program will be occurring. This project is a resident led initiative, with the support of Surf Beach and Sunderland Bay Coastcare Group, Bass Coast Shire Council, Bass Coast Landcare Network, Bunurong Land Council and Phillip Island Nature Parks.</p>	Community Engagement Officer to share the Bass Coast Landcare Network plan that relates to the rabbits in this area	

	<p>Construction is expected to commence in early August and a community drop-in session is being held Saturday 16 July at 10am at the Surfies Point car park. Further information is available <a href="https://www.penguins.org.au/about/local-community/news/biodiversity-project/">https://www.penguins.org.au/about/local-community/news/biodiversity-project/</a></p> <p>It was also noted by members of the committee that the Summerland Peninsula is not entirely rabbit free, although Landcare had reported that the numbers were low in the area.</p> <p><b>Forrest Caves Staircase Strengthening Works update</b> The Community Engagement Officer reported on the planned strengthening works to the staircase at Forrest Caves beach in response to ongoing coastal erosion. The works were scheduled for mid-July and were weather dependent, exact dates for this construction would be posted on Nature Parks socials and local beach signage would be updated. Alternate access during this time will be via Bruce Ave. To learn more, follow on Facebook and be sure to sign up to the Facebook event.</p> <p><b>Coastal Erosion</b> – The Community Engagement Officer announced an update would be provided at the next meeting.</p>		
8	<b>Group Update</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
	<p><b>Phillip Island Land Alliance introduction</b> An update on the new alliance will be given at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Phillip Island Business Network</b> are currently delivering Well Being Training to the community at no cost. Please get in touch for more information.</p> <p><b>Smiths Beachcomber Association</b> advised that Bass Coast Shire Council has adopted the Smiths beach town plan and will now be looking at the implantation of this. Plans relating to reducing rabbit numbers in this area could be added to this plan.</p> <p><b>Phillip Island Conservation Society (PICS)</b> have conducted some investigation into the land currently for sale at Rhyll Inlet which adjoins Nature Parks land. A letter has been sent to Jordan Crugnale MP, suggesting the state government could consider purchasing this land and having Nature Parks manage this land. Complex zoning laws apply to the land with current zoning offering reasonable protection only. Further information will be available on the PICS website <a href="https://picsvictoria.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Letter-to-Jordan-Crugnale-MP-re-Lot-2-Cowes-Rhyll-Rd.pdf">https://picsvictoria.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Letter-to-Jordan-Crugnale-MP-re-Lot-2-Cowes-Rhyll-Rd.pdf</a> PICS have also been reviewing and providing input into the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bass Coast Council Tracks and Trails Strategy</li> <li>• Local Laws Review</li> <li>• Urban Forrest Strategy</li> </ul>		

	<p>Also, very pleased to advise that BCSC have awarded \$50K to the “For Our Future” eco arts cultural hub” which will foster environmental stewardship and strengthen relationship across the community. The programs will help launch the Cowes Cultural Centre at its opening in mid-2023.</p> <p>PICS quarterly meeting is taking place on 3 July 2pm at KCR all welcome.</p> <p>A question was raised with regards to the consultation on the Bass Coast Shire Council’s Tracks and Trails Strategy. It was noted that this strategy is still at the consultation point, and nothing has been approved. The discussion will be undertaken by relevant Nature Parks team members. It is imperative that concerns and questions are raised early and directed toward the relevant authorities, this will ensure all perspectives are captured and assessed.</p> <p>The formation of reference groups is vital.</p> <p>Fantastic to see Southern Oceans Live, filming from the Penguin Parade, well done to all involved for making this happen.</p>	<p>Nature Parks CEO to consult relevant team members with regards to the Tracks and Trails Strategy and ensure connection points within Nature Parks managed land are highlighted and reviewed.</p>	
<b>9</b>	<b>General Business</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
9.1	Many Eastern Barred Bandicoots have been seen in the Kitty Miller Bay area; this is great news.		
<b>10</b>	<b>Close of meeting</b>		
10.1	The meeting closed at 6pm.		
<b>11</b>	<b>Next Meeting</b>		
11.1	The committee noted its next meeting date was 22 September 2022.	The Community and Engagement Officer to advise of the venue for the next meeting.	