



Community and Environment Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes



Meeting held at 4pm on Wednesday 10 May, 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), Michaela Salvato (Board Member), Gil Smith, Ron Day, Jill Sunderland, , Penny Manning, , Shane Livingstone, Bradley Janson, Gareth Kennedy , Serena Cabello, Penny Manning, Jess Patman, , Michael Kendrick-Wells, Robyn Holman, , Phil Wright, Linda Cuttriss, , Nick Say, Doug Waugh, Cheryl Overton, Jim Kiley, Randall Joseph, Judy Day</p> <p>In Attendance: Kevin Love (Chair Board), Catherine Basterfield (Board Member), Jessica McKelson (Conservation Manager), Simon Heislars Project Coordinator, Sarah Hain (Community and Engagement Officer/Minutes).</p> <p>Guests: Peter Abbot, CEO Puffing Billy</p> <p>Apologies: Phil Dressing, Cheryl Owens, Terry Nott, Jeff Nottle, Jane Foley, Robbie Gray, Gayle Seddon, Alycia James, Simon Woodland, Mike Cleeland</p>		
3	Minutes from previous meeting	ACTIONS	STATUS
3.1	Minutes from the February 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Board met 28 Feb and met again in March for budget & business planning purposes</i> • <i>Boardwalk Update – preferred contractor went into administration, now looking at other contractors. This has caused a slight delay but gives time to do further planning & preparation. Project will now commence in 2024.</i> • <i>Ticket system – board have selected preferred tender so are now progressing next steps towards the engagement of this preferred contractor</i> • <i>Visitor numbers continue to grow, still a way to go but we are heading towards pre-covid numbers. Increasing every month but sitting at about 75% of pre-covid sales averages</i> • <i>Business planning continues, with a focus on cyber security and organisational structure that best supports the needs of the business as we continue to recover from covid.</i> • <i>Board recruitment is underway, the outcomes will be known next financial year.</i> 		
7	Nature Parks Update – Chief Executive Officer	ACTIONS	STATUS
7.1	<p><i>Catherine Basterfield, CEO introduced a special guest speaker to share his insights with the committee</i></p> <p><i>Peter Abbot Puffing Bill CEO</i></p> <p><i>Similar to Nature Parks, Puffing Billy is still recovering from the impacts of covid. They are now trying to rebuild, in a more sustainable direction, being aware that high numbers of visitors can have high impacts on infrastructure and the local community. The organisation has 350 active volunteers and 100 staff, they are still recruiting staff after covid, this is challenging given how reliant they are on specialist skills and availability of people to carry out these roles.</i></p> <p><i>The organisation plans to set up a community advisory committee similar to the CEAC, given the impacts the business has on the local community and environment.</i></p> <p><i>Peter is happy to share that the business is recovering well, however the business needs to invest in their assets, eg: steam engines and rail, it is a real challenge to upkeep 25 kms of rail track, through a native forest corridor, and they also face the issue of coal being phased out and hence must source alternate fuel types.</i></p> <p><i>Similarly, to the Penguin Parade the business is not aiming to operate in the exact same way as they were pre-covid, higher yields per visitor is the goal, resulting in a better visitor experience.</i></p> <p><i>Jessica McKelson, Conservation Manager</i></p> <p><i>A quick update into our marine research, Nature Parks is working in partnership with Monash University for further research into the effects of seal entanglements, via a successful grant collaboration. It is hoped this will allow us to improve our understanding of the population dynamics out at sea rocks post entanglement release and track seals on the foraging patterns.</i></p> <p><i>Our Threatened species report has been sent out to the committee and is now available on the Nature Parks website.</i></p>		

