



“From the GM’s Desk” 22nd June 2017



The news that Bourke Shire has received funding of \$8,564,000 funding from the New South Wales Government’s \$110 million Regional Water and Waste Water Backlog Program to construct a Water Treatment Plant and associate sludge lagoons was very well received indeed. Council has previously been allocated \$175,000.00 from the Aboriginal Communities Water and Sewer Program and when the two amounts are combined it will mean a total of \$8,739,000 which is the total anticipated cost of the project. The Regional Water and Waste Water Backlog Program enables local water utilities to construct modern water and sewage infrastructure and associated works to provide safe, secure and reliable water and sewer services for their towns.

Council is very excited to have received the funding that will provide a “state of the art” facility capable of meeting Council’s and the communities current requirements for filtered water as well the ability to cater for any anticipated growth in the future. The current water treatment plant is somewhat aged and the availability of funding very timely.

Council will over the next few weeks finalise the funding agreements and look to call tenders for the works soon after those agreements are finalised. Plans have already been prepared for much of the work as part of the strategic planning process.

Representatives of Bulloo Shire Council have indicated that they will be making the trip to Bourke to review the way in which Bourke Shire implements its tourism function and strategies. Bourke Shire Council enjoys a good reputation for its tourism initiatives and the way it has over the years looked to market the area as a destination rather than a stopover. The ability to encourage tourists to stay in your town is very much dependant on the ability of the town to provide them with a range of activities and attractions that provided the incentive for that additional night’s stay. Both Bulloo Shire and Bourke Shires have previously indicated that the state border should not be an impediment in building a strong relationship between the two organisations. While the date of the visit is still to be confirmed I have had a number of conversations with my counterpart at Bulloo, Edwina Marks, and we are both are keen to make the visit a very positive experience for all parties. It is hoped to be able to have interaction with some of the tourist operators in town to look for the best ways of fostering the relationship between the two Councils and the communities generally.

Bourke Shire recently coordinated the lodgement of a joint application on behalf of Walgett, Brewarrina and Bourke Shire for funding under Round Two of the Innovation Fund which has been provided by the Office of Local Government. As with the first round there is \$2 million dollars available on a competitive basis. Bourke Shire Council also lodged an application in its own right. In the First Round Bourke Shire was the lead Council in a successful joint application with Walgett and Brewarrina in relation to Waste Management in Aboriginal Communities. Bourke Shire also lodged a standalone application for an innovative approach to computer software technology that was also successful. We hope to be able to replicate that success again in the second round.

Council last week received advice from the Member for Parkes Mark Coulton MP that it has been successful in obtaining a grant for \$3,336.00 under the heritage focussed grant programme “Saluting Their Service” for restoration works on the Cenotaph in Central Park. It will be utilised for the replacement works required on the lead infill on some of the names on the cenotaph which are showing signs of deterioration. I believe it is incumbent on all members of the community to ensure the preservation of these important monuments and the sacrifices they represent. President of the local Sub Branch of the RSL Victor Bartley has expressed his delight in the availability of the funding which will see a continuation of the improvements in the cenotaph precinct which have been undertaken over the past few years.

In good news for the Bourke Community, FACS have agreed to assist in the provision of funding for the “summer Programme” in Bourke aimed at providing additional range of activities for children over the school holidays. Council will again auspice the funds which will assist in defraying some of the additional expenses of services providers as we seek to have the availability of youth workers and services for extended hours during that period and also offer an additional and varied range of activities catering for the various age groups.

Over the long weekend I had a meeting with representatives of the Youth Engagement Programme (YEP) based in Melbourne who are once again keen to come to Bourke with their team of volunteers to assist the locally based youth worker resources over the January period. YEPS have provided a team of four (4) youth workers plus their coordinator for a four week programme with each team of four staying for a two (2) week block. The “summer program” has been an initiative of Bourke Shire Council, however, has enjoyed the support and cooperation of the majority of locally based agencies and has been very successful.

The Bourke Shire Council Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committee underwent a refresher course late last week under the guidance of Dubbo based WHS trainer Bryson Rees. Whilst training is not mandatory for committee members these days it was deemed important that all committee members are provided with an update on legislative changes and any impact these may have on their role so that are equipped to perform the role in an effective manner.

At the meeting held on Tuesday Bourke Shire Council adopted the Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027, the Delivery Programme 2017-2021, the Operational Plan 2017-2018 and the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Council also resolved to make the rates for 2017-2018.

All these adopted documents will be available on Councils Website www.bourke.nsw.gov.au in accordance with the legislative requirements.

A reminder of the two (2) workshops being held to assist Council in the development of a Master Plan for Sport and Recreational facilities in Bourke. The first of the two (2) workshops will be held at the Bourke Shire Council Chambers on Wednesday, 5th July 2017 the second will be held on Wednesday, 19th July 2017. The workshops will commence at 5.30pm and finish by 7.30pm. It is

important that we get a good representation of all sections of the sporting community to be involved in this planning process as it will provided the required blue print for the future.

Bourke Shire Council will have a briefing session with the General Manager of the Northern Sector Western District Health Services, Joy Adams and Alison Loudon also of Western District Health Services today (Thursday 22nd June) in relation to a number of issues raised in relation to the provision of midwifery and maternity services to the women of Bourke. **This briefing session will be at 2.00pm and is for Councillors and the Council Management team only.**

This briefing session will be followed by a meeting with other interested members of the public in relation to maternity services in Bourke since the closure of the Birthing Unit in 2015. One of the areas to be discussed is the “Model of Care “that has been developed although not widely disseminated.

The meeting is scheduled for 3.00pm and will be held in the Council Chambers at 29 Mitchell Street Bourke and anyone who is interested in midwifery and maternity services in the District is invited to attend.

A reminder, that Council has reverted back to the 4th Monday for the conduct of its normal monthly meetings. Meetings start at 9.00am with a Public Forum at 10.00am

Mayor Councillor Barry Hollman is generally available between **2.00 pm to 3.00pm** of a Monday at the Council Chambers to discuss any issues residents may wish to raise with him. An exception is the 4th Monday of each Month which is Council Meeting Day. He is also available by appointment by contacting Kai Howard- Oakman at Council’s Offices.

Quote of the Week!

Thousands of candles can be lighted from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared.

Buddha

Ross Earl
General Manager