



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MINUTES

Submitted to the
NINETY SEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSOCIATION

Held on

10 June 2009

Commencing At

11.00am

At
Wrest Point Casino
Hobart



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* Denotes Attachment

FORMAL NOTICE OF MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT

**The Annual Conference of
Local Government in Tasmania
will be held in conjunction with
Local Government Managers Australia
and
Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia
commencing
Wednesday 10 June 2009**

**NOTICE IS ALSO GIVEN THAT THE
Ninety Seventh Annual General Meeting
of the Association
will be held at the
Wrest Point Casino, Hobart
at 11.00am
on Wednesday 10 June 2009**

**NOTICE IS ALSO GIVEN THAT
the Association's General Meeting
will be held at the
Wrest Point Casino, Hobart
Commencing immediately following
the conclusion of the AGM on
Wednesday 10 June 2009
To consider
Local Government Policy and Motions
from Member Councils**

**Allan Garcia
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

2009 CONFERENCE PROGRAM



WEDNESDAY 10 JUNE 2009

10.00 – 2.00pm Registration Desk Open

11.00am Annual General Meeting

General Meeting

Commences immediately following the conclusion of AGM

1.00pm Lunch

2.00pm Meetings continue

5.00pm Cocktail Function

THURSDAY 11 JUNE 2009

7.30-8.00am Find 30 – Morning Tai Chi Session

8.00am Conference Registrations

9.00am Welcome and Opening

9.10am Welcome to Country

9.15am ALGA President Clr Geoff Lake

9.30am Moving Moment

9.35am Allan Tranter

With thanks to Australia Post

10.30am Morning Tea

With thanks to Oak Tasmania

11.00am 2009 Local Government Awards For Excellence Finalists

11.10am Moving Moment

11.15am Jude Munro

With thanks to Simmons Wolfhagen

12.00pm Lunch

With thanks to Oak Tasmania

1.00pm Workshop Program

2.45pm Afternoon Tea

With thanks to Commonwealth Bank

3.15pm 2009 Local Government Awards for Excellence Finalists

3.25pm A word from Platinum Sponsor, Civic Mutual Plus

3.30pm Panel Discussion

4.30-5.30pm Happy Hour

With thanks to Commonwealth Bank

6.45-7.00pm PML Shuttle Service to City Hall

7.15pm Civic Mutual Plus Conference Dinner

10.45-12.00pm PML Shuttle Service to Wrest Point

FRIDAY 12 JUNE 2009

7.30am MARSH Recovery *Breakfast*

9.00am Workshop Program

10.45am Morning Tea

With thanks to ACCT

11.15am The Hon David Bartlett MP

11.35am Roland Naufal

12.15 Moving Moment

12.20pm Institute of Chartered Accountants

12.25pm Graeme Joy

1.10pm Conference wrap up and Wrest Point prize draw

12.00pm Lunch

With thanks to ACCT



2009 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The President, Mayor Mike Gaffney, welcomed Members and declared the AGM open at 11.05am.

Apologies were received from:

Clr Frank Knott	Launceston City Council
Clr Richard Bowden	Central Highlands Council
Mr Peter Harder	West Coast Council
Mayor Carol Cox	Flinders Council
Ald Ray Shipp	Launceston City Council
Mayor Tony Nicholson	Derwent Valley Council
Mayor Albert Van Zetten	Launceston City Council

A copy of the Rules of the Association are available on the Association's website at - <http://www.lgat.tas.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=215>

1 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is my pleasure to present the 2009 report as my last official role after having completed a term and a half as President of the Local Government Association of Tasmania. This report will seek to highlight a number of significant undertakings progressed by LGAT on behalf of member Councils.

Despite some recent bumps in the road, I would like to give some comfort to members that Local Government in Tasmania enjoys a better working relationship with the State Government than many of the other states and territories. The past year has witnessed significant pressure for change and reforms coming from many different quarters. Some of those pressures are manageable and contained by us and yet many are driven from external groups and bodies and as Councils we are constantly addressing spot fires and coping with challenges.