8	Community Engagement projects update – Community Engagement Officer	ACTIONS	STATUS
	<p>Sharing Our Shores wrap up Campaign has now finished, great results were seen overall with regards to online engagement with our social media campaign, good overall statistics from our rangers' patrolling beaches over summer, great media reach and a good response to the poster competition.</p> <p>Dark Sky So Shearwaters Fly campaign The campaign has now finished, a more detailed report will be available at the next meeting. A big thank you to everyone who helped to support this campaign.</p> <p>Community Open Day Date confirmed for 10 September 2023. Please add to your diary.</p> <p>Conservation News The Conservation News is now finally online and the first edition has been sent out. Please share any feedback you have community@penguins.org.au</p>	<p>Community Engagement Officer to share wrap up presentation with the committee</p> <p>Any feedback on the new online newsletter can be sent to community@penguins.org.au</p>	
8	Group Update	ACTIONS	STATUS
	<p>Farewell Farewell and thank you to Linda Cutriss and welcome to Randall who is returning to the CEAC as a community member. The Committee thanked Linda for her valuable contribution to the CEAC over the past 5 years and wishes her the best.</p> <p>Westernport Water: Happy to share they will be receiving \$75K of govt grants to be provided to large water consumers, based on existing program with schools The grants are to be used in the area of water efficiency. Also reported they have commenced a floating wetland study looking at carbon emissions. Further information to be provided in coming months.</p> <p>PICS PICS have been participating and supporting the steering group for Westernport Bay a framework that has been established to raise the profile of Westernport Bay and to attract some funding. (Similar to the Port Phillip. Bay support) At this stage the group is seeking supporters, if interested please visit the website to learn more https://www.actforwesternportbay.au/</p> <p>PICS have also spent significant time at the DAL hearings where they have provided a submission on the environment and biodiversity values of Phillip Island.</p>		

BCSC

Happy to share that the Urban Forest strategy is going to next council meeting for adoption. They are also going ahead with the development of a significant tree register, which will be available on BCSC website

BCSC have completed a blue carbon study and are working with other councils to look at where blue carbon exists or used to exist. Westernport Bay looks to have around 1/3 of VIC's blue carbon. Further results will be shared in the coming months.

The Tracks & Trails Strategy has now been adopted.

Bill Young/Nature Parks Volunteer Representative

Bill shared his recent experience as part of the team to welcomed Nuskin to the Nature Parks which was amazing to see so many visitors experiencing all of the attractions.

Bill also advised that the very large Rotary international conference is happening later this month in Melbourne and he hopes to see many visitors attend the region.

Destination Phillip Island

The Whale Festival will be running from 30 June – 2 July. We have secured the rights to the Ocean Film Festival, this will be screened at Newhaven College. Also will be running other presentations, talks and activities.

We are also working on regenerative tourism, based around ways tourists can give back. And the Destination Management Plan is now being developed, this will be available later this year.

Ventnor Coastcare

Have received a grant from DEECA to renew part of the Ventnor coast line. They have also found half a dozen middens and are working with BLCAC to learn more. The group will be holding an event on 19 May to unveil their new signage.

Phillip Island Business Network

Pleased to share that it is great to be a part of the CEAC and they are happy to report that lots of local business are joining the network, hence they can be a good conduit to the broader business community.

Rhyll Community Association

Have received a grant for their boat ramp development and are looking at new trails and interps going up in the area.

Birdlife Bass Coast

Noted that the recent DAL hearings and DALi s of significance, and also shared an interesting statistic relating to the pelicans at San Remo, there have been 25 days of no pelicans attending the feeding at San Remo foreshore.

	<p>Monitoring and tracking of the birds is underway, there is some evidence to suggest the birds are feeding well in the region and are hence not needing to return to the foreshore area.</p> <p>FOCIS Churchill Island have a new horse being trained to do wagon rides at the island, hoping to be able to offer this new attraction later in the year.</p> <p>Island Voice Ron Day shared that he has conducted an unofficial count on Cowes Rhyll Road, equivalent to what was recorded in the research period, and sadly reported about 40 kills for the 3 km section of the road. No Rakali reported this year, last year they were a part of the toll (native water rat)</p>		
9	General Business	ACTIONS	STATUS
9.1	Nothing to report.		
10	Future Proofing Little Penguin Habitat – walk and talk – Project Coordinator		
10.1	The walk was cancelled due to the weather, Simon shared his presentation with the group.	Community Engagement Officer to share the presentation with the committee.	
11	Close of meeting		
11.1	The Chair closed the meeting at 6.05pm		