

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING 5/2023
Wednesday 8 and Thursday 9 November 2023
Complete Business Solutions, 59 McLeod Street, Cairns

ATTENDEES AND APOLOGIES			
Cr Keri Tamwoy	Mayor	Aurukun Shire Council	Yes
Cr Craig Koomeeta	Deputy Mayor	Aurukun Shire Council	Yes
Cr Kempo Tamwoy	Councillor	Aurukun Shire Council	Yes
Graham King	A/CEO	Aurukun Shire Council	Apology
Cr Peter Scott	Mayor / TCICA Treasurer	Cook Shire Council	Yes
Brian Joiner	CEO	Cook Shire Council	Yes
Cr Myron Johnny	Mayor	Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council	Apology
Cr Elijah Douglas	Councillor	Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Troy Fraser	CEO	Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council	Apology
Cr Jason Woibo	Mayor	Hopevale Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Cr Bruce Woibo	Deputy Mayor	Hopevale Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Cr Barry Bowen	Councillor	Hopevale Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Steve Linnane	CEO	Hopevale Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Cr Robbie Sands	Mayor / TCICA Chair	Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Cr Teddy Barnard	Councillor	Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Kevin Bell	CEO	Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Cr Wayne Butcher	Mayor	Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Dave Clarke	CEO	Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council	Apology
Cr Aileen Addo	Mayor	Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Cr Cameron Hudson	Councillor / TCICA Deputy Chair	Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Tom Smith	CEO	Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Cr Kyle Yanner	Mayor	Mornington Shire Council	Yes
Gary Uhlmann	CEO	Mornington Shire Council	Yes
Cr Janita Motton	Mayor	Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council	Tbc
Cr Kaylene Jawai	Councillor	Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council	Tbc
Peter O'May	CEO	Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Cr Patricia Yusia	Mayor	Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council	Apology
Cr Kitty Gebadi	Deputy Mayor	Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council	Yes
Cr Dennis Getawan	Councillor	Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council	Yes
Kate Gallaway	CEO	Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council	Yes
Cr Richard Tarpencha	Mayor	Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council	Apology
Cr Tim Koo-Aga	Councillor	Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Edward Natera	CEO	Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council	Apology
Melinda Eades	Executive Officer	TCICA	Yes
Cr Yen Loban	Mayor	Torres Shire Council	Yes
Cr Gabriel Bani	Deputy Mayor	Torres Shire Council	Yes
Cr Thomas Loban	Councillor	Torres Shire Council	Yes
Dalassa Yorkston	CEO	Torres Shire Council	Yes
Cr Phillemon Mosby	Mayor	Torres Strait Island Regional Council	Apology
James William	CEO	Torres Strait Island Regional Council	Apology

Mr Michael Rowland	Chair	Weipa Town Authority	Yes
Cr Bradley Creek	Mayor	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Kiley Hanslow	CEO	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Cr Ross Andrews	Mayor	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council	Apology
Cr Lucrecia Willett	Councillor	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
Richard Wright	CEO	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes
GUESTS			
Cr Mislam Sam	Mayor	Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council	Yes

DAY 1

The meeting commenced at 10.00am

Opening Prayer by Councillor Gabriel Bani

1.1 Chair's welcome and acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

TCICA Chair Mayor Robbie Sands welcomed Mayors, Councillors and CEOs to the meeting, and acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which the meeting was held.

Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council Mayor Mislam Sam was welcomed to the meeting as a guest.

1.2 Attendance and apologies noted; proxies noted

Attendance, apologies, and proxies noted above. A quorum was present and the meeting proceeded.

1.3 Conflicts of Interest

Nil

2.0 Queensland Electoral Commission: Local Government Election preparations

Presented by Wade Lewis, Assistant Electoral Commissioner; Quentin Barba, First Nations Engagement Officer; Matt Thurlby, Director of Funding, Disclosure and Compliance; Peter McGraw, Director of Elections Management; and Alicia Hangan, Project Manager for Remote Elections Management. Presentation attached.

Members raised questions around So You Want to be a Councillor training – this has to be completed even by sitting mayor and councillors. DSDILGP will be travelling to communities over the next couple of months to deliver training and will be in contact, if they haven't already, to provide details of timing etc. If there was to be a byelection during a term, people would have an opportunity to do training before an election was held.

