

## Meeting Minutes

### ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2018

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**Councillors Present:** Mayor Cheyne Wilkie  
Cr Laurence Weazel  
Cr Archie Williams

**Officers Present:** Chief Executive Officer - Emil Moul  
Minute Secretary - Candace Veavea

**Meeting Open:** The Mayor declared the meeting open at 11:07am

**Welcome to Country:** The Mayor performed the welcome to country ritual

**Apologies:** The Mayor recorded apologies tendered for:  
  
Deputy Mayor Stewart Smith  
Cr Phillip Alberts

**Register of Interests:** Councillors did not declare any conflicts or updates of interests

**Agenda:** 5.1 General – Youth Crime Strategies:

The Mayor Cheyne Wilkie invited a group of Elders and Community Members into Chambers to voice concerns around the rate of break-in's and attacks on Community Members by a group of youths within Woorabinda.

**Elders Group arrived at 11:25am**

Michelle Leisha, Uncle Wally Saunders Aunty Di Aunty Celeste, Aunty Norma, Aunty Felicity, Aunty Pam, Judith Major, Lynette Skeen, Thyra Mi Mi and Sharon Kinchela (not an Elder)

Michelle Leisha advised Council the Elders of Woorabinda wanted to address Council to identify solutions to address the attacks on elders. The Group wanted to provide information to Council and understand what action is being taken to address the incidents of crime in Woorabinda. The Group recognised that Council, Police, Housing and Community need to work together for solutions.

**Mayor Cheyne Wilkie advised**

- He and the CEO have organised a meeting with Juvenile Justice
- CEO has arranged a meeting with Deb Frecklington Leader of the Opposition to discuss youth justice and identify ways to return people to their home community.
- Past Community patrol did not work due to lack of power to move people on or ask for names and that Patrol Officers were stoned and attacked in the line of duty.
- Mayor advised the parents and children involved must be included in the solution

**Elders** provided the following advice to Councillors;

- Relocating people is difficult under current local laws.
- The Elders believe it is difficult to get a resolution through the Justice system.



**Mayor Wilkie** acknowledged the feeling of fear in the community especially for the Elders.

- Elders requested Council to approach Politicians to establish a halfway house or boot camp to rehabilitate offenders.
- The group wanted to know how Elders can talk to Magistrate and change how justice is administered to Children in the Community.
- Elders want to create a pathway to address re-offending through Cultural Lore and Customs.
- Children are lacking positive male role models and strong family structures to support young people.

**CEO outlined the following**

- Council has written letters to Police and Magistrates about offences bailing offenders out of Woorabinda.
- Mayor Wilkie and CEO Emil Moul will attend the QLD Police Summit in Brisbane.
- Mayor Wilkie and CEO Emil Moul have secured a meeting with Opposition Leader to discuss crime in the Community.
- Council has arranged for a group of volunteers to patrol the community from sundown to sunrise. Council will supply torches and walkie talkies, Children will be returned to their homes and if necessary report families to Child Safety.
- All community members are encouraged to participate in Neighbourhood Watch night patrols.
- CEO acknowledged that Police are picking children up and turning them over to the Justice system but children are released due to their age and detention centres being full.

**Elders Group advised;**

- Cultural Lore needs to be included in the submission to Opposition leader from Council and that the Stolen Generation continued through removing children from families and country.
- Customary law needs to be brought back by Traditional Owners.
- Entire Community needs a traditional smoking ceremony to address bad spirits & Traditional Owners need to be empowered to take action and be a part of finding a solution.

**Cr Williams** reminded Elders that they have the power in the Community and to represent the Community on a political level.

Cr Weazel acknowledged that parents and family units need to be supported to address youth issues and be accountable for the actions of their families.

- Elders raised the issue of Crisis Houses Cr Weazel advised that Magistrates have the ability to recognise Crisis houses.
- Elders raised the possibility to write up contracts between Community and families – Cr Weazel advised these could also be recognised by a Magistrate and that all action taken to address the crime issue needs to be within the Law and done the right way.

Cr Weazel also stated that people in the Community know who is selling alcohol, drugs and organising gambling but are not reporting names to the Police so that action can be taken.

Cr Weazel also advised the Police need the right information at the right time to act so that people supplying the community can be dealt with.

Cr Weazel advised the group to encourage community members to contact Police Link (This can be done unanimously; you don't have to give your name). This helps Police to establish a process and the intelligence to act at the right time.

- Elders need to be empowered to walk beside Council and suggested setting up an Elders Council. The previous Advisory Board worked well and should be re-established.

CR Williams left the room at 12:05pm returned at 12:06pm.