It is also appreciated that as Water and Sewerage Reformation has been so time and resource consuming that we tend to forget about many other LGAT roles and responsibilities.

I will take this opportunity to reflect on some of the issues and achievements of the Local Government Association over the past twelve months.

Professional Development opportunities and communication networks.

On the matter of connecting with and informing elected members, the Association has continued to provide and coordinate conferences, weekend workshops, meetings and forums for professional development largely focusing on the wishes of staff or elected members. Attendees have welcomed the networking opportunity and the ability to learn from others as to how common matters are dealt with in different places. A series of successful pre-election workshops was also held recently across the regions in preparation for the October Local Government elections.

Significant effort has also been undertaken in providing member councils and elected members of issues, initiatives and opportunities. Fortnightly newsletters, quarterly magazines, articles for

national magazines, dedicated newsletters for community development personnel and climate change officers are but a few of the means by which the Association seeks to keep people up to date and on top of issues. I would also like to acknowledge the increased efforts by Tasmanian Councils in recent times to provide information to national newsletters and magazines. I think that has been great and there has been an obvious improvement. Well done and I would encourage individual Councils to continue to forward articles where ever possible.

Negotiations are presently underway with the University of Tasmania to develop a practical short course on *land use planning* for elected members that could be delivered over a two weekend period and which would provide newly elected members, in particular, with the background, skills and knowledge they require to participate as a member of a planning authority.

Planning Reforms

Moves by the State Government to implement planning reforms to create a new Tasmanian Planning Commission, establish call in powers for the Minister for Planning for a range of circumstances and implementing new processes for projects of regional significance including the establishment of expert panels has created significant angst among councils and the wider community. The relatively short time frames associated with consultation and the ill defined justification for establishing some of these arrangements has created justifiable concern within councils and the Local Government Sector. The Association sought and received "more time" from the Minister and continues to lobby for a more complete and thorough analysis of the problems and suggest improved strategies required to manage the contentious issues. It should be noted that there were some aspects of the suggested planning reforms which were generally well received by Councils and should assist with better outcomes.

Water and Sewerage Reforms

At the Association's 2007 November General Meeting, the membership expressed its strong opposition to the Water and Sewerage reform process and its disgust at being kept at arm's length. The Meeting vehemently opposed the proposition of a State Owned Company that would assume the assets of councils and would see present revenue flows to councils be re-directed to the State Government. The Association was given the task of lobbying and negotiating a water and sewerage outcome that would witness continued ownership by Local Government, regional structures, retention of dividends and tax equivalents by councils and protection of employees.

Constant lobbying of both the Premier and the Treasurer led to a dialogue about alternative models for reform and following several months of negotiation, the Association delivered a model that met the key elements of the General Meeting resolution. The Association also lobbied strongly to secure funding to assist councils with any transition to reform with the State Government making \$5 million available.

Since that time, the Association has worked with member councils, transition and implementation project teams within to ensure that the reform timetable could be met to ensure certainty for employees and customers by July 1, 2009. With such diverse and complex task there have been many challenges and issues along the way, the current CSO challenge is a perfect example of this change process and no doubt other issues will continue to arise.

The due diligence process was an enormous task for all councils and the efforts of staff are to be commended. The speed of the reform has created difficulties and anxiety within councils and the community but at all times the Association has been working to achieve the best outcomes for members. Ridiculous timelines have been imposed on many throughout this process and while credit is due to those that have managed to meet the deadlines, it has placed significant pressure and stress on the good relations of parties that may otherwise not have been at loggerheads.

Amalgamations

The Association has secured policy positions from both major parties within the Tasmanian Parliament opposing forced amalgamations. It continues to publicly defend councils, the communities they represent and the importance of local decision making. The Association has addressed various business and public forums highlighting the efforts and endeavours of councils to improve their sustainability and the actions being taken to share resources and work cooperatively. The Association has also provided assistance to Councils regarding mergers, amalgams and the like.