On the matter of election costs, ECQ's cost recovery is required under the Act, however they will use discretion if and when they can to minimise passed on costs as much as possible.

Pens and pencils can be used in polling booths! People can bring their own if they wish.

3.1 Confirmation of July 2023 Minutes and Actions Arising

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 7 September 2023 in Cairns were accepted as read.

Resolution: That TCICA receives and adopts the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7 September 2023 and confirms as a true and correct record.

Moved: Mayor Robbie Sands

Seconded: Mayor Yen Loban

CARRIED

3.2 Chair's Update

Mayor Sands gave brief update on matters including reporting following the Voice referendum and noted this will be discussed later in the day.

3.3 Financial Report

Mayor Peter Scott briefed members on the current financial status of TCICA as noted in the financial reports. Mayor Scott noted the diminishing of LGMS returns, which have previously offset TCICA membership costs. Mayor Scott will seek an update from LGMS on returns.

Action: Mayor Scott to seek an update from LGMS on likely value of returns this year.

Resolution: That TCICA receives and adopts the Financial Report.

Moved: Mayor Peter Scott

Seconded: Mayor Wayne Butcher

CARRIED

3.4 Executive Officer's Report, including correspondence in/out

The Executive Officer's report was accepted as read. Melinda briefed Members on the funding proposal submitted to NIAA, with a copy to be circulated.

Action: Executive Officer to circulate NIAA funding proposal.

4.0 Water Services Association of Australia MOU

Resolution: That TCICA agrees to enter into a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding with the Water Services Association of Australia.

Moved: Mayor Robbie Sands

Seconded: Gary Uhlmann

CARRIED

5.0 Community Enterprises Queensland

Presented by Michael Dykes, Chief Executive and Fred Gela, General Manager of Stakeholder Relations. Presentation attached.

Michael and Fred briefed members on new CEQ initiatives, including those being trialled in CEQ's new Bamaga store. CEQ is pushing DTMR for clarity on the freight subsidy. In the meantime they are working collaboratively with ALPA and Outback Stores to help make sure systems are ready when for when the subsidy comes in.

Fred spoke about CEQ's funding for the Good Pasin initiative, which will now give 1/3 of CEQ's surplus back to communities. Currently that is \$1.2M. This is a big increase from the \$80,000 that was previously allocated to supporting community projects, organisations, and events.

Members were briefed on different models for management and/or ownership of community stores. A current challenge for CEQ with some stores is no security of tenure, which makes it difficult for CEQ to make capital investments. CEQ supports the payment of a fair rent, not peppercorn rents.

Michael committed to following up concerns of theft and "shrinkage" at some stores. To date they have been able to reduce shrinkage to 1.9%, from 2.5%. A commitment was also made to visit Napranum to talk about local issues at the store.

Like TCICA, CEQ has been advocating for a better freight subsidy. The Sea Swift rate increase will have a major impact on their business but they remain committed to keeping prices as low as

possible. CEQ is seeking to get Outback Stores, ALPA, and TSIRC together to negotiate collectively for a freight deal with Sea Swift.

6.0 Open discussion

Members undertook a wide-ranging discussion on the opportunities for Councils individually and collectively as TCICA to position as the local and regional voices for Indigenous communities. Suggestions in the media that Empower Communities is a potential model for regional voices was noted. TCICA needs to get on the front foot on this issue; the ground needs to be claimed now.

Resolution: That TCICA request Minister Leeanne Enoch to invite Queensland's 17 Indigenous Local Governments to Brisbane before the end of the year for an audience with the full Cabinet to discuss issues of importance, including:

- the need for freight equalisation
- recognition and acknowledgement of the democratically elected Indigenous local governments as the legitimate, unified "real" voice for the communities and regions that we represent.

Moved: Mayor Robbie Sands
Seconded: Mayor Kyle Yanner
CARRIED

Resolution: That TCICA request Minister Linda Burney meet with Queensland's 17 Indigenous Local Governments in Cairns before the end of the year to discuss issues of importance, including:

- the need for freight equalisation
- recognition and acknowledgement of the democratically elected Indigenous local governments in Queensland as the legitimate, unified "real" voice for the communities and regions that we represent.

