

**WYE SEP RECOVERY GROUP
MEETING
9 April 2016, 11.00 am at the Station**

PRESENT: Andrew Hack, Christine Shaw, Richard van der Merwe, Ian Angus, Sandy Forbes, Debra Hocking, Peter Latham (*Chairperson*), Yvonne Sheppard (*Secretary*).

APOLOGIES: Mel Kohout, Carolyn Tatchell, Matthew Jackman, Terry Bracks, Roy Moriarty

The future role of the Wye Sep Recovery Group

Peter tabled the letter dated 30th March which he had received from Craig Lapsley and passed on to all Group members. This letter indicated that our group had served its purpose and, with the formation of the Community Resilience Committee (CRC) our role is no longer necessary.

There was some discussion about this conclusion –

- There is confusion in the greater community regarding different groups and committees with similar roles. One voice is better. Individuals might continue working on particular interest projects and report back to CRC on progress.
- The role of the CRC is to deal with the big picture, and may not have the resources to deal with smaller issues.
- The CRC role will change, but our original list of projects is still critical and needs to continue, ie. the water tank, the Lions Club of Lorne (LCL) cabins, etc.
- It is doubtful the WSRG can keep going. It no longer has a mandate and any continuing role would need to be clarified and defined.
- We appear to have been ignored by Colac Otway Shire (COS) for some time now.
- Alternate suggestions enabling our group to continue its work were –
 - Recognition by the CRC as a sub-committee, but prioritization may be problematic.
 - Continue as a sub-committee of the Progress Association (PA).

It was decided that a submission be made to the Progress Association including –

1. The history of our interim Group and its present circumstances.
2. With the establishment of the CRC, the goalposts are moving.
3. A proposal that the PA establish a sub-committee under their auspices to enable a vehicle to see through ongoing projects.

The following actions were approved –

1. *That the Wye Sep Recovery Group be discontinued at the conclusion of this meeting.*
Moved: Peter Latham. Seconded: Andrew Hack. Unanimous.
2. *That a proposal be made to the Wye River Separation Creek Progress Association that the functions and membership of the Wye Sep Recovery Group be adopted as a sub-committee of that Association with appropriate delegation of authority to enable the functions and activities of the Wye Sep Recovery Group to continue.*
Moved: Debra Hocking. Seconded: Christine Shaw. Unanimous

The proposal should include the purposes of the sub-committee and its accountability to the PA for its decisions. Sandy will write the proposal. Peter will formally advise the CRC that the WSRG is

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discontinuing in its present form, and is applying to continue some of its current role under the auspices of the PA.

The sub-committee should report on its activities to the CRC to avoid duplication.

Members present at the meeting gave a general indication of their intention whether or not to continue with the sub-committee, and absent members will be asked to similarly indicate.

Suggestions are also called for from all members for a new title for the sub-committee.

Community Resilience Committee

At the Community meeting held in Melbourne on 7th April, Craig indicated he was there to deliver the Government's adamant message regarding, for instance, Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) issues. It was suggested Diane Sisley present the community's position. We are advised that the CRC does not see itself as a lobby group, but as a voice for the community.

Some of our projects should be handed over to the CRC as they are more likely to succeed with COS and Government representatives present when they are discussed.

Future Responsibilities

Progress Association sub-committee

Lions Club of Lorne – accommodation cabins
Nissan vehicles
Community water tank
Wellbeing

Community Resilience Committee

Survey
CFA & SLSC submissions
All infrastructure projects

Spirit Foundation & Red Cross monies distribution

The Red Cross wants their monies distributed to all those who lost houses. Peter has composed a declaration and covering letter for COS to send to all those affected so they can register their eligibility – no proof is required. The *Spirit Foundation* wants to augment this fund.

Some discussion ensued that donors may not be happy that money will go to support second properties. The money will be dissipated rather than being used for projects benefitting the general community.

Spirit has indicated that they would like the donated money to be distributed by the end of May. Peter will follow up with Clive Goldsworthy.

Wellbeing

Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) are funding Lorne Community Hospital (LCH) to co-ordinate a wellbeing programme. The Department has also funded COS for two community workers. DHHS (Pam Williams – Regional Director Barwon Area) is taking the programme seriously and LCH are committed to it. In discussion with Sandy, Carolyn is willing/able to assist Heather Ramp (Het) and her team at Lorne Hospital. Het is continuing to organise the appointments for the

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medical check-ups and Jay Robinson is offering to organise small groups to discuss the broader wellbeing topics. Het is asking Carolyn to assist Jay to identify the groups this should be directed to, and to encourage the relevant individuals to attend the sessions. Carolyn has generously offered to continue to do this after her relocation to Anglesea. It makes sense for her to complete the work started especially as she has such an extensive knowledge of who to include.

Memorial Art Installation

It was agreed this is worthwhile and should be a stand-alone project. We do not know if *Spirit Foundation* will still provide its support, or grants will need to be applied for.

A small committee will need to be recruited from the community to pursue what could be a long-term project, maybe including photo exhibitions and a curator.

Sandy will include the project in the letter to the Progress Association, and also seek advice from Terry.

Donations of salvaged items have been, and can continue to be, received and stored in the shipping container. It was suggested an entry in the next Community Newsletter and on Wye Sep Connect might be useful.

Finally

Peter formally thanked Sandy for her contribution to the Group, and *nous group* for their help with the survey. Terry's letter of thanks on behalf of the group to *nous group* is attached.

Peter is stepping down from his role as Chairman and was thanked for his hard work and invaluable commitment.

Meeting closed.

Yvonne Sheppard
Secretary

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Letter of thanks to *nous group*

16 March 2016

Mr Tim Orton
Managing Director
Nous Group
Level 10, 485 Bourke St
Melbourne Vic 3000

Dear Tim

On behalf of the Wye River and Separation Creek Interim Recovery Group I would like to thank you for the support given to us from the Nous Group's Community Contribution Fund.

As you know the communities of Wye River and Separation Creek have been hit very hard by the impact of the bushfires, many homes have been destroyed along with valued public infrastructure.

There are very strong connections within these communities and a determination to recover what has been lost and to improve where possible on the amenities in the area.

As you know Sandy Forbes has matched the Nous contribution by volunteering her time. Sandy has been a vital facilitator for our group, communicating with stakeholders and carrying out all important day-to-day tasks. This work was particularly significant in the immediate aftermath of the bushfire when there was an obvious and urgent need for a community representative group to give advice and support to government agencies and philanthropic organisations.

A part of Sandy's work has also been to develop a community survey as a guide to the priorities that the community place on projects and also to give an opportunity for participants to suggest a wide range of projects that may be taken up by funding authorities in the future.

The report developed from the survey will be an invaluable resource not only for the Wye River and Separation Creek communities but also for the recently established Community Resilience Committee and the various government and non government agencies involved in the recovery process.

A small non funded group like ours would not have been able to afford such professional and timely work.

We greatly appreciate the support from the Nous Group and for stepping in at what has been a difficult time for the community.

Regards

Terry Bracks
Representative
Wye River and Separation Creek Interim Recovery Group