

SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP Inc.
MINUTES FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON SATURDAY 28 OCTOBER 2017
HOSTED BY NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL

FG3-17 Minutes

IN ATTENDANCE

Cr Tom Sherlock	Mosman Council
Mr Peter Massey	North Sydney Council
Cr Kathy Neilson	Randwick City Council
Cr Philipa Veitch	Randwick City Council
Cr Jack Boyd	Sutherland Shire Council
Cr Paula Masselos	Waverley Council
Cr George Copeland	Waverley Council
Cr Lynne Saville	Willoughby Council
Cr Megan McEwin	Woollahra Council
Prof. Bruce Thom AM	Honorary Member
Mr George Cotis	Honorary Member
Mr Geoff Withycombe	SCCG (EO)
Ms Molly O'Halloran	SCCG (SO)
Peter Hannam, (Presenter)	Fairfax Media

ITEM 1 - OPENING

1.1 OPENING AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The acting Chair, Cr. Jack Boyd opened the meeting at 12.40pm and provided an Acknowledgement of Country. North Sydney Council was thanked for hosting the meeting.

Round table introductions were requested to also highlight key coastal issues facing Councils

1.2 APOLOGIES

Mr David Dekel	Bayside Council
Ms Belinda Atkins	SCCG MPP
Ms Wendy McMurdo	Honorary Member

The EO noted that Bayside, Inner West and Northern Beaches Councils had yet to appoint delegates to external committees and are not represented at the meeting.

Bayside, City of Sydney, Inner West and Northern Beaches Councils were not represented at the meeting.

Standing orders suspended for presentation.

1.3 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Nil declarations were made.

RESOLUTIONS

- R1.2 Apologies were received and noted.
R1.3 Nil notifications of pecuniary interests were received.

(Massey / Saville)
Carried

ITEM 2 - GUEST PRESENTATIONS

Guest presenter, Peter Hannam (Fairfax Media – Environment Editor), was welcomed and introduced by the Chair.

Notes from the presentation are provided below:

- Peter thanked the EO for the invitation to present on the suggested topics of *Environmental reporting – The issues, challenges and opportunities*
- Difficulties of balancing local and national environmental news with numbers depleted from newsrooms including no environment editor at the Age .
- Peter discussed some of the diversity of stories he had been working on over the last 3-4 weeks, ranging from a local to global scale. Topics included Antarctic ice; Taronga zoo displays; Ian Turnbull family land clearing; El Nina impacts for the coast; Federal National Energy Guarantee; Paris Target; Neutron stars colliding; penguin chicks; Hunter valley pollution; building nests for albatross' through conservation intervention; Federal government land clearing policy; micro-plastic fibres in water and the inability of EPA to do their own science, relying instead on contractors.
- For there to be positive change, news stories need to be in the public sphere have a personal element and told in a unique way. key elements of stories will include those where there has clearly been a crisis or those more slow burning issues where thresholds are often undefined and stories are produced to elicit reader thinking
- Questions raised about how do we get more people to listen to the stories? Which stories are people interested in and why? As a society are we acknowledging environmental issues?. Response - it takes a crisis to draw attention to an issue – the challenge is to personalise the story. People must be bought into the article to make them change their behaviour.
- Queries regarding Australian's believe in climate change and want action And who they think is responsible for this action?' Response - climate change arguments need to be connected to facts. Perception is altered by clever marketing producing a psychological war that must be based on fact. The arguments must be factual all the time, compared to the opposing side who often distort the truth.

The Chair thanked Peter for his interesting and valuable presentation and looked forward to continuing to work with Fairfax on issues of importance to the SCCG and its member councils.

Cr Lynne Saville arrived during the presentation and resumed her position of Chair.

Emeritus Professor Bruce Thom AM

Prof. Thom gave a brief presentation on the history of NSW coastal management and reforms until present day. He remarked that NSW was remarkable due to geographical position and respect of coastal values. The following points of interest were made:

- There are two pressures on the NSW coast – population growth and climate change. The third problem is institutional arrangements, and governance. The current NSW Coastal Reforms are attempting to address this with new arrangements.
- In the mid-1970s storm events triggered State government to institute new legislation. Prior to this local councils dominated coastal management in NSW, allowing structures to be put close to the sea, creating many of the legacy of problems of today. The legislation of the 1970s was similar to the California Coastal Act, however there is no federal act to underpin it unlike in the USA.
- The NSW Coastal Protection Act – confusion over protection of coast or built assets. Led to eventual change in name to Coastal Management Act. Under the Coastal Protection Act, the Coastal Panel was established, and acts as a consent and advisory authority to the Minister. The Panel currently has several cases going through Land and Environment Act due to the interpretation is different to owners protecting property.

