



Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee

MINUTES FOR MEETING 7

7 March 2005

9.00am – 12.00pm

Level 5 conference room, Energy House, Darwin

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Present:

Name	Representing
Ms Annie Andrews	Business and industry
Mr John Bailey	Independent chairperson
Mr Alastair Black	Darwin Port Corporation
Mr Brendan Dowd	Local government interests
Ms Adele Pedder	Environment Centre of the NT
Ms Kira Schlusser	Project Coordinator, Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management
Ms Christine Truarn	Horticultural/agricultural interests
Mr Chris Young	Shipping and transport industry

Apologies:

Name	Representing
Mr John Harrison	Recreational fishing interests
Ms Donna Odegaard	Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation
Ms Liza Schenkel	Landcare
Dr Simon Townsend	Ecosystem Monitoring Group (EMG)
Professor Bob Wasson	Charles Darwin University

Mr Bailey welcomed the members of the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee (DHAC) and introduced Ms Christine Truarn.

Ms Truarn said that she was a Councillor with the Litchfield Shire Council and had held the position of Public Officer with the Coomalie Landcare Group for approximately four years. She looked forward to working with the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee.

PREVIOUS BUSINESS

2. ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Moved: Mr Dowd

Seconded: Mr Black

3. ACTION SHEET AND STATUS REPORT

Members noted the action sheet and the status report of projects and work program.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence noted.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

Committee members noted the financial statement. Mr Dowd asked that commentary be provided on the budget figures in future.

Members discussed priorities for using unspent funds prior to the end of the financial year and agreed it was important to start implementing the communication strategy. Mr Young moved that if funding was available from this financial year, part of the communication plan would be implemented. Seconded by Mr Bailey.

ACTIONS

1. Next financial statement to include explanation of relevant figures.
2. Any funds not committed for 2004-05 financial year will be wholly or partially used to implement the communication plan.

6. ECOSYSTEM MONITORING GROUP (EMG)

Mr Bailey said that the EMG will be holding a risk assessment workshop on 15 March and the Ecosystem Research Group and DHAC members were also invited to attend. Dr Townsend would report on the outcomes of the workshop at the next meeting.

7. INDIGENOUS WORKING GROUP (IWG)

Mr Bailey said that letters of invitation had been sent out and several replies had been received. Ms Odegaard had indicated that she had spoken to invited representatives of the Belyuen community who had accepted their invitation to the working group.

The first meeting of the IWG is to be held in April.

8. 2005-06 FUNDING BID UPDATE

Mr Bailey said that he had met with the Minister for Lands and Planning, Dr Chris Burns, to brief him on the funding submission, which had since been discussed in Cabinet on 28 February.

9. DISCUSSION PAPER ON DHAC'S INVOLVEMENT IN MAJOR POLICIES, PROPOSALS AND ZONING PLANS

Members noted the changes to the discussion paper and agreed that the committee did not have the resources to provide an environmental assessment of the development applications, particularly when applications may contain a great deal of information. The project coordinator would

prepare a general overview and draw to the committee's attention any areas where there may be concerns.

10. PRESENTATION ON STORM WATER STRATEGY

Mr Michael Lawton, Director Waste and Pollution Management at the Office of Environment and Heritage, gave a status report on the development of the storm water strategy. He said that a steering committee had met and that two officers were working on developing the strategy, which was due for completion in June 2005. He said that there would be a consultation period of six weeks when industry and interested parties could comment on the draft strategy.

Mr Dowd said that while local government had a particular interest in the storm water strategy he thought that the steering committee was too heavily weighted towards technical government representatives and needed more industry input. He said that he was pleased that the consultation process would provide an opportunity for business to comment on the draft, but thought there was a need to actively consult with consulting engineers and business groups. He also thought it was important to take up opportunities during the development of the strategy, such as in wetland management and new technologies.

Mr Dowd also said he would like Mr Lawton to prepare a one page brief for the committee on the scope of the storm water strategy.

Mr Lawton said the officers developing the storm water strategy were using national guidelines for preparing stormwater strategies and these guidelines included issues about integrating water quality and quantity in a local context.

He also said that he would like some clarification on the DHAC's role in the process of preparing the storm water strategy, for example, who will own the strategy, who will then promote its implementation and who will champion the strategy, that is, obtain funds in the new financial year for its implementation. He also sought advice on whether DHAC wanted to have specific input.

ACTION

In consultation with Mr Dowd, the Project Coordinator will prepare a letter to the Executive Director of the Office of Environment and Heritage outlining the need to address the issues noted in this agenda item.

11. PRESENTATION ON CULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY

Mr Stephen Sutton, Director of Heritage Conservation Services, Office of Environment and Heritage, told the committee that there had been delays starting the project due to staff changes within the organisation that was going to be contracted to undertake the work. However, with a joint contract between Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Nation and Charles Darwin University to

be signed shortly, he was confident that the survey work would be completed in a few months and a report provided to the committee, probably not by the due date of June 2005, but soon after. He said that Larrakia Nation would provide rangers to do the survey work and Dr Trish Bourke, from Charles Darwin University, would provide other expertise. She had already done some of this work as part of her PhD thesis and would bring valuable experience to the project.

Mr Sutton agreed to provide the scope of works for the contract to undertake the work and suggested that he be invited to the next committee meeting to provide an update. He also indicated that he had been nominated to be DIPE's representative on the Indigenous Working Group.

ACTION

The project coordinator will email Mr Sutton requesting a copy of the scope of works and inviting him to the next DHAC meeting to give an update.

