



SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

MINUTES

8 NOVEMBER 2017



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL HELD 8 NOVEMBER 2017 IN ST KILDA TOWN HALL

The meeting opened at 6:31 pm.

PRESENT

Cr Baxter, Cr Bond, Cr Brand, Cr Copsey, Cr Crawford, Cr Gross, Cr Pearl, Cr Simic, Cr Voss.

IN ATTENDANCE

Peter Smith, Chief Executive Officer; Claire Ferres Miles, General Manager Place Strategy and Development; Carol Jeffs, General Manager Community Development; Fiona Blair, General Manager Infrastructure and Amenity; Chris Carroll, General Manager Organisational Performance,

The City of Port Phillip respectfully acknowledges the Yalukut Weelam Clan of the Boon Wurrung. We pay our respect to their Elders, both past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

I WELCOME

The Chief Executive Officer, Peter Smith, welcomed Councillors and members of the Gallery to the meeting.

2 APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON

The Chief Executive Officer facilitated the appointment of a Temporary Chairperson, in accordance with Part 4, Section 28 of the Council Meetings Procedure Law No 2/2009.

Cr Bond nominated Cr Pearl for the position of Temporary Chairperson for this meeting.

Cr Gross seconded the nomination.

There being no further nominations, Cr Pearl was elected.



3. APOLOGIES

Nil.

4. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

5. OUTGOING MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR ADDRESS

The Mayor, Cr Voss, addressed the Gallery:

“Firstly I wanted to say thank you to you all for being a wonderful group of Councillors. It has been a great honour to be your Mayor and I have been humbled by your support over the past 12 months.

I actually can't believe that 12 months ago we had just taken our oath and affirmations and sworn in as Councillors to serve and lead this city in the best interests of the people of the City of Port Phillip

It's been an incredible year, one where we saw the previous CEO leave, have a stabilising interim CEO in Carol Jeffs and we finally settled on a new CEO Peter Smith to take on the job to lead this organisation along with our very capable and inspiring Executive to deliver our Council Plan for our community. This is such a terrific and evolving organisation that it is amazing to have such talented and caring people around us, working for our community. Thank you for the work you do.

Finalising our first Council Plan was a huge effort, but one we got through together, and the result is one we can be immensely proud of. It's ambitious and transformative. It sits perfectly with this group, which has very high expectations of our organisation to deliver what is needed.

We have ticked off some huge projects and celebrated a little along the way. Big ones being the opening of the Palais Theatre, winning the Pride Centre, and successfully uniting this Council with a clear focus on the Elster Creek flooding issue in Elwood. We are carefully considering St Kilda Rd precinct 2 applications and doing as much as practicable to give our community an insight to our decision making.

Looking forward to Fishermans Bend: we have Ferrars Street, the new Park, community centre and School opening next year and it is our first catalytic project in Fishermans Bend to set the tone, along with many more big issues and decisions to work through municipal wide. We have a strong financial position and with our focus on good governance and transparency we are set for great things.

Next:

I am especially grateful to the Deputy Mayor Cr Katherine Copsey, who took on the role and worked hard for the benefit of us all. Thank you.

I also wanted to pay tribute to the silent heroes that are everyday beavering away in the office to help make our lives easier and to carry out our civic duties. In particular the Mayor and Councillors' Office with Marisa, Mary, Laura and now the awesome Sam. Thank you for your constant attention and help. What would we ever do without you?

While I am here I wanted to do a special shout out to Sandra. She has been my trusted rock for media, always

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putting all scenarios in front of me so I am able to make the best decisions I can. Consistent and always delivers. Thank you.

Lastly, I wanted to thank my family. Warren, Lachlan, Caitlin & Eliza. I am incredibly lucky to have you all. You have all been amazing in your support of me and my work for our community. I know it is not easy on you all with me being out all day and every night of the week. I could not ask for a better family.”

The Deputy Mayor, Cr Copsey, addressed the Gallery:

“I acknowledge that we meet on the lands of the Yalukut Weelam Clan of the Boon Wurrung, and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

We were elected as broadly speaking a new Council – 7 of us new this time, and 5 of us brand new to the role. Bernadene has provided continuity from the old Council to the new, guided us through the big jobs of the first year both expected and extraordinary, and given us a solid framework for working together. I want to acknowledge your contribution and service.

I also want to thank you all for supporting me as Deputy Mayor, and particularly Bernadene for involving me in the leadership team this year. As well as representing Council at events and as spokesperson I have enjoyed the opportunities the role of Deputy Mayor provides to work closely with the fantastic community organisations we are lucky to have in Port Phillip.

What a year we have had! I was looking back on my notes from my incoming speech. They referred to the recent election of Donald Trump – has it really only been a year? And spoke about how in the context of faltering faith in our political institutions, Council has a role to play in making local democracy engaging, making participation mean something for our local community.

We have had some fantastic conversations with our community through the course of setting the Council Plan. I am looking forward to discussing some of the biggest challenges we identified together and how to solve them over the summer months like fighting congestion and making our streets for people, and finding our way to realising the community’s vision for Fishermans Bend.

