



SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

9 NOVEMBER 2022



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MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL HELD 9 NOVEMBER 2022 IN ST KILDA TOWN HALL

The meeting opened at 5:30pm.

IN ATTENDANCE

Cr Baxter, Cr Bond, Cr Clark, Cr Copsey, Cr Crawford, Cr Cunsolo, Cr Martin, Cr Pearl, Cr Sirakoff.

Chris Carroll, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Kylie Bennetts, General Manager City Growth and Development, Allison Kenwood, General Manager Community Wellbeing and Inclusion, Brian Tee, Acting General Manager Customer Operations and Infrastructure, Joanne McNeill, Acting General Manager, Governance and Organisational Capability, Xavier Smerdon, Head of Governance, Emily Williams, Council Business Advisor, Samuel Yeo, Council Business Officer.

The City of Port Phillip respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the people of the Kulin Nations. We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

1. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING AND WELCOME

Chris Carroll, Interim Chief Executive Officer, formally opened the meeting.

2. REQUESTS TO ATTEND BY ELECTRONIC MEANS

Nil

3. APOLOGIES

Nil

4. PRESENTATIONS

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SERVICE – COUNCILLOR BOND

Councillor Pearl spoke in congratulations of Councillor Bond who celebrated his tenth anniversary as a Councillor at the City of Port Phillip:

Councillor Bond has given a decade's service to the community, as the only Councillor to win three successive four-year terms. During his initial election campaign, Councillor Bond was not a favourite to win, but he showed tenacity, sincerity, and work effort during that campaign, which he has shown to his constituents ever since. Councillor Bond has been especially vocal around supporting live music traders, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. He was one of the key Councillors to push for parklets, outdoor dining, and arts activation to retain the city's reputation as a lively, cultural destination. Councillor Bond is a proud advocate for the social and economic benefits of the St Kilda Festival, and the custodian of the St Kilda Festival t-shirt collection. He has also been a passionate supporter

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of key projects at Council, none more so than the Palais Theatre deal, which was a wonderful outcome for St Kilda's cultural DNA. He was also a keen advocate for CCTV along Fitzroy Street and the recently-purchased mobile CCTV unit. Additionally he has become an advocate for local sporting clubs and upkeep of sporting facilities, which has been admirable. His track record of commitments and service is to be commended.

Councillor Pearl thanked Councillor Bond for his commitment and on behalf of the City the Council presented a gift.

In response Councillor Bond thanked Councillor Pearl and his supporters, in particular Virginia Brown, Tony Brown, and Kaye O'Connor, who were instrumental in helping him get elected to Council in 2012. Councillor Bond reflected that some residents felt that his greatest achievement was, unexpectedly, loading bays in buildings on St Kilda Road and the surrounding areas such as Queens Road.

OUTGOING MAYOR ADDRESS

Councillor Marcus Pearl gave an address as outgoing Mayor:

"Thankyou Chair and Thank you to all for being here this evening. Councillors, when you elected me twelve months ago, I promised you that I would give this job my all and I told you that I would act with integrity, be impartial and I would focus on bringing us together to get better outcomes for our community. I put my hand on my heart when I tell you that I've done my absolute best to make that happen. It was a very large surprise that you made me Mayor and it caused a large life change at the time and that change was all for the better, I sincerely thank you for giving me what was a wonderful opportunities, probably the best of my life to be able to serve our community. We have a great responsibility here as Councillors, but to be able to lead this City as your Mayor is an honour and a privilege well above what I understood at the time to what I understand now. Being Mayor can be a lonely place to be sometimes but I have felt hugely supported by this group of Councillors. We can always do better, and will continue to improve over the next two years.

Our community demands a lot of us and that is a good thing, and I've done my best to put my best foot forward during the past 12 months. One key area in which I hope I have represented the community is In the federal and state election advocacy. I have reconnected and leveraged from the good work Councillor Crawford did during her year as Mayor, reconnecting our community during lockdown and in the post-covid environment. Councillor Crawford did a wonderful job communicating to a community who needed this during covid, so it was easier for me. I have loved doing the Mobile Mayor sessions, and committed to do fifty of them during this term – even if I had to do several of them in the past week to make it happen. I've been as transparent as I possibly could to Councillors in the hope to empower Councillors to make better decisions and understand what is happening in the background.

The reality is these are not my achievements, they are our achievements as a Council. We have made some gains in childcare which are a wonderful outcome for our city, although it was a complicated journey. We have made a renewed focus on our community groups. Every Mayor brings a different angle to the role. The angle I have tried to bring is to make a bridge between our small businesses and the role of Council also.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors. Councillor Clark, you've always been a great support to me and kept me honest. I hope that we've made sure you've been listened to and heard here on Council.

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My success was in large part thanks to Deputy Mayor Baxter, I relied very heavily particularly in the first three to six months to make sure we were understood as united team both in and out of Council, including walking around the building together to meet staff, some of whom had never met the Mayor and Deputy in many years of service. Thankyou Deputy Mayor Baxter for all of your support.

