

THE NATIONALS - MURRAY PLAINS AEDC

President

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MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING Thursday 18th June 2020, 7.30pm ZOOM Meeting

WELCOME BY PRESIDENT: ELAINE LEES

PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Elaine Lees, David Lees, Damian Kelly, Karen Kelly, Paul Weller, Peter Walsh, Neil Pankhurst, Loretta Meek, Brett Hosking, David Hackett, Barry Bishop, Andrew Leahy, Robert Amos, Noel Maughan, Dorothy Maughan, Pete Gibson, Ron Hooper, John Lyle, Glenys Gillingham, Murray McDonald, Fairlie McDonald, Harry Gibson and Xavier Healy

APOLOGIES: Claire & Frank Millar, Roseanne Kava

Moved: Damian Kelly

Seconded: Neil Pankhurst

That the apologies be accepted, carried

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 16/02/2020

The Minutes of the previous meeting are moved as true and correct

1. Moved: Paul Weller
carried

Seconded: Murray McDonald,

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: NIL

CORRESPONDENCE

Inwards: NAB Bank statements. Notification of two new National Party Members in Murray Plains, Mr Michael Hayes, Cohuna and Mr Robert Amos, Echuca

Outwards: 19/02/2020- Two Motions from Murray Plains AEDC sent to Head Office for the 2020 State Conference; Ordinary Meeting Notice

Moved: Damian Kelly

Seconded: David Hackett

That the Correspondence be received, carried

REPORTS

President- Elaine Lees, as presented

Moved: Elaine Lees

Seconded: Dorothy Maughan

That the Presidents report be received, carried

Treasurer- As presented by Damian Kelly

Moved: Damian Kelly

Seconded: Noel Maughan

That the Treasurer's Report be accepted, carried.

FUNDRAISING REPORT- Paul Weller- No activity in this period. Plans for a Dinner in Echuca. Millar's have offered their place, for 60 people, dependent on Covid Restrictions. October/November- Senator Bridget McKenzie as guest.

STATE COUNCIL: Elaine Lees- Provided a report. Attended two State Council meetings, Tele Conference, Neil Pankhurst was re-elected President

State President: Neil Pankhurst – Reported on the Bush Fire recovery. Last meeting June 13th June, safe trip home with Zoom. New Board member elected – Bernadette Hogan. Reported that Young Nationals age has been changed - 15 to 35.

Local state member – Peter Walsh MP, Leader of The Nationals, State Member for Murray Plains - Peter followed up with Neil's good summary of State Council, participating with Xavier hosting Zoom meetings, all learning new technology with less travelling. State Conference 2021 will be in Inverloch as it was postponed this year. Keen to hold something with a range of motions guidance in Policy development – challenging. Peter reported on the Election review- John Tanner taken longer- proposed recommendations. Neil will be available as will be distributed a copy of the John Tanner Report. Peter thanked people for their hard work. Peter reported on the border issues with Covid 19, plan for post Covid 19 returning businesses, tourism etc.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Rob Amos, Captain of the Echuca CFA and a Nats new member, spoke on issues under the new structure. Two weeks to go until the new FRB comes into play. The CFA Chief Officer cannot choose his own people, has to be FRB personal. Local CFA brigades feel like a second rate of service and there are a raft of unresolved issues.

Brett Hosking – National Grains spoke to the nonexistence of the grain market to China. Farmers continue to find new markets and this comes with a cost. Farmers have had big hits and cannot assist their communities as in the past

Peter Gibson sort clarification on branch stacking from Peter Walsh MP

Two motions were put forward by David Hackett

Motion 1

That the Nationals investigate the possibility of the infrastructure for renewable energy generation be included in the post covid-19 economic stimulation spending, with the intention to attract the vast investment capital waiting for the opportunity to invest.

NB. The investments would be in the power grid, servicing private sector investment in solar and wind generation projects and enable further investment in battery storage, hydrogen fuel production and fuel cells for eg. Electric vehicles and machinery.

Moved: David Hackett Seconded: Barry Bishop

Motion 2

The Murray Plains electorate seek and support the transition of long-term refugees, working and living in rural areas to permanent visas, with agreement to remain in the rural workforce. This will establish a stable workforce for our primary, manufacturing and processing industries.

A second benefit will occur when family reunion is achieved, to offset the reduced migration intake due to covid-19.

Moved: David Hackett

Seconded: Paul Weller

This meeting will accept the motion put together by Murray and Paul around red tape for Fire Brigade.

Moved: Fairley McDonald

Seconded Noel Maughan

Date for Next meeting- It was proposed that it be at the Lockington Pub at the end of August, date to be advised.

CLOSE: 9.00pm

Murray Plains AEDC Quarterly Meeting - June 18th, 2020 – 7.30pm Virtual via Zoom/Phone.

Presidents Report

The worldwide exposure and responses to Covid-19 in the intervening four months since our previous Murray Plains AEDC meeting in Kyabram in mid February, along with our personal experiences will be etched in our memories forever. Probably one of the most reassuring comments we have all shared with family and friends is that we are very fortunate to live not only in Australia, but also outside major population areas. We have also appreciated the leadership especially at Federal level.