- The previous Planning Minister Hon. Rob Stokes had a good understanding of coastal policy and law – instituted Part 2 of reforms.
- Panel and agency representatives (OEH and Planning) wrote a new Act – The Coastal Management Act, which passed both houses in July 2017. The Act has not proceeded past ascension waiting on the activation mechanisms once the Coastal SEPP and the Coastal manual are finalised.
- A Ministerial representative will make a statement about the act at the upcoming Coastal Conference. When the new act comes into force, there will be an inclusion of SEPP 14 as well as SEPP 26 in metropolitan areas.
- The new regime now requires working with two Ministers, the Minister for Planning and the Minister for Environment/Local Government. Minister Roberts has responsibility for the Coastal SEPP, whereas the Act and the Manual are with Minister Upton.
- At the next SCCG meeting in December Prof Thom suggested he provide the Group with a more specific presentation regarding the Act and the SEPP
- The EO noted that the SCCG Secretariat is planning a workshop with members, OEH and Planning as soon as possible after the release of the final reform elements. This workshop will present the final elements of the NSW Coastal Reform package with a focus on implementation and workshop with SCCG representatives on defining where all member councils are now and what they need to do locally and to also define opportunities for regional activities to fulfil successful, timely and resource efficient implementation in the SCCG.

RESOLUTIONS

R2.1 That Peter Hannam be thanked for his attendance and presentation.

R2.2 That Professor Bruce Thom AM be thanked for his presentation on the coastal reforms and coastal management.

ITEM 3 - ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

3.1 555CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Full Group held on 24 June 2017 were confirmed.

The Minutes from the SCCG Technical Committee held on 20 July 2017 and the Minutes of the Executive Committee held on 24 August 2017 were noted.

3.2 BUSINESS ARISING

Actions arising from the Ordinary meeting held on 24 June were reviewed by the EO.

3.3 CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

Correspondence sent and received since the last meeting was circulated in hard copy at the meeting.

3.4 ANNUAL MEMBER SURVEY

The SO delivered a brief presentation on the survey results from the 2016-2017 member survey. Highlights included overall strong performance in 2016/2017 with 76.19% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they were satisfied with the SCCG's performance.

A note was made of the overrepresentation of some councils, with suggestions for improvement. Discussion over membership satisfaction not being reflected in the decision of a member to leave the group – results didn't indicate that this would be an outcome. The outgoing member had indicated they were highly satisfied in previous years surveys.

RESOLUTIONS

R3.1a	The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on 24 June 2017 were confirmed.	(Saville / Massey) Carried
R3.1b	The Minutes of the Technical Committee Meeting on 20 July 2017 were received and noted.	(Saville / Massey) Carried
R3.1c	The Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting on 24 August be received and noted.	(Boyd / Saville) Carried
R3.2	The Business Arising was discussed, considered and noted.	(Boyd / Neilson) Carried
R3.3	The circulated correspondence was received and noted.	(Boyd / Neilson) Carried
R3.4	The Annual Member Survey Report was received and noted.	(Masselos /Neilson) Carried

ITEM 4 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

4.1 SCCG ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

• Chairperson's Annual Report

The Chairperson provided her annual report and referred delegates to the [SCCG Annual Report 2016-2017](#) provided prior to and distributed at the meeting in hard copy.

Cr Saville noted that 2016-17 has been a challenging year for SCCG whilst providing significant services and benefits to member councils. Cr Saville provided a brief review of these benefits. Cr Saville thanked Member Councils elected delegates and staff, as well as the EO and secretariat staff for their valued contributions.

• Executive Officers Annual Report

The EO provided a brief overview key highlights taken from the [SCCG Annual Report 2016-2017](#)

Collaboration - Highlights

- Collaboration highlights from the three main SCG committees – Full Group, Executive and Technical Committees as well as other committees and working groups.
- The endorsement of the Systems Management for Healthy Waterways – Action Plan with Sydney Water focus activities under three categories: Regulatory and funding arrangements; System performance (stormwater and sewer network and non-compliant connections); and Information transparency, sharing and effective communication and engagement.
- SCCG established a working group with OEH and other agencies to address the issues surrounding flying-fox management. Coordinated with OEH to provide camp mapping data. SCCG campaigned for a strategic holistic approach resulting in recent workshops.
- Summerama saw another successful year in 2017 with 84 events held across Sydney.
- Harbour care program – community activities presented at Technical Committee meetings resulting in other member councils supporting and establishing the program in their areas.