Compulsory Voting

Many of you may be aware of my personal opinion regarding compulsory voting and whilst it has been easier for me to defend as it supportive of the current LGAT policy position as passed at last year's conference it is not an issue that we have swept under the carpet.

Indeed, a segment or "hot topic" was introduced this year at our General Meetings (to allow for a meaningful discussion, to listen to thus appreciate other members point of view and finally to try and keep everyone awake)

"Compulsory Voting" was the first cab off the rank.

It allowed us as a sector to hear from differing opinions and I personally found it beneficial. Hopefully, the organisation will continue to utilize "hot topics" at general meetings as a way of an informed debate.

Codes of Conduct

The Association has also established the Code of Conduct Standards Panel which supports the conduct of hearings to resolve differences and issues between and with elected members of councils. This process has allowed a means by which matters of difference can be independently and expertly addressed while allowing councils to continue to operate in a functional and appropriate manner. It is acknowledged that Codes of Conduct concept is a work in progress and LGAT is the coordinator of the process and change is subject to member's suggestions.

Ambulance Levy

Suffice to say that this issue was definitely on the State Government's agenda and whilst it has been "largely forgotten by Councils as other more time consuming challenges have come to the fore" I can assure you that there were a number of quite frank and forceful discussions held between members of the State Government and Allan Garcia and I.

Whilst many of you may not have been aware of the intensity of the discussions, we were able to reinforce the feelings of our member Councils and the issue was taken off the table.

Careers

The Association, with extra financial support from Councils, has allocated a specialist resource to encourage and enable people to choose Local Government as an employment and career possibility. LGAT staff attendance at careers fairs, assistance with University Internship programs and helping councils strengthen their relationships with schools has also sought to address some of the issues facing skills deficiencies and workforce planning.

Constitutional Recognition

LGAT has been very active in the Constitutional reform process and coordinated workshops in July last year for interested elected members to get together and prepare documentation and be involved with the ALGA action plan.

I am aware that quite a few people in this gathering actually attended the Melbourne forum from which the declaration based on the following three principles was agreed –

1. The Australian People should be represented in the community by democratically elected and accountable Local Government representatives;
2. The power of the Commonwealth to provide direct funding to local government should be explicitly recognized; and
3. If a new preamble is proposed, it should ensure that local government is recognized as one of the components making up the modern Australian Federation.

Mayor Easter and I are ALGA Board Directors and whilst we set policy and direction it is also one of Allan's responsibilities as CEO of LGAT to be heavily involved in the workings of ALGA. I think that we would all agree that the lobbying in the last few years has enabled a much better relationship to eventuate between Federal and Local Government. The direct funding we are now receiving does not come by chance but more by hard work and collegiality.

Waste Management

LGAT fought a significant battle to ensure that a state based waste levy was not imposed and that councils were able to implement a regional arrangement to effect regional waste solutions through their own collection arrangements. Rather than collecting levies on behalf of State Government, councils now collect levies that are retained by Local Government and utilized to effect waste management outcomes at the regional level.

Waste management has received significant attention from the Association and we recently committed to the hosting of a project officer on behalf of the 3 council regions to undertake a major project on household hazardous waste. The development of the initiative has been well received and has the potential to dramatically enhance the way in which particular items can be diverted from the landfill waste stream.

Climate Change

Climate change has received specific attention over the past 18 months with the allocation of a dedicated resource to this important matter. Guides, toolkits, meetings, workshops and a very successful conference to facilitate sharing information and access to expertise, technical data and resources have been important elements of this resource support. The Association has also secured funding from the Climate Change Office to collect baseline data to establish the carbon footprint of councils with a view to then reducing this level through targeted strategies and ongoing measurement of results and support for councils.