Councillor Crawford, you left me a wonderful legacy, especially in regard to political advocacy and relationships. You positioned a lot of ground work to get me going, and you did a great job as Mayor in the previous term.

Councillor Martin, you are the glue that holds the Gateway ward together and are the best promoter of Gateway Ward.

Councillor Cunsolo, you have been a good Gateway Ward confidante, but I've also enjoyed working together and growing together in these roles with you.

Councillor Copsey you have been a great advocate, especially in relation to political advocacy items, and you have delivered some wonderful outcomes in your role as a candidate for the State Election.

Councillor Sirakoff you are a very detailed, focused person. I've enjoyed sitting on the audit and risk committee, keep up the good work, and I hope you continue with that.

Councillor Bond, as I said before, thankyou for your support. I would not be here if it were not for you.

Most importantly it is difficult to juggle a Mayoral calendar with family commitments and a full time job. I would like to thank my wife and children, whom I love dearly, and I look forward to spending more time with them. I would also like to thank my parents, parent in laws and my sister-in-law. It would be remiss not to acknowledge former Mayor Dick Gross.

Councillors, it has been an honour to serve with you over the past two years. I have done my best and enjoyed every single second of it, and I look forward to the remaining two years of this term. Thankyou from the bottom of my heart for the opportunity."

The CEO thanked Councillor Pearl for his service and presented him with a gift.

OUTGOING DEPUTY MAYOR ADDRESS

Councillor Tim Baxter gave an address as outgoing Deputy Mayor:

"Thankyou CEO it's been a big year for a number of reasons, the first year out of lockdowns and our ability to come back to doing alot things as we would 'normally' do.

One thing I'd like to talk about is something I've learned over that year and I think its something that all Councillors could always benefit from a refresher on and that's the power of our community and the shared power that is held outside of this chamber and this building.

In December last year we passed a motion to investigate the sale of three childcare centres. This was at a time where we had just had a change in Mayor, we were all trying to work well together, to try not to rock the boat or cause a lot of arguments so we chose to all go in the same direction with investigating to sell these centres, which was a terrible mistake. What we discovered was that we had made these decisions in the chamber, we had conversations behind closed doors and we'd all made a commitment to make ourselves feel better about it, but we hadn't really checked in with how the commnuty felt about that until we opened up for consultation where they let us know.

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It was a really good reminder that although there is a lot of power that is exercised within this chamber or behind closed doors, that power is nothing compared to that collective power this is shared and exercised by our community, That is really what we should be keeping front and centre all the time and in fact working to continue to empower our community no matter what is going on behind closed doors with Councillors. That was a learning experience, an awful one for those who had to campaign to keep their childcare centres but in the end we got to a good place Councillor came around, but that is a lesson that will stay with me and I hope one that will stay with other Councillors also.

It's been a stressful year, hopefully the next one is a lot smoother and that we can hopefully do more to get some good outcomes for our community, thank you."

The CEO thanked Councillor Baxter for his service and presented him with a gift.

5. TERM OF MAYORAL OFFICE

Moved Crs Pearl/Martin

That Council:

- 1 Determines the Mayor to be elected to serve a one year term.

A vote was taken and the MOTION was CARRIED.

6. ELECTION OF MAYOR

The Chief Executive Officer called for nominations for the position of Mayor.

Councillor Clark nominated Councillor Cunsolo for the position of Mayor, Councillor Crawford seconded the nomination.

Councillor Baxter nominated himself for the position of Mayor, Councillor Copsy seconded the nomination.

The Chief Executive Officer put the nominations to the vote. Councillor Cunsolo received an absolute majority of votes, therefore the Chief Executive Officer declared Councillor Cunsolo elected as Mayor of the City of Port Phillip.

Councillor Cunsolo assumed the Chair and addressed the meeting as Mayor:

"Thankyou and it's exciting to be here. It is an honour and a privilege, a big responsibility to be the sixteenth mayor at the City of Port Phillip. Of course history goes a lot farther with the Cities of Port Melbourne, South Melbourne and St Kilda and notably far far longer to the traditional owners of the land, the people of the Kulin Nations to whom I pay my respect and acknowledge their continuing relationship to this land.

I have a duty of care to all we represent in our municipality, my fellow Councillors and our fantastic Council staff, I do not take this lightly. I'd like to thank our outgoing Mayor, Councillor Marcus Pearl for doing an excellent job in the role as well as Councillor Louise Crawford in year one. Both have set a high standard and are tough acts to follow. Nearly everyone in the room and those listening online knows who Bernadene Voss is, Bernadene was a big inspiration to me seeing myself on Council and in the Mayor's role. She made it look easy, which I know now, it isn't. Thank you to Bernadene and to all past Councillors for your great work as stewards of this municipality. I'd also like to thank my fellow Councillors for electing me as Mayor, as you know it was contested. I really appreciate you giving me the opportunity. I will enhance authentic working relationships with all of you to achieve our

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Council Plan. Thank you to our outgoing Deputy Mayor Councillor Tim Baxter and we'll see who becomes Deputy Mayor shortly.

