

**WYE SEP RECOVERY GROUP  
MEETING  
14 February 2016, 9.30 am at the Station**

**PRESENT:** Mel Kohout, Carolyn Tatchell, Terry Bracks, Christine Shaw, Matthew Jackman, Ian Angus, Roy Moriarty, Debra Hocking, Sandy Forbes (*phone*), Peter Latham (*Chairperson*), Yvonne Sheppard (*Secretary*).

**GUESTS:** David Stirling (*Marysville*)

**APOLOGIES:** Richard van der Merwe, David Huggins, Rex Brown, Clive Goldsworthy

**Preliminary announcements**

1. The *Lions Club of Lorne* recovery and relief program is offering the free use of two caravans in the Big 4 Camping Ground from 30<sup>th</sup> January to 20<sup>th</sup> March. Thereafter, the caravans will be replaced by two on-site cabins for lease up until the 2016 Melbourne Cup weekend, these will be available for a small fee of \$20 per night. Bookings can be made at [lornelionsbookings@solution4u.com](mailto:lornelionsbookings@solution4u.com). A copy of their flier will be posted on the PA website.
2. *JB Hi Fi* has donated twelve \$200 vouchers for those who have lost their homes. It was suggested we ask *Spirit Foundation* to 'top them up' to \$500.
3. A list of active volunteer fire fighters who returned to fight the fire on Christmas Day, thus foregoing their wages, has been sent to Craig Lapsley for his attention. Sandy to follow up.
4. Peter will send a letter to Otway Coast Committee thanking them for agreeing to pay the wages of Shane (Slug) McCarthy for his work during the emergency.

**Proposed Memorial Art Installation**

It was unanimously agreed that our Group commission a local artist to commence this project without further ado. *Spirit Foundation* has indicated it will finance the cost of this Group initiative.

The installation will comprise items which have been salvaged from destroyed houses by each owner. If nothing could be salvaged, house keys or even a piece of glass would be appropriate. This is, of course, on a voluntary basis only - there is no compulsion for owners to participate if they do not wish to do so.

Advice will be sought from Grocon whether items will need to be washed in case of asbestos contamination.

If not already salvaged, items will have to be found before Grocon starts the clean-up. A record will be kept of donated items, donors' names and contact details. We might also ask people to provide photos of their sites - if they have them - as part of the record.

Terry and Chris will liaise to get the information out to all those who lost their houses. The Lorne Sculpture Biennale board may help with advice.

Sandy will include the project on the agenda for Monday's Melbourne information meeting.

**Lorne Sculpture Biennale 2016**

We understand the organizers want to invite the Wye/Sep people to the opening ceremony.

A Japanese artist is creating sculptures on the beach at Lorne and Wye River from March to Easter. It was suggested this might provide impetus for our above initiative.

**The WSRG community survey of desired future projects**

Sandy will talk about the Survey at Monday's Melbourne information meeting.

It was felt that a minority of people could disapprove of our suggestions listed in the Survey. They should be reminded that our list is for guidance, and that this is everyone's chance to have input of their ideas. The list is not in priority order and, in fact, the order will change every time someone opens the Survey.

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A few minor amendments were decided to clarify the preamble, and include in the list of already committed projects the Art Installation and the Community Water Tank.

Two further suggestions will be added to the suggestions list –

1. Putting the powerlines underground in 'downtown' Wye River.
2. The formation of additional walking tracks around the townships.

With regard to the suggestion that the purchase of replacement plants be subsidized, if there is community support for this initiative, we can approach the *Spirit Foundation* for finance.

The Survey will be distributed through all means of communication by the 19<sup>th</sup> February and the closing date for responses will be Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February.

#### **Non-residents who lost their houses**

It was noted that non-resident property owners who have lost their houses have difficulty in attending local meetings as they have nowhere to stay when they come down here.

With their permission, it was decided to include the group in the dissemination of general information of community benefit, and also provide them with links to other information sites.

#### **Agenda items**

Debra Hocking will serve as Chairperson while Peter is away.

It is understood there have been many applications for the new Resilience Group thus delaying the decision regarding its composition. Efforts are being made to resolve this next week.

Eleven permanent residents have been accepted as having lost their homes. There are 4 - 5 additional cases, which need their positions to be clarified. Clive Goldsworthy of *Spirit Foundation* is also trying to resolve this issue. It was suggested we write to COS that this high priority matter be settled as soon as possible.