I hope this message serves to provide some insight into the major activities the Tasmanian Association is undertaking on behalf of member councils.

It's not always easy as President chairing meetings, workshop or conferences, however I believe that although there have been potentially volatile moments and significant issues that all Mayors, General Managers, elected members and staff have conducted themselves in a manner in which their communities would expect.

I have had numerous positive conversations with Mayors and General Managers of each of the 29 entities and I might also add I have received regular calls from other elected members and Council Staff connected with the 29 municipalities.

I also have to admit receiving a number of individual constituent complaints which I have fielded and then spoken with the relevant GM or Mayor about the last rotten decision made by their Council.

I cannot speak highly enough about LGAT staff who work under extreme pressure and tight timeframes, with limited numbers and having to represent an exceptionally diverse sector with a host of different issues. Whilst most Councils probably have anywhere from 20 to 150 employees LGAT has a total of 11 staff, including the CEO.

There are only four full time positions and seven part time staff to cope with the myriad of roles and responsibilities it has accepted or at times has had foisted on it. The staff need and deserve our support and cooperation as they seek to provide comment, overviews and a way forward.

I would also take this opportunity, whilst I have the floor, to acknowledge Liz Gillam. Liz has been an excellent staff member for us and for LGAT for the past nine years and on behalf of the organization I wish her all the best as she undertakes a new position with the LGMA.

I also acknowledge the role and sound work of GMC and the individual representatives who attend meetings and prepare papers on behalf of the Local Government Sector. I am confident that Vice President Mayor Easter will fulfill the Acting role and if he decides to stand for the President's position I wish him the very best.

Not only have I been representing ALGA in the Federal Arena on the Ministerial for Ageing I also have been attending as the only Tasmanian on the ACLG steering committee. We met last week in Canberra not only to organize the next Mayoral meeting at the NGA in Canberra but to report on infrastructure funding and other issues.

I can only impress to you that it was made very clear that Councils need to spend all of their stimulus infrastructure funding in the prescribed time period and that the Prime Minister would not hesitate to require the dollars to be returned if Councils were thinking of carrying the money or works over into the next financial year

Last year I closed my Presidents report with some observations and a few words of advice.

The issue last year was regarding elected members having "cracks at or giving advice to other elected members from other Council areas through the media."

Indeed, those articles and reports were not beneficial and at best destabilizing to Local Government. To a certain extent that scenario was playing into the hands of individuals and groups who are often critical of our sector. It has been pleasing to note that the "in fighting" is somewhat less as it should be.

My advice this year is quite simple, ALGA is embarking on a very significant reform agenda on behalf of the Local Government sector for us to be ultimately recognized in the Australian Constitution, not just recognized but included as a legitimate and integral sector, representative of the people.

I would encourage all of you to stay focused on the bigger picture so that some of the ridiculous timeframes, positions and situations we have found ourselves and being subservient to the State Government may be addressed and alleviated through constitutional reform. It is therefore imperative that we address our issues "in house" and at all times where possible, seek to provide a united front.

I thank you for your time and your support ... At all times I tried to represent and deliver the very best for this Association. As Mayor of Latrobe I look forward to continue my involvement with the sector.

I know I have worked exceptionally long hours and travelled many miles on behalf of our organization and I really do thank you for that opportunity.

Central Coast Council/Central Highlands Council

That the President's report be received.

Carried

At the conclusion of the President's report, Mayor Mike Gaffney thanked the meeting for his term as President of the Association and took his leave of the meeting.

Mayor Barry Easter, Acting President, proceeded with the meeting.

2 MINUTES OF 96TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING *

The Minutes of the 96th Annual General Meeting of the Local Government Association of Tasmania, held in Launceston on 18 June 2008, as circulated, are submitted for confirmation.

The Minutes are at **Attachment to Item 2.**

Central Highlands Council/Circular Head Council

That the Minutes of the 96th Annual General Meeting, held 18 June 2008, as circulated, be confirmed.

