

# 18<sup>th</sup> Dec 2012

## Diary Notes of Observed Public Meeting Highlights

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### Councillors Attendance

1. GL - Geoff Lake	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6. RD - Robert Davies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. KN - Katrina Nolan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7. MD - Micaela Drieberg	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. BL - Brian Little	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	8. PK - Paul Klisaris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. JY - Jieh-Yung Lo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	9. SD - Stephen Dimopoulos	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. TM - Tom Morrissey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10. BP - Bill Pontikis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		11. TZ - Theo Zographos	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### 3.1 LASF Defined Benefits Shortfall

- Only one payment solution was proposed for the decision to approve or reject.
- The orientation of debates focused on deciding to approve or reject the proposed payment solution. The debates expressed varying for/against viewpoints:
  - GL announced his position as Vision Super's Trustee, complying to conflict of interest declaration, and perceived that there is no conflict of interest in participating in decision making of this matter.
  - RD proposed to pay early; acknowledging consequent impact on budget plans. He also said he did not agree with the \$500K estimate (mix of savings) mentioned in the background document and what viable (cost-saving) estimate to use can be determined/addressed in another meeting.
  - GL said that the how to fund aspects will determined by the budget planning process, which starts next year. He also mentioned that Council had already provided in current SRP budget forecasts \$800K provision to cover for future liability calls; there is about \$3m provision accessible for the next 4 years and \$3.5 out of cash reserves and about \$500K shortfall needs to come from some operating cost cutting/saving. Council has the medium capacity to fork out about \$10m from extra cash reserves and the remainder to be funded by modest borrowings about \$3-5m, over 4 years (including provision for cash reserves). He believes Council has the capacity to devise a mix of cost funding from cash reserves, cost savings and borrowings to pay the current super liability.
  - TZ supported paying upfront to reflect his oversee of sound economic management.
  - MD emphasized that "It's a big decision that council is not making lightly ..... But the debt is not unique to Monash and we are positioned better than many other councils to pay it."
- Motion carried.

### 4.2 Tender for Wellington Reserve Pavilion Amenities Upgrade

The decision is to approve the recommended tender quote, which has over exceeded the original quote of \$215K (the proposed quote was \$278K ex GST or \$305K incl GST).

Discussions focused on emphasizing the importance of upgrade while acknowledging challenging budget times.

Another Pavilion upgrade in the Ashwood reserve was discussed, acknowledging the need to consult the community about the Pavilion issues and solution development and present for future decision-making.

Motion carried.

### **5.1 95 Warrigal Road Hughesdale - A Four Storey Residential Building (18 Apartments) and Alteration of Access To A Road Zone, Category 1**

Council proposes granting of permit/s.

Viewpoint discussions focused on opinions of the appropriateness of height/number of storeys. TZ expressed concerns the development is just outside the Activity Centre boundary and there is no legacy precedents of medium density buildings (beside one nearby development's permit was approved but no work started yet).

GL expressed appropriateness for such development with a main road (Warrigal Rd) frontage, there are no objections and the site is not appropriate for retail uses.

Motion carried.

### **5.2 19 Morton Street Clayton - 2-Storey Student Accommodation Building Comprising 26 Self-Contained Units With Basement Car Parking**

Council proposes granting of permit/s.

No discussions and approved - Motion carried.

### **5.3 303-305 Huntingdale Road Chadstone – Construction of A Three Level Building Comprising 26 Dwellings Plus Basement Car Parking**

Council proposes granting of permit/s.

TM supports the development and quoted a paper article saying 1 out of 98 people is homeless and city changes are appropriate to contribute solving the homeless. JY debated/opposed saying that housing affordability is key to solving the homeless problem and he opposed the dev because it is not close enough to an Activity Centre and the car park entrance comes off a residential street and is near a recreational public oval, which will cause local traffic issues.

PK supported on the basis that the dev is near an Activity Centre and train station and give more housing options to the community.

BL alerted others that the development is massive and that land sizes are changing from being 85 sq metres to about 63 sq metres now. He raised the question "Is there a minimum size we should tolerate (for higher density developments)" No one answered.

GL said high development solves the housing problem because there are more houses on land. He supports the dev because despite being outside the Activity Centre, it is near a train station, on a busy road, etc. He reckoned 3 storeys is OK, but not 4. He also stressed that the solution to Melbourne housing problem is not building single story houses but high density houses.

Motion carried.

### **5.4 611-633 Blackburn Road Notting Hill - Construction of A Separate Building As An Addition To The Existing Research and Development Facility Together With Associated Landscaping**

Council proposes granting of permit/s.

No discussions and approved

Motion carried.

### **5.5 8 Railway Parade North Glen Waverley - Development of A Three Storey Apartment Building Comprising 16 Dwellings and Basement Level Car Parking Including A Reduction In Visitor Car Parking Requirement**

Council proposes refusal.

GL considers the development inappropriate because the street is quiet suburban street despite being just outside an Activity Centre. Neighbourhood landscape is clearly made up of single storey houses and such higher density development is over the top. As a rule of thumb, he supports development of similar density and scale as in current landscape. RD agreed.

Motion carried.