Capacity building - Highlights:

- The \$1.9 million Sydney Salty Communities grant program was completed including major and supplementary grant rounds financially supporting member council projects as well as the

completion of special projects which included the Climate ready tool with CSIRO developed to assist with biodiversity strategies.

- The rolling out of the Emergency management project provided a toolkit and supporting resources for councils. So far 40 councils have accessed the tool.
- Key research in partnership with education and science institutes (UNSW and CSIRO)
- New grant received for coordinating a project on adapting priority coastal infrastructure for climate change
- SPLASH program for water sensitive cities

Advocacy – Highlights

- [7 major comprehensive submissions](#)
- Key focus areas included Coastal and Biodiversity reforms that included the establishment key working groups enabling Councils to consult directly with state agencies and work collectively with key independent experts
- key outcomes for the Coastal reforms included the previous Minister for Planning the Hon. Rob Stokes presented to an SCCG Full Group Meeting and committed to exhibit the Coastal Management SEPP. The SCCG was also able to secure the inclusion of Sydney's wetlands and Littoral rainforests in the SEPP.
- Successful motions tabled at the National General Assembly of Local Government, based on the [SCCG Policy Recommendations on the Key Coastal Management Issues Federal Election 2016](#) document
- Various other advocacy through letters to the NSW Premier and relevant Ministers including support for a ban on plastic bags.

Research Activities - Highlights

- Estimating Coastal Values project implemented by the CSIRO (SCCG is a project partner) will be finalised at the NSW Coastal Conference in November.
- Working with UNSW to ascertain opinions of the community regarding erosion and inundation. SCCG is on the steering committee for this project to ensure that research activities have an applied outcome for our member councils.
- SCCG was represented on various NCCARF Committees and was funded as a Tool Implementation Partner for [CoastAdapt](#) as well as for the preparation of a selected [National Adaptation Coastal Case study](#) fact sheet for the SCCG project [Prioritising Coastal Adaptation and Development Options for Local Government](#).

The Executive Officer thanked the Chairperson for her support and chairpersonship over the last 12 months as well as the Full Group, outgoing members of the Executive Committee, the Technical Committee, and the many partners, stakeholders both formally and informally who have assisted the Group during year. A final thanks to the Secretariat including Belinda Atkins (Manager Projects and Programs), Alexander Fletcher (former Coastal Projects Officer), and Molly O'Halloran (Support Officer).

Queries were raised regarding if the outgoing member council would continue to benefit from actions even though they aren't a paying member. it was noted that this would have to be carefully managed and these issues would also be referred to the new Executive Committee for consideration. Further questions related to the departure of the City of Sydney. The EO noted that there was a report to Council in April and a final resolution to Council in July 2017. The EO further noted that there was always opportunity for the City of Sydney to become a member again in the future if they choose to do so.

4.2 ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The EO noted that the finance statements were provided and that the SCCG Audit had now been signed off by the SCCG auditor Hill Rogers. The item was opened up for questions/discussion.

The EO highlighted the overall deficit of \$616,000 due to over a million dollars of Federal grants going to member councils via the Sydney Salty Community program.

4.3 ANNUAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

4.4 ANNUAL HONORARY MEMBER NOMINATIONS

4.5 NOMINATIONS FOR EXTERNAL COMMITTEES

As a result of not all member councils yet having appointed delegates to the SCCG, the meeting was in unanimous agreement that nominations of Executive Committee Members be deferred to the next meeting (9 December).

Nominations for Honorary Members and External Committee membership to also be deferred to the next meeting in December

RESOLUTIONS

- | | | |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| R4.1 | The SCCG Annual Report 2016 -2017 was received and noted. | (Masselos/ Neilson)
Carried |
| R4.2 | The SCCG Financial Audit for the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 was received and adopted. | (Masselos/ Neilson)
Carried |
| R4.3 | That Annual Executive Committee, Honorary members and external committee nominations be deferred until the next full group meeting on 9 December 2017 | (Masselos /McEwin)
Carried |

ITEM 5 AND 6 – DISCUSSION ITEM AND MEMBER COUNCIL ROUNDTABLE

5.1 SCCG Consultations – ‘SCCG Moving Forward’

Due to time constraints, Item 5 and 6 were combined, such that the Member Council Roundtable was combined with an open discussion on opportunities and challenges, coastal issues, and what success looks like for the SCCG. Each representative was asked to provide some feedback during the discussion.