- Michelle Leisha advised of new program approach through Child Safety called 'Our Way'. Child Safety is dissolving recognised entities and returning to community ways for local solutions. "Our Way" let's Elders work beside Child Safety workers through this program Michelle is arranging a Camp to talk about Culture. First Camp will be held in early December and there will be monthly Camps during 2019 to reunite and connect children in care with family & community. Woorabinda is designing the template which will be used throughout QLD.
- Traditional Owners haven't been given the opportunity to talk and the kids know the system.
- Elders need to have two male and two female Elders in Court to talk to the magistrate parents and children together to clean off graffiti and undertake other work on community as part of Community Service Orders.
- More Jobs need to be created for Community members to give people purpose and self-respect.
- House parties are a breach of tenancy agreements – parties need to be reported so that action can be taken through Department of Housing and Council will investigate their powers regarding reclaiming houses in breach of tenancy agreements.

Cr Weazel advised Elders Group to create an agenda to identify what the group wants to address and prioritise what they want to address and the action they propose to take.

- Elders requested Council to dedicate a building for Traditional Owners, where people can go to talk about problems, concerns & complaints. The Traditional Owner group can then refer these matters to the appropriate people.

Cr Weazel voiced his support for a building to be dedicated to the Traditional Owner Groups but; stipulated that the group would need a formal constitution to outline the group's intent and to ensure the group is accountable for what they are setting out to do.

**Sharon Kinchela (Project consultant Yoonthalla Services Woorabinda) summarised the actions agreed upon as follows;**

- There is nothing stopping Traditional Owners bringing about Cultural practices on community.
- Elders are welcome to attend court and make submissions to the Magistrate - Sharon, Auntie Di and Lynette Skeen committed to attending Court on Wednesday 07/11/2018.
- An Advisory group can be established to walk beside Council.
- An action plan needs to be developed to identify what to do next.
- Elders have the power and authority to lobby Governments on what the Community needs.
- Encourage people to participate in the Neighbourhood Watch.
- Community Campaign to outline acceptable behaviours and enforce what behaviour will be accepted.
- If you see crime happening ring up Police Link when you see crime or you know who is supplying drugs, alcohol and arranging gambling in the Community.
- Local solutions include a volunteer group of Elders to ask people to step up and lead the way.
- CEO and Mayor Wilkie to include cultural perspective in the proposal to the Opposition Leader.
- Mayor Wilkie asked that people present at today's meeting come back to Council in 2 weeks' time to see what's working and what else needs to be done.
- Volunteer Neighbourhood Watch group will start tonight at sundown meet at the HACC Building.
- Church group will take responsibility for Children in their program tonight and return the children home from Church Group.
- Elders present gave their support to Council to start volunteer group to patrol the streets from sundown to sunup.
- Mayor asked Elders to think about the basic cards to hear their advice on the initiative
- Week of 19/11/18 CEO & Mayor travel to Brisbane for Crime meeting and meeting with Opposition Leader Elders may wish to send a delegation to this meeting as well.

The Women's group left the meeting at 12:50pm



## **Community Men**

A Group of Men asked for permission to address the Council on the matter of crime in Woorabinda, Mayor Wilkie gave his permission and the group entered the meeting at 12:55pm.

Those present included: Sean Williams; Anthony Munns, Kevin Saltner, Wogwan Savage, Adrian Williams Snr, Stewart Major, Terrance Adams, Edger Freeman, Nicki Cameron, Leslie Purcell and Carrol Major, William Munns & Buddy Williams & Michael Thiaday.

- The men advised they had commenced walking the Community over the last 3 weeks.
- Services funded for Woorabinda need to better engage with the Community, they need to step outside 9-5 work and provide support and services at night and on the weekends.
- We need local Solutions that are supported and "Our Ways" need to be recognised in the Community.
- Community Services are funded thousands of dollars to deliver services to our community and they need to be held accountable.
- Yong leaders are dealing with issues from past generations and young voices need to be heard as part of the solution.
- Elders need to be protected and supported to take their rightful place in the Community.
- We need long term solutions and we need to protect young people from having to take action into their own hands.
- Community Services need to connect properly and communicate in the right way with our Community.
- Aunty Val was broken into last night and she needs to feel safe and protected.
- Community led discussions and solutions need to be documented and we need a Community group to hold Services accountable and refer matters for help.

**Sharon Kinchela (Project consultant Yoonthalla Services Woorabinda) provided an overview of the solutions identified with Elders in the previous meeting;**

- Community need to take responsibility.
- Working with Traditional Owners and bring back Customary Lore.
- Smoking ceremony for the whole community with Traditional Owners coming together as a Nation.
- Respect has been lost for our Elders and our Customs.
- Elders looking after children, Parents need to take responsibility for their children and need to be supported to take responsibility.
- An Elders Advisory group will be established and supported by Michelle Leisha to sit in the Courts to address the system.
- Elders will develop a plan of action with solutions to meet with politicians and lobby for support.
- Neighbourhood watch will commence at sundown today and all community is encouraged to participate and contribute. Torches and Walkie Talkies will be provided by Council.
- Elders will outline what behaviour we accept in Community and we need to stand up and enforce what we will accept.
- Council cannot evict people from the Community under the current Local Government Act.
- People at this meeting agree that 8:30pm is an acceptable time to expect children to be at home unless participating in organised activities like Church or Redcross.
- Neighbourhood watch members can talk to parents and complete referral forms to go through to parents.
- We need to ask young people to support the Elders.
- Sharon advised Yoonthalla has arranged weekly Women's group every Monday at Black Boy.