### **5.6 36 Halliday Street Mount Waverley - Construction of Two Dwellings (One Double Storey Dwelling and One Single Storey Dwelling) With Associated Car Parking and Landscaping - Extension of Time**

No discussions and approved.

Motion carried.

### **5.7 Town Planning; 5.8 Austin st Hughesdale – Road Reconstruction; 5.9 Brandon Park Reserve Retarding Basi Civil Works – Stage 3B**

Council proposes granting of permit/s.

No discussions and approved,

Motions carried.

## **6 CEO and 7 Committee Reports**

<No notes taken>

Motions carried.

## **8.1 Discretionary Fund Applications**

RD expressed concern about the process of selecting applicants to receive small grants. Being a new Councillor he needs to understand the purpose of the grants and whether process improvements is necessary

GL supported the grants and was disappointed that that they are considered haphazard and their process requires improvements; there is no need for formal process to verify the applications and spends as the fund was setup to support small miscellaneous grant requests from the community. The budget allocated is \$23K a year and the fund supports Councillor in supporting community groups. Transparency is already in place as full decision making of who get the grants occurs upfront in public meetings.

MD also expressed support for the grant as it enables local community groups to have activities.

Motion carried.

## **8.2 Constitutional Recognition of Local Government: Submission to Joint Select Committee**

JY explained the basis for supporting (financial) recognition of LG in the Constitution. He also urged residents to contact federal MPs to convey their support.

TZ asked if the Council submission allows for individual Councillor's views. He supports symbolic recognition, but not Canberra funding directly to Local Government.

RD disagreed and said LG needs to be self funding and is capable of running operations. He expressed concern of power grab by Federal Government to get more control outside federal boundaries.

GL expressed that this matter is not the most important issue but still support. He also mentioned Federal Govt had funded LG since the Whitlam years; today funds from the Federal Government is greater than what is given at State level; both (mainstream) political parties support to continue current practice. He also expressed concern that RD's disagreement exposes LG to (future) Constitutional changes that can drastically impact LG and ratepayers. He also elaborated that if Monash loses 20% of its budget funding from governments, it cannot function and that Federal Govt allows LG to spend discretionary on given funds.

JY further emphasized that the constitution recognition of LG is not about power grab. Instead it is about consolidated partnership with federal & state governments and making federation works properly. It is also about building community infrastructure. Hence, LG needs to be protected through the Constitution.

Motion carried.

### **8.3 Smoke Free Environments**

PK introduced the topic by saying the State Gov is asking support for smoking ban and Monash has written to the State Premier in Feb and to date there is no response. He also said he consulted some traders in Oakleigh and one other area (however not in Clayton) and said 1 out of 3/5 supported the notion. He emphasized for this to work in Monash, support needs to be driven by the State Govt, as such there needs to have a collective decision to make the notion work.

TZ suggest including all Councillors' names in the reminding letter to the State Premier to ask for State support/lead in the matter.

RD viewed that this is a social engineering matter and this discussion is a second session of discussion and is deemed as a waste of time to continue arguing / debating. He also is concerned that the survey PK that referred to only includes traders, and did not include non-traders in the community consultation/engagement. He also alerted others than traders have invested money to create their own smoking zone dining areas to cater for their smoking clientele (in addition to catering non smoking areas for their other clients). He said that Council shouldn't impose on traders who already invested in creating smoking areas in their businesses. Council can avail smoke free guidelines for traders to discretionary follow or otherwise, and not used for social engineering purposes.

BL referred a success case in Tasmania, which proved that was no detrimental impact on traders' businesses.

BP also highlighted that for traders, shopping strips are the heart of a city. Council should allow traders to decide what they can and can't do in their shops.

KN disagreed with BP, saying that Council cannot ignore health benefits for the community.

GL add to the disagreement with BP and said that BP's comments are nonsense raised. He said he has been criticized by his colleagues for being too conservative & blocking change. He expressed further views about the importance of one's health and the community effects of smoking. He also reminded others that while they are entitled to their opinions, Council decision making is based on debates and decisions should not be made based on judging viewpoints, ie not about what Councillors or even community thinks. He expressed annoyance about the no response from the Premier (Council sent a letter in Feb this year).

MD also expressed disappointment with others bringing in their (subjective) opinions or viewpoints that lack support for this matter.

PK explicitly expressed that he respected the different viewpoints and the need to make an informed decision about the matter. Then, he expressed that given RD's professional background, he is too one dimensional and too fiscal responsibility focused and is ignoring social responsibility in his viewpoints; and also disagreed with BP's views on the matter. He gave best advice to others by asking to stop the "bull-shit" discussions.

Motion carried.

#### **8.4 Appointment of Council Representative To Community Liaison Committee: Ashwood-Chadstone Gateway Project**

JY introduced the topic.

TZ agrees with JY to support.

Others expressed general discussions leading to overall support.

Motion carried.

#### **8.5 Christmas Decorations**

TZ introduced the motion, rationalizing the case for recognising Christmas and having no need to be politically correct to communicate public messages with explicit "Christmas" references.

JY expressed disappointment that this matter was brought to Council meeting as it is not relevant in a cultural Monash.

Others also supported JY's view and critiqued the writing quality of the motion description as poor. There were follow-up petty debates.

Motion lost.

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Diary Notes Author: Dr Chan Cheah

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