Moved: Mayor Jason Woibo
Seconded: Mayor Bradley Creek
CARRIED

All Indigenous Councils will be stronger by working together. Members discussed and resolved to invite Palm Island, Cherbourg, and Woorabinda to join the alliance. If they take up the offer, TCICA can then consider changing its name to reflect the broader group.

Resolution: TCICA write to Palm Island, Cherbourg, and Woorabinda Mayors to consider joining TCICA to strengthen the Voice of elected leadership of Indigenous communities in Queensland.

Moved: Mayor Robbie Sands
Seconded: Mayor Jason Woibo
CARRIED

Day one meeting close: 4.30pm

DAY 2

The meeting opened at 9.15am

7.0 Indigenous Council Sustainability Centre

Presented by Jo Stephenson, Local Government Division and Arun Pratap, Queensland Treasury Corporation. Presentation attached.

Jo briefed members on the findings of the PIC report (expected to be circulated), and the proposal to establish an Indigenous Council Sustainability Centre as a four-year trial. Queensland Treasury Corporation has been commissioned by the Department to develop a business case for the ICSC, to be completed before Christmas. Nominations were sought for local government representatives to sit

on an Expert Panel to help inform the development of the business case. The following representatives were nominated:

Mayor Robbie Sands
Mayor Wayne Butcher
CEO Dalassa Yorkston
CEO Gary Uhlmann

With a fifth nomination to come from Palm Island, Woorabinda, or Cherbourg Councils.

Action: Executive Officer to advise DSDILGP and QTC of the local government representatives to sit on the Expert Panel.

8.0 TORCH

Due to the time overrun of the previous agenda item, this item was removed from agenda. A TORCH project update is attached.

9.0 General Business

9.1 Freight subsidy

Mayor Keri Tamwoy briefed Members on the cost of everyday food items in Aurukun compared to Brisbane and why the 5.2% freight subsidy will achieve little in the way of driving down living costs for people. Members extensively discussed their concerns about the low level of the subsidy and agreed to support the recommendations of Aurukun:

That TCICA request the Minister for Transport and Main Roads make public the full Deloitte Study the State Government commissioned to look at a freight subsidy scheme in the Northern Peninsula, Torres Strait and Gulf Regions.

That TCICA advise the Premier of Queensland:

- that the 5.2% discount on essential eligible goods, (as set out in the Minister for Transport and Main Road's letter), will provide little benefit to Indigenous Communities which pay over 30% more for essential groceries than the people in Brisbane, and
- that as an example, that the mean Family Income of the Aurukun community is \$40,820 compared \$105,248 for Queensland as a whole.
- That the entire value of the subsidy will be taken up by the Sea Swift price increase of 8.9% from September 2023.
- That the subsidy needs to be indexed annually.

That the State Government together with the Australian Government commit to and implement a Freight Equalisation Scheme, as set out in the TCICA Report 2023 "Far North Queensland Freight Equalisation Study". This will demonstrate that both the Australian and Queensland Governments are truly committed to Closing the Gap and "*fully embrace the belief that when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people have a genuine say in the design and delivery of policies, program and services that affect them, life outcomes are achieved*". (Closing the Gap Joint Council).

Action: Executive Officer to draft letters to Minister Mark Bailey and Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk regarding the inadequacy of the freight subsidy and to request the release of the Deloitte study.

9.2 Gulf of Carpentaria inshore fishery discussion paper

Weipa Chairman Michael Rowland briefed members on the Gulf of Carpentaria inshore fishery discussion paper and recommended Members make submissions to the Government to raise concerns. Michael will share Weipa's submission which Councils can use as a template for their own. Submissions need to be made by 17 November.

Action: Executive Officer to circulate Gulf of Carpentaria inshore fishery discussion paper and Weipa's submission.

9.3 Other matters

Due to the meeting running overtime, other matters to be dealt with by Flying Minute.

- Action:** Executive Officer to send Flying Minutes for:
- Places of Refuge studies for communities
 - RDA Tropical North Economic Development Strategy review

10.0 Next meeting

The next meeting of TCICA will be its AGM during late November. To be held online.

The next Ordinary Meeting of TCICA is currently scheduled for 9 & 10 April 2024, following the local government elections in March.

Meeting closed at 1.20pm with a closing prayer by Cr Gabriel Bani

Mayor Robbie Sands
Chair