Carried

3 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO 30 JUNE 2008 *

The General Management Committee recommends consideration and adoption of the Association's Financial Statements for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008, an abridged version of which is included at **Attachment to Item 3**.

A full version is available from the Association's offices.

Clarence City Council/Hobart City Council

That the Financial Statements for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 be received and adopted.

Carried

4 PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT HONORARIUMS

The Rules of the Association provide that the Annual General Meeting will grant an annual allowance to the President and Vice President.

It has been practice to undertake an independent review of the allowances of the President and Vice President in the same financial year as the four yearly review of allowances of Local Government Elected Members. That review was undertaken this year by the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The result of the review was a proposal to retain the basis of the present allowances unchanged for the two positions with annual movements for the next four years being in accord with the wages price index. This brings these allowances into line with the escalation factor used for elected member allowances across councils. The resultant application of the 3.6% wages price index will mean allowances for this year will be:

- President allowance \$37,712 per annum.
- Vice President allowance \$9,428 per annum.

The wage price index will also be applied to GMC sitting fees.

Launceston City Council/Kingborough Council

That the President's and Vice President's allowance for the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 be adjusted in accordance with the movement in the Wages Price Index.

Carried

5 COUNCIL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE 2009/2010 FINANCIAL YEAR *

Subscriptions received from councils last year totalled \$894,593. Councils agreed to meet the additional cost of a dedicated careers officer for the last year and the upcoming year at which time the position outcomes would be reviewed. This resulted in councils agreeing to fund an additional \$100,000 increase in expenses for the two years to meet the costs of this function.

This year it is proposed to increase subscriptions by 4% to a level of \$930,376. The revised subscription levels for councils is at **Attachment to Item 5** and are submitted to the Annual General Meeting for adoption.

Mayor Graham Bury, Kingborough Council, indicated to the meeting that his council was unhappy with the efforts of the Association in relation to its advocacy with the State Government on behalf of Member Councils. It considered that the Association works too closely with the State Government on certain issues and in particular, wanted it to be recorded that it had a specific displeasure with the Associations' efforts in relation to water and sewerage reform.

Break O'Day Council/Dorset Council

That subscriptions be increased by 4% to meet the increased operating costs of the Association.

Carried

The 2009/10 Budget is at **Appendix to Item 6**.

As with most councils that rely on income from interest on funds, the Association will realise a reduction in revenue from that source this year. The Association has also relied on a number of bulk purchasing and agency arrangements as a source of revenue but a number of these have either ceased or significantly dropped off. This creates a shortfall of expected revenue for the upcoming year of some \$40,000.

Salaries increase slightly with the Senior Policy Officer position being extended from a three day a week position to full time. This will seek to meet the increased load on the policy and advocacy function in the organisation. The climate change position will be retained but on a part time basis with the Association funding two days a week and an additional day being funded by the Climate Change Office.

Another matter of significance in the budget is the potential for a 10% supplementary increase to ALGA subscriptions to allow for increased resources within that organisation. This would mean an additional \$7,800 being required by the Association to meet this obligation. This amount has not been included in the draft budget at this time as a final decision will not be made by ALGA until the end of June at its AGM.

The Association recently negotiated with the Tasmanian Training Consortium(TTC) a bulk membership this year to replace the per council cost of membership. The TTC provides training and development predominantly to State Service employees but council officers are also frequent users of the services. The subscription cost per council is in the order of \$3000 each per year. While this is a minor amount for large councils it is nonetheless expensive for smaller councils. The subscription allows for reduced attendance prices of approximately 25% at training sessions.

The Association has negotiated an all of Local Government subscription payable by the Association of \$6000. This will now give all councils access to training at a significantly reduced rate. The subscription has been included in the budget and councils will no longer be required to fund separate subscriptions from their own budgets.