The EO gave the following background notes prior to discussion:

- As a result of amalgamations, and changing membership there is an identified need and opportunity for SCCG to undertake a comprehensive organisational review to redefine its focus, scope, member services, governance structures, and resourcing.
- At the June SCCG meeting it was resolved that the Chair and EO seek meetings with General Managers and Mayors / Administrators to ensure that the SCCG objectives, strategies, programs and services remain applicable, appropriate and of value to member councils, and that member councils needs continue to be met
- Nine Council meetings occurred during August – October
- Elton Consulting has been engaged to conduct workshops with Council Executives and Operational staff to assist in preparing a new Business Plan for the next period
- Executive and staff workshops occurred on 31 October with Executives seeking an additional workshop to be held on 29 November
- A draft Business Plan will be sent to Councils following the second Executives meeting on the 29 November for formal comment
- Pending outcomes of above, a final plan will be completed and submitted to the SCCG Full Group on 17 March 2018.
- The EO distributed a form for delegates completion including space for:

- Opportunities and challenges for the future
- Key priorities for the SCCG moving forward
- Defining what SCCG success looks like post June 2018

Round Table – Discussion Item and Round Table current and emerging issues / Key Council initiatives

Willoughby

- Issues: stormwater and plastics in gross pollution traps
- Stormwater harvesting
- Threat has been changes to biodiversity laws including loss of vegetation and associated fauna habitat

Mosman

- Challenge for SCCG: too many issues – SCCG has struggled to focus on only a few issues.
- How does SCCG work as a unifying mechanism for all councils?
- Success for SCCG concerted policy action effort from all councils
- Get it right on site – a good example of a policy initiative all councils are participated in
- Issue of City of Sydney withdrawing and freeloading
- Expectation exchange between SCCG and members
- Clear understanding of definitive results

North Sydney

- Bring more LGA's into fold to enhance technical experience and combat costs which will become problematic
- Suggest Newcastle to Wollongong are included in membership base
- The EO noted this recommendation to expand was made in March 2017 but has been postponed due to the internal review. Opportunity to explore this on completion of review
- Value in being exposed to wider range of issues
- SCCG to act as key advocates

Woollahra

- Rose Bay water quality issues
- Ongoing Stormwater and sewage issues
- Suggest changing name to include rivers to incorporate wider range of councils. E.g. Parramatta.
- Success would be swimmable waterways.
- Storm damage e.g. Watsons Bay

Randwick

- Echoed ideas of other members
- Stormwater management
- Climate and sea rise issues critical challenges
- Questions over infrastructure investment and the effect of sea level rise
- Continue concerns over water quality
- Success looks like maintaining or improving aquatic biodiversity
- Significant coastal use pressures

Waverley (GC)

- Success involves better technology based censoring, monitoring and measuring to assess impacts on coastal processes and structures.
- Challenges – overpopulation, overdevelopment, private certification in construction, over intensification, tourism pressure – costs absorbed by council.
- Priorities – stormwater sensory and design, source control of pollutants
- Sea level, storm surge, flooding – when factors combined Coogee, Bronte and Bondi will suffer.

Waverley (PM)

- Concerned over significant damage at Bronte on coastal walkway to Bondi – a million dollars cost for repair works.
- 1 in 100 year storm surges are happening every couple of years.
- Cliff slippage costing Council \$6 million.
- Issue of insurance is critical – insurance barely contributes to damage costs.
- Priority for the future – what does this mean long term for public assets and infrastructure?
- Insufficient drainage system capacity leading to flooding issues.
- Waverley most densely populated area and high rises continue to be built.
- Buying back land is difficult due to land price.
- Need to start thinking about how we manage open space, including private open space, and increasing concretisation of land so normal draining processes can't occur.
- Plastic free Bronte – run campaigns targeted at non-coastal areas and for people who don't understand everything ends up in the sea. Increase in visual approach so people see cause and effect
- Young people and children – important resource we should utilise more. E.g. nippers at Bronte surf club. Teaching science now so they will become advocates and ambassadors in the future. Reminder this is why we are doing it.
- Each delegate must be a strong advocates and ambassadors for SCCG to ensure it lives on
- Would like some training or kit to be able to push SCCG.