I come to this role with a strong focus on the community, the whole City of Port Phillip including my fantastic support base in the Gateway Ward. Perhaps I'm not giving a clear outline of what I will be doing this year, but there are two specific projects that I would like to see get some traction this year. Firstly being the future of the Station Pier Freight Yard and secondly the green line down here in Balaclava, among many others within our Council Plan.

This afternoon I took a minute to let this all sink in and I thought how did I get here, and the answer, one day at a time, which is the approach I will take from today, day one as Mayor. Physically though, I was born overseas but I got here as soon as I could which was straight after university in 2008. For fourteen years I have immersed myself in Australian life and I love it. I run my own architecture practice for over a decade, I will pause this for a year, but bring my love of good practical design to the mayoral role.

We face a lot of unknowns this year: who will be the next CEO, (thank you for what you are doing as interim CEO). Who will be elected to parliament in the various electorates; good luck ladies (Councillors Crawford and Copsey). And will we be getting new Councillos or returning Councillors coming back to join us? We have plenty of challenges ahead of us, working as a team we can assure our Community that we have their best interests at heart in our decision making. I've come to realise that one of my favourite parts of being a Councillor is getting to speak to the many different people that make up this City. Everyday there are little bits and stories that come about, its very rewarding and it's a long lasting aspect and influence in my life. One of my strengths is that I look for perspective of what a person is saying, even if I don't agree with their opinions or stances, I try to listen before I formulate my views. Now, I will absolutely mispronounce things, Australian English is my after all my second language, I know I need to work more on speaking slower and being on time, none of which come naturally to me. However sometimes we don't know our own strengths and potential until we give it a go.

I've left my very important thankyou's and acknowledgements of my family until the end as speaking about them makes me flood with love. I'd like to give a virtual hug to gramps the great, he put the idea of Mayor in my head before I'd even considered it, I wish he could have made it tonight. Hello to Nona at the back there, you've been a great example of immigration in this Country, arriving from Sicily in 1963 and raising your family that has become mine too. I'm very grateful for my Mother and Father-in-law, who are always sharing the time to help us. I couldn't do this without my family's support, making me feel like family from day one. Thank you to my Brother-in-law and Niece, thank you for coming tonight to share this special day. Council is a real commitment, it has been very trying on my family. Wednesdays are a mix of emotions, with me always out, as well as many other evenings and weekends too. Thank you to my awesome husband, I'm so grateful to you, and my darling children who have been so excited for the prospect of today happening. I don't think they are 100% across what it means, but in a way I don't know either so we will figure it out together. I think all the events you get to come to as kids of Councillors will come back as memories when you're much older and you'll realise, that was kind of cool, for now, it might not always be cool. I frequently have flashbacks of what my Mum did in her community work, and I didn't realise it was as impactful to me at the time, but here I am and I know that her care and dedication to our small town in Southern California really shaped me to be the person I am here on the other side of the world.

Thank you Mum and Dad and my siblings, I know you are listening online and I wish you could have been here." To wrap up i'm overwhelmed with excitement and what this year holds. Thank you everyone.'



7. ESTABLISHMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR OFFICE

Moved Crs Martin/Pearl

That Council:

- 1 Establish an office of the Deputy Mayor to align with the length of the Mayoral term.

A vote was taken and the MOTION was CARRIED unanimously.

8. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

The Mayor called for nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Pearl nominated Councillor Bond for the position of Mayor. Councillor Sirakoff seconded the nomination.

As there were no other nominations, the Mayor declared Councillor Bond elected Deputy Mayor and invited Cr Bond to address the Gallery.

Councillor Bond addressed the meeting as Deputy Mayor:

'First of all I'd like to thank Councillor Pearl as outgoing Mayor you've done a fantastic job over the last 12 months with your energy, enthusiasm and passion for the role, it's been great for someone like myself to watch.

Concillor Cunsolo will be the sixth Mayor of the City of Port Phillip under which I have served. Congratulations Heather on your election to the role, you will be a fantastic mayor just like each of the previous five who have been fantastic and great representative of the City. I have no doubts you will live up to the standards that those previous five have set, including the great Dick Gross who is here tonight, Thank you for coming along Dick its great to have you here.

Thankyou everybody for putting the faith in me in this role, the role of the Deputy Mayor is to support the Mayor and offer advice where the Mayor requests it. I look forward to doing that over the next twelve months, any questions you have or any advice you need, any ideas or thoughts you would like to run past me, I will be more than happy to assist.

Good luck and I have no doubt you will be fantastic at this role.'

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 6.09pm.

Confirmed: 16 November 2022

Chairperson _____