**Sean Williams** advised that we need to have compassion and that there need to be activities after hours so the Neighbourhood watch can refer kids to those activities.

- Young voices need to be heard and included in the solutions because this is a long term commitment.



- There needs to be flexibility around services delivered and when they are delivering, Services need to be accountable.
- Can introduction of Basic Cards make parents more accountable?
- Services need to work better with the Community and mobilise more support outside working hours.
- The Advisory Board should include all different age groups to find solutions.
- Look at organisations that are funded to support Woorabinda and make them more accountable to the Community, not who funds them.
- Traditional Owner building should be empowered to implement Lore and have elders at court.
- The Group acknowledged the pain and suffering stemming from 10 deaths of people connected to Woorabinda in the last twelve months.
- Need to work with the hospital to ensure services meet our needs. There is no Men's group here, the only groups are focused on drugs, alcohol, gambling, football what service is there to develop future leaders in the Community.
- Laws are not working for the Community.
- Need to support families and each other to make a difference.

#### **Cr Weazel offered information and advice to the Group**

- Change will be resisted and those effecting change must be in the right frame of mind to address issues.
- Those willing to step forward must be prepared to pay consequences for actions like our Ancestors have in the past.
- We are embarking on a Long term commitment and have to work together.
- People present must first deal with their own families and lead by example and live like leaders, don't let your behaviour be thrown back in your face.
- When addressing an issue make sure you have the facts and figures right – deal only with facts and don't let emotion get in the way of making change.
- Show respect for the positions that people hold in the Community and work together, don't blame and point fingers.

#### **Sean Williams stated the following**

- Good kids want action now so they aren't blamed for the actions of those few.
- Need to come up with local solutions; our community can feel when services are not working.
- The Community is underserved at night and on weekends.

#### **Sharon Kinchela provided the following information**

- Woorabinda Black Card training will be held Friday 30/11/18 at Black Boy and run over the weekend. This is Cultural Awareness and competency training for services working in Woorabinda.
- Elders and community members at this meeting will set a template identifying gaps and solutions.
- Community need to monitor the behavioural shift in service delivery.
- Black Card program will be tabled at next Council Meeting for approval.
- Organisations will pay to attend. Money raised will go pay Elders for their Cultural contribution.
- Black Card training will be held monthly to meet the demand.

#### **The Group made the following statements;**

- People need support to deal with addiction and self-medicating to deal with past trauma and undiagnosed mental health issues.
- Need to come together as one to support our community.
- Lobby to have the Black Card recognised by funding bodies – no black card no licence to operate in Woorabinda.
- We need to address the ignorance of service providers and Black Card training needs to be done more than once.
- Incorporate Kinship rights and recognise that authority.
- Need a community group that can enforce cultural practices.
- Traditional Owners need to come together as a Nation, all 52 groups need to be recognised as part of the Nation of Woorabinda.



- Need tombstone opening with smoking ceremony.
- Children don't know where their family are buried and lose connection.

**Question was raised regarding Yoonthalla Services and Sharon provided the following information regarding her Consultancy role**

- Pastoral Company pay contractor to support new organisation because of lack of Government Money to set up Governance & Compliance systems.
- Organisation established in 2017 with community members and Board and struggled to stabilise and gain traction.
- Project Consultant engaged by Pastoral Company until 21/12/18.
- Yoonthalla AGM is coming up all community members are invited to become members and nominate for the board to have a say in how the group move forward.
- Coordinator has been appointed for Yoonthalla (Les Purcell) this position is funded by Council.
- Under the existing leadership Yoonthalla has engaged an accountant, established a building and increased membership over 100%.

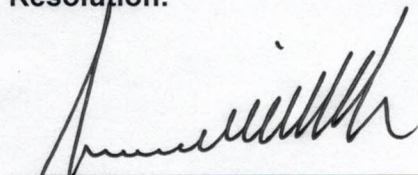
Mayor Wilkie acknowledge frustration in the Community, the importance of capturing the right information and that Council, Community, Police and Services need to start to work together sooner rather than later.

The group acknowledge Council for supporting a formal walk around to keep the community safe. All willing volunteers are asked to meet at the HACC building at sundown to start the first patrol.

**It was agreed that due to the disruption of the agenda the balance of the agenda items would be addressed at the next Ordinary Council Meeting to be held on Wednesday 28 November 2018.**

Mayor Wilkie closed the meeting at 1:56pm.

**Confirmed:  
Resolution:**



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Cr Cheyne Wilkie (Mayor)

28 / 11 / 2018