With all the matters above taken into account, it is anticipated that a 4% increase in subscriptions would be required to operate effectively for the coming year. In the event that the carbon footprint work is to proceed then the call on councils to effect their carbon measurement would be in the vicinity of \$2000-\$4000 per council on top of subscriptions.

A core component of the Statewide Partnership on climate change was a project to audit the carbon footprint of Tasmanian councils. Initial commitments to funding the project by the State Government did not translate to the level anticipated with the Association meeting almost \$20,000 of the \$60,000 cost this financial year. The 23 councils that were not already doing work in this area are presently being measured and the report will be available by the end of the financial year. When initially contemplating this program the expectation was that there would be funding for up to three years from the CCO but given the State Government budget position there is some doubt about continued funding and there was no formal commitment beyond year one.

The cost of the year two activity of measurement and reporting and developing action plans would be in the range of \$60,000 - \$115,000 per annum for next year and the ensuing year. At this time, that remains unfunded and has not been included within the Association's subscriptions. This is a matter on which the Association is seeking guidance from members as to whether there is a preparedness to fund this activity in this year's budget. Alternatively, the ongoing discussions with the CCO may result in some funding being provided and it may be more appropriate to await the outcome of this exchange prior to making a direct allocation. In the event that it is agreed to continue this program and funding support is forthcoming, a call may be required to be made on councils to the extent of between \$2000-\$4000.

With all the matters above taken into account, it is anticipated that a 4% increase in subscriptions would be required to operate effectively for the coming year. In the event that the carbon footprint work is to proceed then the call on councils to effect their carbon measurement will require an additional allocation in the budget or a later call on funds.

Devonport City Council/Break O'Day Council

That the meeting note the key features of the proposed budget for 2009/2010 and endorse its adoption.

Carried

7 REPORTS FROM BOARD REPRESENTATIVES *

Listed below are the bodies on which the Association had statutory representation in the 2008/09 financial year.

Representatives on Statutory Bodies are requested to provide a report for Conference and are also requested to provide regular reports back to the Association during the year.

- **Animal Welfare Advisory Committee**
Mrs Kym Curran, Launceston City Council
- **Assessment Committee for Dam Construction (ACDC)**
Mr Neil Blaikie
- **Community Review Committee - Threatened Species Protection Act 1995**
Mr Jay Wilson
- **Crime Prevention and Community Safety Council**
- Ald Sandra French, Burnie City Council
- **Environmental Management Pollution Control Board**
Mr David Masters, Glamorgan Spring Bay Council
- **Forests & Forest Industry Council**
Mayor Robert Armstrong, Huon Valley Council
- **LGAT Assist**
Mr Kay Reeves
- **Marine Farming Planning Review Panel**
Mayor Jock Campbell, Clarence City Council
- **Plumbers and Gasfitters Registration Board**
Mr John Palmer
- **Resource Planning and Development Commission**
Ms Sandra Hogue
- **State Fire Commission**
Clr John Lefevre, Break O'Day Council, Clr Richard Bowden, Central Highlands Council
- **State Fire Management Council**
Mr Rod Sweetnam, Launceston City Council
- **State Grants Commission**
Mr Barrie Southorn and Mr Hugh Denny
- **Tasmanian Cultural Heritage Council**
Ald Sandra French, Burnie City Council, Mr Roger Howlett
- **Tasmanian Library Advisory Board**
Clr Julian Bush Kingborough Council, Sandra French, Burnie City Council, Ms Lorraine Green, Northern Midlands Council and Clr Doug Chipman, Clarence City Council

The reports received for presentation are at **Attachment to Item 7**.

Glenorchy City Council/George Town Council

- (a) That the reports from representatives on various bodies be received and noted.**
- (b) That Conference acknowledges the time and effort put in by all Association representatives on boards, working parties, advisory groups and committees etc.**

Carried

8 CLOSURE

The Acting President, Mayor Barry Easter, declared the Annual General Meeting closed at 11.30am.