

**SHIRE OF KOJONUP**

**Kojonup**



**Kojonup Bush Fire Advisory Committee**

**MINUTES**

***13 FEBRUARY 2019***

**MINUTES FOR THE KOJONUP BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**HELD 13 FEBRUARY 2019**

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## MINUTES

### 1. **DECLARATION OF OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF GUESTS**

The Presiding Member shall declare the meeting open at 7:30pm and alert the meeting of the procedures for emergencies including evacuation, designated exits and muster points.

### 2. **ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES**

#### **MEMBERS**

Mr Ned Radford	Councillor (Presiding Member)
Mr John Benn	Councillor
Mr Tony Fisher	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO) (Zulu 1)
Mr Roger House	Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer (Zulu 2)
Mr Ross Fryer-Smith	Senior Bush Fire Control Officer (Zulu 3)
Mr Myles Reid	Senior Bush Fire Control Officer (Zulu 4)
Mr Geoff Gale	President of the Kojonup Bush Fire Association
Mr Rick Mitchell-Collins	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Robert Cowie	Administration/Regulatory Officer
Mrs Denise Berryman	Secretary of the Kojonup Bush Fire Association
Mr Paul Retallack	Senior Ranger/Building Maintenance Coordinator
Mr Daniel Campbell	Kojonup Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service
Mr Matthew Crabb	Kojonup Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service
Mr Bob Francis	Kojonup Bushfire Brigade Member

#### **GUESTS**

Mr Murray Gibbs	Bushfire Member and former Zulu (7.30pm – 7.45pm)
Mr Murray Hatton	District Officer DFES
Mr Wayne Green	Superintendent DFES (from 9.10pm)

#### **APOLOGIES**

Nil

3. **SUMMARY OF RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE**

Nil

4. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Nil

5. **APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Nil

6. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

COMMITTEE DECISION

01/19 Moved Geoff Gale, seconded Dan Campbell that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Bushfire Advisory Committee held 5 September 2018 be confirmed as a true record.

CARRIED 14/0

7. **ANNOUNCEMENTS** by the Presiding Member without discussion

Nil

8. **PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS & PRESENTATIONS**

Nil

9. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

10. **STATUS REPORTS**

**10.1 *Fisher Rd Fire***

*Mr Murray Gibbs to speak to Committee regarding recent Fisher Rd Fire.*

- Mr Gibbs spoke to the Committee about the impact and possible financial implications that the recent fire will have on him and his family. He thanked the Bush Fire Brigades and the Shire for the efforts that were carried out in the 10 days from when the fire first started to when the last day of mopping up was completed.

Mr Gibbs commented on:

- The cost to repair fences is substantial which will be the subject of an insurance claim against the property owner,

- Questioned the number of fires occurring at Heggarton’s property requiring volunteer brigade assistance over the years and particularly in recent years,
- What considerations Permit Officers applied when approached for permits by the property owner,
- The inspections undertaken by Permit Officers to ensure compliance with the issued permit(s) and Fire Break Order,
- Is Council going to apply a penalty, impose specific restrictions, or deny permits on the property owner?

The Committee thanked Mr Gibbs, who left the meeting at 7:45pm.

## **11. ITEMS (General Business)**

### **11.1 *Current Fire Permit Restrictions – Are they adequate?***

*Do we need to make any adjustments for example, is the current wording regarding fire units at harvest time prescriptive enough?*

Cr Radford complimented the Zulu’s, volunteer brigades and general community on the tremendous work they do attending fires and mopping up not only in our shire but also neighbouring shires.

Discussion followed on current fire permit restrictions and it was agreed that the current permits are rigid enough. The Fire Control Officer’s (FCO) that are writing the permits have the ability to place extra conditions on the permits at the time of issuing.

The Zulu’s all agreed that any changes to the current conditions should be discussed at the BFB Annual Meeting in April and any changes that the BFB members agree to, should be presented at the next BFAC meeting.

Cr Ned Radford questioned that there were numbers of Permits being granted after the allocated time (6:45am) on the day of the burn. CBFCO advised that his was not the case. Sometimes due to availability at the time of the radio sched’s the FCO’s may read out their permits after the roll call, but all permits are being granted prior to the allocated time stated above.