Sutherland

- Pressure on Port Hacking
- Ecological issues and value for the river and coastal areas

Honorary Member - GCS

- Success looks like a greater connection to people who use the waterways and wider community.
- SCCG successful in taking coastal issues to the citizens
- Metropolitan wide involvement with minimal aid from local government.

The EO distributed a form for delegates to fill out regarding regional collaboration in action. Delegates requested to take the form with them to fill out in more detail.

RESOLUTION

- R5.1 Successes and challenges were received and noted.
- R5.2 Delegates to provide the completed forms at or ASAP after the meeting
- R6.1 Delegates updates were received and noted.

(Boyd/Masselos)
Carried

ITEM 7 - QUARTERLY ACTIVITIES REPORT

Introduction

The EO gave a brief update firstly reviewing the standard quarterly report noting elements for new members. This includes outlining all internal and external meetings and collaborations and the four report components reflecting the SCCG strategic plan strategic goals.

7.1 COLLABORATION

The EO provided an update on collaboration activities. The EO invited delegates to get in touch if they had any questions in regard to any of the listed meetings, workshops and SCCG committee representations how collaboration was conducted.

Get the Site Right Campaign – November 2017

The SCCG has partnered with Sydney's Catchment Groups – the Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG), Cooks River Alliance (CRA), and the Georges River Combined Councils Committee (GRCCC), the EPA and the Department of Planning and Environment, to deliver the 'Get the Site Right' Campaign across most of the Greater Sydney area during November. As part of this campaign compliance training is being undertaken for interested members councils and multiple campaign materials and promotion are being undertaken with and on behalf of councils. Over 30 Sydney Council are now involved across Sydney.

Roadshow - Engaging Communities and Facilitating Change

The roadshow held on 20 October is part of a collaboration between the [CRC for Low Carbon Living](#), WSROC, and the SCCG. It was open to member Council officers, state government and academics to explore the latest research on sustainable design, energy efficiency and community engagement.

Other Items taken as read, as per Item 7.1 in the Agenda Papers.

7.2 CAPACITY BUILDING

The EO gave a brief update on capacity building activities.

Adapting Priority Coastal Infrastructure for Climate Change

The SCCG was awarded grant funding under the LGNSW Building Resilience to Climate Change, and has partnered with Engineers Australia - National Committee on Coastal and Oceans Engineering (NCCOE) to undertake the project 'Adapting to Priority Coastal Recreational Infrastructure for Climate Change'. The aim is to provide councils with a decision-making, support and management toolkit in regard to coastal infrastructure. The package will serve as a stepping stone to link to coastal manual and asset management. The next steering committee for the project will be held at the upcoming Coastal Conference.

7.3 ADVOCACY

The EO gave a brief update on current reforms and submissions, highlighting the main focus for SCCG for the remainder of 2017 are the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy and the NSW Marine Estate Management Strategy.

Other Items taken as read as per Item 7.3 in the Agenda Papers.

7.4 RESEARCH

The EO noted two current research projects - Community Understanding of Coastal Erosion: Improving Resiliency and Preparedness to Coastal Storms and Sea Level Rise, and Estimating Coastal Values using Multi-criteria and Valuation Methods.

RESOLUTION

R7.1 The Secretariat's update on key activities were received and noted.

ITEM 8 GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 SCCG Hosting arrangement

The call for expressions of interest to be followed up and for delegates to reach out to their Mayors and GM's regarding hosting SCCG from 1 July 2018. No positive interest has been received to date.

8.2 PROPOSED MEETING DATES FOR THE NEXT MEETINGS

The next two meetings of the Full Group will be held on:

- Saturday 9 December 2017 at 12 noon (City of Sydney – to be confirmed)
- Saturday 10 March 2018 at 12 noon (location TBC)

8.3 AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Nil agenda items were provided for the next meeting. Agenda items can be provided to the Chairperson via the Executive Officer at least four weeks prior to the meeting.

ITEM 9 EXTERNAL REPORTS (for information only)

9.1 BEACHWATCH REPORT

9.2 GREATER SYDNEY LOCAL LAND SERVICES UPDATE

Items taken as read.

Cr Saville thanked all delegates for their contributions to the SCCG.

The meeting closed at 4.20pm

Confirmation of Minutes:

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