Payments from the proceeds of the *Wye Sep Bands Together* concert have already been paid to eligible recipients. We understand the Red Cross is holding money as well.

Carolyn had a call from Doug McNeill (*COS Planning, Building and Health Manager*) informing her that Minister Neville had phoned him asking what was going on with the siting of the community water tank. We may need to include this additional unresolved priority matter in our letter to COS above. Doug also said he would let us know about the requested hard waste collection.

If a hard waste collection is offered, Grocon will need to be consulted about the possibility that some waste might contain asbestos. COS will also need to be involved.

A meeting arranged between Peter Galvin (*DELWP*) and Peter Latham to discuss what DELWP could do for the townships, ie. community water tank, noticeboards, green and hard waste collection etc., unfortunately did not eventuate.

Deb said that DELWP is negotiating with the SLSC to hold an information event at the clubhouse. Details are not clear yet, but it would apparently provide information on various projects and may be 'open house' at specified times. As there are a range of things to do, it was suggested that they talk to the community for feed-back.

It was speculated such events might be scheduled for the March long weekend and/or Easter, but as the CFA and SLSC are busy during both these periods, they may not be able to accommodate anything else. Outside agencies might need to arrange an alternative temporary venue such as a marquee/tent, perhaps on the flat grassy area behind the playground.

Carolyn has received from Father Wally a donation of \$436.16 raised by a small Western Australian parish. She suggested the money could be used for a community group-outing to *The Dressmaker* costume exhibition at Barwon Park in Winchelsea. The meeting thought this was a good idea and Carolyn will follow it up.

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**Other matters**

Deb mentioned that COS had \$50,000 for event financing from which the SLSC received \$5000 which will be used for a Trivia Night and the planned Wye Revival family event.

Concern was expressed that the One-Stop-Shop had not yet materialized, nor the temporary building for counselling purposes promised by DHHS. Early intervention to preserve the health of our community is vital; case workers need to be assigned to each individual to give advice and information on available services.

Communication is another issue. Could there be a web-site designed solely for property owners?

Sandy will discuss the timing of the proposed information portal, and health issues, with Craig.

The Community Meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> January, although successfully attracting a sizeable attendance, attracted some criticism of the short notice. COS stated at that meeting they would schedule future community meetings in advance.

Next meetings of the WSRG will be held on –

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2.00 pm at the Fire Station  
and  
Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2.00 pm at the Fire Station**

This meeting was then closed. The report of David Stirling's address is attached.

Yvonne Sheppard  
Secretary

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**Report and advice from David Stirling , Marysville**

All the community has been affected by the bushfire and, in this regard, we are all speaking a common language.

Seven years have passed since the Marysville fire but the community is still feeling its effects.

Dave commended our Group for its help with the recovery phase.

For recovery to be successful, there must be as many people as possible round the table – ‘bad’ ideas must be aired, as well as the ‘good’ ones.

He touched on some of the suggestions he heard from our Group.

- The underground powerlines – this is an opportunity to make Wye River better than before.
- Playground – he commended the new Marysville playground. Incorporating local research and design, it cost \$250,000 but “is so good it has become a tourist attraction”. We should check it out.
- Extending walking tracks and trails is an excellent way to attract more tourism, and should be pushed. In some cases in Marysville such access took 3 - 4 years to complete.

Dave advised the Group not to rush things, as we may find funds could possibly run out before being better used in 2 -3 years’ time.

Fatigue within the group will be a problem. ‘Wellness’-type funding is also important.

As well as a Community Recovery Group, an Economic Group comprising representatives from shire, business, Government as well as locals, had the most traction. In his experience, with locals around the table, there is no time-line for funds. Community needs should be prioritized so funds can be siphoned off into these areas.

Community meetings are the key, and all agencies should be there. The meetings can also serve as advanced information about projects for, say, the involvement of local tradies.

The meetings should be all-inclusive, even if there are some ugly moments. It is best to involve everybody to get the best outcome. Small sub-groups can be formed to decide priorities. People will differ as to what is important to them – this should all be put in writing.

Self-interested groups don’t last. Consultation with all will best serve the community.

Consideration should be given to have co-ordinators or a consultancy group running the meetings, but definitely at least an independent chairperson.

We must band together, united groups will attract the money.

The Group thanked David for making the long journey to visit our townships so we could benefit from his invaluable advice and experience.

*Following the meeting, David toured the fire area and spent the rest of the day meeting with representatives of the main townships groups.*