12. PRESENTATION ON EIS PROCESS FOR DARWIN WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

Ms Juanita Croft, Director of Environmental Assessment Services, Office of Environment and Heritage, and Mr Terry O'Neill, Waterfront consultant in the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment, reported on the environmental impact assessment process. Ms Croft said that an EIS had been done on a concept of the development and OEH had assumed that the master plan would need to be formally approved. However, only development applications needed to be formally approved, while an environmental management plan covered whole-of-site management.

Ms Croft said that an officer from OEH would report any non-compliance activity to the planning authority and that OEH has a regulatory role in licencing for waste management and contaminated sites. OEH would be responsible for policing general environmental issues, such as dust levels and noise.

Mr O'Neill said that contactors would be required to adhere to Project Development Agreements (PDA's) which set out penalties for failing to meet obligations. He said that a Victorian certified environmental auditor, Dr Peter Nadebaum, had been engaged to police environmental standards and sign off on each stage of works on a case by case basis. He would also have a role in the site environmental management plan and had played an active role in prescribing field studies.

Mr Bailey raised concerns that some environmental details were not available publicly until the day of the Development Consent Authority hearing and asked if this could be changed.

Members also asked about the spoil from dredging for the wave pool and rock wall. Mr O'Neill outlined plans to dispose of the dredged material in holding ponds at East Arm, however, conceded that technical aspects of dealing with the material, which consists of very fine mud, was difficult. The use of the East Arm holding ponds was not ideal in that dewatering the mud was more difficult than expected and various techniques were being investigated in order to convert it to suitable landfill for future development.

Ms Croft said that OEH will have a licencing role and the proponents will need to demonstrate that they can meet water quality criteria before water from the ponds can be released.

Members of the committee thanked Ms Croft and Mr O'Neill and noted the briefing.

13. DEFENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY LEE POINT ROAD DEVELOPMENT

Committee members noted Amendment 196 to the *Planning Act 1999* for the Defence Housing Authority proposal and agreed to keep a watching brief on the next stage of the development. Mr Dowd said that he could share the assessment of Amendment 196 made by Darwin City Council with the committee once that had been done.

14. AMENDMENTS TO PLANNING ACT

The committee noted the transcript from Parliamentary Debates – Ninth Assembly, First Session – 30/11/2004 – Parliamentary Record No: 23 on the Planning Amendment Bill (Serial 275). Committee members noted that the Minister for Lands and Planning would establish the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee by statute. The committee would be appointed under Section 144A of the *Planning Act*.

Members noted that they originally thought that the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management would be a recognised document under the *Planning Act*. Since this was not the case members would write to the Minister asking that this be done.

ACTION

The project coordinator will draft a letter to the Minister for Lands and Planning requesting that the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management be recognised under the *Planning Act*.

15. GLYDE POINT PROPOSAL

Members noted the Notice of Intent information on Glyde Point and, since only a proportion of the Murrumujuk township would be inside the boundary of the Plan of Management members wanted to discuss whether the proposal should be considered. Ms Pedder pointed out that although the industrial site

was not within the boundary of the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management it was a large development that would be likely to impact on the Darwin Harbour region. She offered to provide a map and EIS guidelines to the committee. Since time was short the discussion about the relevance of the proposal to the committee was postponed until next meeting. Members also wanted more information about the proposal and asked the project coordinator to organise a presentation.

ACTION

1. The project coordinator will organise a presentation on the Glyde Point development proposal for the next meeting.
2. Ms Pedder will send out the EIS guidelines and map of Glyde Point.

16. HUDSON CREEK BOAT RAMP PROPOSAL

Committee members wanted some information about the potential concerns about the proposed boat ramp before discussing the matter. The project coordinator would contact Mr Harrison about the matter for next meeting.

ACTION

The project coordinator will contact Mr Harrison for information about the proposed boat ramp at Hudson Creek.

BUSINESS ARISING

17. COMMUNICATION WITH DIPE

Mr Bailey would seek a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment to discuss the committee's role and ways the department could communicate with the committee.

The committee thought that the chairman should inform the CEO about:

1. how they saw their position in relation to the Department
2. their involvement in the Storm water strategy, or any other project funded by the committee.

ACTION

The project coordinator will organise a meeting between the chairman and the CEO of DIPE to discuss the above matters.

18. SITES FOR LANDFILL

Mr Dowd said that one of the actions listed in the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management was to secure future landfill areas for the shires within

the region. He understood that leases were due to expire and uncertainty existed about a future course of action.

Mr Lawton, Director Waste and Pollution Management, Office of Environment and Heritage, said that it was OEH's role to approve and licence landfills by burial, and oversee how they are managed.

He said that there were a number of concerns with the Humpty Doo land fill and its licence, which expired on 27 August 2005, would not be renewed. He said that a Cabinet submission had been prepared for the Minister for Lands and Planning, which listed various options for new landfill sites for Darwin, Palmerston and Litchfield City Councils.

The chairman thanked Mr Lawton for taking the time to speak to the committee.

Members agreed that the letter to be written to the Office of Environment and Heritage under agenda item 10 would also include clarification on potential landfill sites.

ACTION

The letter to the Executive Director Office of Environment and Heritage will include a request for clarification on potential landfill sites.

19. REVIEW OF GOVERNMENT BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND TRIBUNALS

The project coordinator said that she had been asked to provide relevant comments on a report from a review of the government boards, committees and tribunals. The review did not include the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee because the committee had only just been formed toward the end of the review and the committee was linked to the life of the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management.

20. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held Monday 4 April 2005 at the Ormiston Room, Parliament House.