Murray Plains members from Timmering, Lockington, & Kerang, & I, attended the Victorian Women's Executive Conference in Bendigo on Feb 29th. Isobel Project participants, an impressive group of young women from across Victoria were introduced. In addition to careers, NP & community involvement, they are being mentored in presentation, media, Parliament and the National Party. Dr. Theresa Craig, Federal Women's Council President, from Qld addressed the meeting, followed by Q & A featuring MP's Bridget McKenzie, Steph Ryan, Melina Bath, Anne Webster & Jeanette Powell. Winemaker, Vinea Marson from Mt Camel, whose wines accompanied lunch, also spoke. Roundtable discussions identified challenges & opportunities, resulting in conference resolutions aimed at achieving better targeted funding for Ag Research, Homecare Packages, Centralised Emergency Relief & Dentistry Rebates.

Two Teletownhall meetings were held, with all members being contacted by phone to participate. The meetings were addressed by State & Federal MP's. Members were then able to dial in to raise questions. The first was on Thurs April 9th at 6.30pm, over 200 participants, speakers included, State President, Neil, Federal Cabinet Minister, Darren Chester, & State Leader, Peter Walsh. The second on Tue May 19th at 6.30pm, over 300 participants, was addressed by Federal Leader & Deputy PM, Michael McCormack & Senator Bridget McKenzie. MHR for Nicholls, Damian Drum also participated.

The questions were representative of the issues of concern relative to our members and their regions. It was interesting hearing participants from around the state raise issues especially as a consequence of Covid-19, including, financial stress, mail delays, supply chain concerns, both exports of ag products and imports - ag & pharmaceutical supplies, reliance on immigration for growth & pacific islander labour, telehealth and rural doctor availability, bushfire rebuilds, roads, bridges, and the ongoing water issues.

A small group, including myself, Lindsay Dann, Noel & Dorothy Manghan met briefly with Bridget in Echuca early Tues May 19th, for general discussion, including water. She was also meeting Richard Anderson from VFF, and visiting the Barmah area with Steph Ryan.

In lieu of State Conference, an Online Policy Forum was held on 23rd May, at 11.00am – 12.30pm. Topic: Beyond Covid-19 - Structure: Panel discussion with our Members of Parliament followed by Member's Q&A with Darren Chester, Peter Walsh, Steph Ryan and Bridget McKenzie. Melina Bath, Danny O'Brien,

and Tim McCurdy, also participated. Questions included concern regarding (1) State government - debt estimates of overruns, lack of accountability, & potential use of extra (Covid-19) \$24 billion to cover, also degree of involvement with China Belt & Road program, - - (2) Frustration of state wide work at home restrictions relevant to urban crowds on public transport & crowded lifts, concern for country business including hospitality, (3) Broadening of trade outside China, increase self sufficiency, Complexity of dependence on immigration for growth, and horticultural labour.

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State Council Report

State Council - March 21st

The March 21st was rescheduled to a Teleconference phone meeting. I attended as an observer.

My Murray Plains State Councillor role being due to commence at State Conference on May 23rd The meeting commenced at 10.30am, and concluded at 12.50pm.

It was summarized afterwards by one experienced state councillor as a productive couple of hours during which as well as participating, he had also managed to mow the lawn, and hang out a couple of loads of washing.

- (1) State Conference provisionally cancelled with option to reschedule 2020 or May 2021
- (2) Re election of Neil as State President in lieu of State Conference -no other nominations
- (3) Incoming State Council for 2020/2021 still commences May 23rd (although no State Conference)
- (4) Fees to remain unchanged for 2020/2021
- (5) State Conference Agenda Committee pleased to receive >100 motions (condensed to 51)
Incl. Murray Plains for (1) Lock Zero & (2) Supporting the CFA jointly with Euroa AEDC.
- (6) State redistribution pre 2022 election. NP committee David O'Brien, Bill Baxter, Danny O'Brien
- (7) Reports State - Director Matthew, - President Neil, - Leader Peter, Federal -Bridget, MP - Melina re' responses - Covid-19, & Bushfires.
- (8) Options for working remotely including Head Office & State Conference options.

State Council – June 13th.

The June 13th State Council meeting was held as scheduled on Teleconference via Zoom. This meeting was conducted as close as possible to a regular State Council Meeting, including voting.

All participants were visible via zoom, so no mowing and washing this time, and it ran close to the normal State Council schedule, commencing at 10.30am, and finishing at 4.00pm. Neil did allow us a break for lunch, but as he said, no need to wish a safe trip home, as we were probably only walking to the kitchen.

- (1) Welcome new & returning state councillors, including 3 State Councillors elected at large.
- (2) Election of 3 State Councillors to the Board of Management, and Committee appointments.
- (3) Inclusion of FEDC delegates to Senate pre selections
- (4) Responses to John Tanner elections review – about 45 recommendations
- (5) Reports - H/O and MP's responses to Covid-19 issues, frustration of state wide restrictions, intrastate inconsistencies impacting cross border business along Murray and SA border, impact on regional hospitality, mass gatherings hypocrisy, , vindication live export cattle,
- (6) Young Nationals Vic changed from 15 – 30yrs to 15 - 35yrs to align with NSW & QLd.
- (7) Contact list for supporters or friends of Nationals approved