### **11.2 *Fire Period Signs***

*The townscape committee at their last meeting (November 2018) decided that at this stage they will not recommend to Council that new signs be erected. This can be looked at further in the future as Council will be asked to incorporate digital media display as part of a community notice board similar to the Shire of Plantagenet board at Mt Barker.*

Committee agreed that some signage is required. The CEO elaborated on the Townscape Committee’s decision to move towards two digital signs that would be erected prior to the next bushfire season. These signs will be able to be utilised to advertise other local content throughout the year.

It was suggested that the Firebreak Notice be handed out with the Rotary Calendar and also the dates be printed on the calendar. Rob Cowie to investigate and liaise with Rotary to ensure effectiveness of initiative.

**11.3 *Bushfire Maps***

*The current Fire Maps were last updated in 2008. These need to be updated, but this is quite a large project and will take some time to complete. This will require a collective approach with assistance from Brigades, FCO's and Zulus to ensure all farm names are correct.*

Committee agreed that the Fire Map needed to be updated and that the Brigades could be helpful in making certain that all properties are captured and correct.

Roger House suggested that the new maps be available in a digital format. Rob Cowie to investigate and look to include in future budget discussions.

**11.4 *General Property Compliance – Paul Retallack***

*Senior Ranger to report on general fire compliance.*

Paul Retallack discussed the high level of compliance across the Shire this season. He is currently dealing with seven town site properties and seven rural properties. Paul can only officiate the rules as per the Firebreak Notice.

**11.5 *Water Standpipe Action Plan***

*Does the committee see any issues with the Council decision to centralise the water supply to Stock Road.*

CEO spoke to the item and presented the Committee with the background from WaterCorp, as to why the decision was reached by Council. After discussion, Rick agreed that multiple sets of keys would be available for the Kojonup and Muradup Fire Trucks. The Committee suggested that the Shire look at upgrading the tanks at the Kojonup/Katanning Rd (Town) and the Muradup Standpipes. Rob Cowie and Paul Retallack to investigate.

**11.6 *Signs at Fires***

*The shire will purchase signs to be located on the Kojonup and Muradup 2.4 Trucks.*

The Committee agreed that this is a good idea. Dan Campbell commented that the VFRS trucks had some signs that would suit our purposes. He demonstrated the sign to the group after the meeting and it was agreed that the Shire should purchase a number of these signs with the ESL funding.

**11.7 *Communications Reliability / Bushfire Tower Update***

The committee was updated as to where the progress of the new tower was at.

CEO reported that communications were still being investigated and the best option for the Shire will be presented to Council.

Mr Murray Hatton presented the Committee with some further information pertaining to the High Band coverage at the Fisher Rd Fire. It showed that when utilising the 234 and 229 channels, there was expected to be some poor coverage in the Ryansbrook area. The Cranbrook West (162) channel showed much better coverage for this area. Tony and Rob to investigate if using this channel is a viable option. Murray also suggested that it might not be the best financial option to pursue the mid band tower as this technology is outdated and the serviceable life of mid band radios is reaching the end.

Mr Hatton suggested that the Shire speak to the appropriate staff at DFES to discuss technical advice for this issue. Rob Cowie to follow up.

Dan Campbell suggested that if funds were an issue, why not open the funding up to donations from the public who rely on the tower. All suggestions will be considered at the appropriate time.

Post Script: Superintendent advised that DFES possess a mobile repeater at Albany that can be activated and erected on the fire ground to cover communication black spots or improve connectivity if a repeater station is not functioning as it should.

#### **12. MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN**

Nil

#### **13. LATE ITEMS**

*This section of the meeting is for discussing late items which did not make it into the Agenda and of which a decision is required by the BFAC as to the course of action to be taken.*

Murray and Wayne welcomed the opportunity to meet with the committee and looked forward to attending future meetings. Clarified process for seeking approval for Dozer hire as without DFES approval, Council would bear the cost. Members noted correct procedure which effectively required a phone call to the Duty Officer at the time of the fire, an estimate of the time the Dozer is required and what the dozer would specifically be doing, for example pushing down trees or making fire breaks or both.

Outlined training opportunities including radio communications and DFES happy to deliver same as it is imperative volunteers are not placed in danger or compromised because they are unfamiliar with role required when on the fire ground.

#### **14. NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 10 April 2019 commencing at 7.30pm in the Council Reception Room.

#### **15. CLOSURE**

There being no further business to discuss the Presiding Member thanked the members for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 9:35pm.

**16. ATTACHMENTS (SEPARATE)**