



Minutes of the TRAA General Meeting

7:00 pm, 18 October 2016, Nelson Bay Bowling Club

Present	25 as per the attendance sheets
Apologies	Kevin Shadler, Bill Steadman, Mark Penn, Annie Howarth

Guest Speaker: Ron Land the Vice President of the Port Stephens Koalas and Wildlife Society Ltd.

At the recent AGM the name was changed from the Koala Preservation Society this was necessary to get tax deduction status as a registered charity. The Society has 120 members with 20 licenced Koala carers some for Tomaree, Tiligerry and Clarence Town. The service is very disparate working from 5 -6 private homes. The care regimes are very intensive and the Society could not continue in its previous form. Total care days in 2015 was 1,558

Koalas who come into care are seriously injured or with disease. Between 2013 and 2015 there were 249 deaths registered. The population is in free fall. The numbers are now 200 or below which is not a figure for a viable population which can sustain itself in the wild. The necessary first step is to husband resources and instigate a breeding program. The numbers need to breed up to 220. It is not possible to introduce Koalas from other population pockets because of possible introduction of diseases.

The establishment of a Koala hospital would require as a minimum 2.8 million dollars. What it would fund is a world class facility for care, research and education. There is an absolutely urgent need to do something or the Koalas will not survive in the wild in Port Stephens.

Port Stephen's Council is very supportive of the venture. They have taken the lead with the NSW Government and advocating on behalf of the Hospital. Newcastle, Wollongong and NSW Universities would use the facilities for the placement of trainees in vet science.



The positive about a hospital would include allowing people to volunteer a few hours each day. In Port Macquarie Hospital 170 volunteers are used each week. There is a canvassing for many roles and people show a great joy in helping.

The scoping of the 2.5 acre site within TreEscape Resort would involve an education centre, a place for exhibit of healthy animals not able to be returned to the wild and a special quiet site inaccessible for the public for the sick animals to be cared for, and for breeding and quarantine.

People will be charged an entry fee. Council will provide admin support. Schools would be encouraged to visit. Oakdale and Port Macquarie attract 78,000 visitors a year.

The basic unchallenged problem for koalas is habitat loss and road injuries.

The meeting congratulated Ron on the initiative and wished it success.

Finance: Treasurer Denis Pittorino reported a \$2,084.11 the current balance. Full *Statement in Attachment 1*

Defamation Claim: Bruce Mc Kenzie Vs the TRAA and Dick Appleby - Report by Dick Appleby:

Members will be aware that the Association and our Media Officer Dick Appleby were named as defendants in a defamation claim brought by Cr Bruce Mackenzie. The claim related to an article published on the Association website in July 2015. The claim has been resolved and final paperwork in being prepared. The Association has agreed to publish an apology to Cr Mackenzie on its website and not republish the original article which has been removed.

The Association remains committed to representing the interests of its members and will continue to make appropriate submissions and comments in relation to issues which impact our local community. That will continue to extend to review and discussion of the decisions taken by our local council.

We were very fortunate that a prominent Sydney legal firm agreed to represent TRAA in this matter Pro Bono. As an incorporated association, TRRA Inc. would have its liability limited to its assets however this would not have even covered the legal costs of getting the matter to Court.

We are investigating Indemnity Insurance cover, it could be expensive for a community group such as TRRA, but it appears in the current environment that it may be essential. We may contact other community groups to see if some sort of deal could be negotiated with a broker to defray the cost.

Degraded Industrial site Soldiers Point: In response to TRAA letter the Council is attempting to contact the owners to request them to remediate the site.

Erosion Fly Point: The council advises of a site restoration program to begin at the end of October.



Council Mergers 750 of 800 responses to the Delegates Inquiry opposed the merger with Newcastle Council. The Council is in favour of merging with Dungog Council. The State Government has not announced its decision on outstanding merger proposals and meantime, our present Council remains in place but is prevented from taking major policy decisions or making financial commitments.

Church St Building Development The proposed plan is 32.9 meters where the high limit is 15 metres. The plan does not meet the set back or density requirements. TRAA to write to Council pointing out the good qualities of the design but believes it is premature before the current review of Nelson Bay Strategy has been completed and expressing concern about the precedent with so many other possible developments in the Bay. Moved Dick Appleby seconded Robin Williams

Meeting Closed: at 9.35 pm

Attachment 1

TOMAREE RATEPAYERS & RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION. Inc.		
Financial Statement of Income and Expenditure		
September/October 2016		
	Sept/Oct 16	Year To Date
Opening Balance	\$ 2,392.11	\$ 1,995.61
Income		
Subs and Donations	\$ 150.00	\$ 535.00
Cold Coin Donations	\$ 33.50	\$ 45.00
Total Income	\$ 183.50	\$ 580.00
Advertising	\$ -	\$ -
Postage	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00
PO Box	\$ -	\$ -
Printing	\$ -	\$ -
Photocopying	\$ -	\$ -
Lodgement Fees	\$ -	\$ -
Internet Services	\$ 318.00	\$ 318.00

Stationery	\$ 4.50	\$ 4.50
GIPA Expenditure	\$ -	\$ -
Assoc. Membership	\$ 157.00	\$ 157.00
Professional Services	\$ -	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 491.50	\$ 491.50
Surplus/Deficit	-\$ 308.00	\$ 88.50
Closing Balance	\$ 2,084.11	\$ 2,084.11
Denis Pittorino – TRRA Treasurer		