I love this job. There is actually nothing I would rather be doing, and I think about what a rare privilege it is to be in this chamber most weeks when we come together and I truly do value working with this group, and value your individual contributions to what we achieve as a whole.

Most of all I value the incredible community organisations we partner with to deliver outcomes like sheltering people, helping our community learn new skills, giving companionship to those who are lonely and help to those who need a hand. Keeping our parks, streets and beaches clean. Organising community events or making art for us all to enjoy. This city would not be itself without you, and learning more about and supporting the great organisations working tirelessly is without a doubt my favourite part of the job, and one I’ve had great opportunities to enjoy as Deputy Mayor. So I want to put the spotlight on our amazing community groups today - thank you.

The core focus of our Council Plan – finding solutions to the big environmental and social challenges that threaten the beautiful place we are stewards of, preserving the egalitarian and compassionate spirit of our community and the special essence of the neighbourhoods we call home – these are the reasons I sought election in the first place. So it has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve as your Deputy Mayor this term and I thank the community for their faith in putting me here and my fellow Councillors for giving me this great opportunity.”



6. TERM OF MAYORAL OFFICE

No motion, therefore the default term is one year.

7. ELECTION OF MAYOR

The Temporary Chairperson, Cr Pearl, called for nominations for the position of Mayor in accordance with Section 71 of the Local Government Act 1989 and Part 4, Section 28 of the Council Meeting Procedure Local Law No 2/2009.

Cr Crawford nominated Cr Voss for the position of Mayor.

Cr Bond seconded the nomination.

Cr Brand nominated Cr Copsey for the position of Mayor.

Cr Simic seconded the nomination.

The Temporary Chairperson, Cr Pearl, called for a vote by show of hands.

A vote was taken for those in favour of Cr Voss. Cr Voss received five votes.

A vote was taken for those in favour of Cr Copsey. Cr Copsey received four votes.

Cr Voss was declared elected.

The Temporary Chairperson, Cr Pearl, vacated the chair at 6.48pm.

The newly elected Mayor of the Port Phillip Council assumed the Chair at 6.48pm.

8. MAYORAL ADDRESS

The newly elected Mayor, Cr Bernadene Voss, addressed the Gallery:

“Thank you - it is a great honour that you, Councillors, have placed your trust and support in me for 2018. It is a privilege to serve our community. I look forward to bringing a bold, creative, inclusive and respectful approach to our discussions and problem solving.

I know that in a contested vote, there are those that are not successful. I also know that there are a couple of Councillors that decided not to compete for the benefit of us all. That has not gone unnoticed and I thank you for your braveness.

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There are a few things I have learnt during this process and I will endeavor to do all I can to ensure that we pool our strengths and harness our collective talents and use them where necessary.

Again I wanted to acknowledge My dear family, Warren, Lachlan, Caitlin & Eliza - I wanted to thank you for sharing this special moment with me. It means a lot to me that you are here.

Councillors, It is a big year ahead of us and we have some huge advocacy items on our agenda. We have a State Government election and possibly a Federal one also. Complex issues and important decisions need to be made and through it all I know we will continue put into practice our goal to adhere to our shared values, including integrity, respect, and unity. Our diversity is our strength. Our City is also changing. We have numerous dilemmas we are facing. We will continue to rise to our challenges, to ensure our community is better off and well informed.

This Council is committed to achieving good governance and we will continue to actively engage our community on key issues of significance and make decisions in an open and transparent manner. We have already accomplished many things together and we have some terrific projects to deliver on for our community like JL Murphy Reserve, and the Peanut Farm pavilion along with the South Melbourne Life Saving Club, the St Kilda Marina tender, safer & cleaner streets, heritage reviews, the housing review, upgrade our paths for easier ways to get around etc.

We have the task of ensuring that our St Kilda Rd community comes through the Metro tunnels works well, with Albert Reserve place making, Park Street reinvigorated, new tram link and Moray Street bike lane.

We have significant State Government advocacy initiatives - such as Fishermans Bend tram line to be delivered within the mixed use area within 4 years, Sustainability Hub implemented for waste, organics processing, Marlborough Street Affordable Housing, Eco Centre 50:50 funding for a new building as well as the Albert Park lake water harvesting scheme.

There are 4 transformations in our Council Plan water, waste, Fishermans Bend and Transport. Any one of them will define our term, but 4 is huge, but if you know this group it is typical of our high expectations.

Port Phillip is a great municipality, the best in my opinion. We are blessed with a beautiful bay, huge parks, terrific retail strips, vibrant businesses and active and amazing residents. We also know that there are many things that can be done to make our municipality even better. I am looking forward to the challenge and to working with my fellow Councillors and Council staff to deliver the best outcomes for our community.

While we have a huge agenda, I am also going to continue my focus on eliminating unwanted tagging from our community, noisy motorbikes and the plague of litter and dumped rubbish. They all need to be a thing of the past.

In a few minutes time the Deputy Mayor will be elected and I will work particularly closely with the person elected to this office. It will be an honour to serve as your Mayor this year.

Thank you."



9. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

The Mayor, Cr Voss, called for nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor in accordance with Part 4, Section 28 of the Council Meeting Procedure Local Law No 2/2009.

Cr Brand nominated Cr Baxter for the position of Deputy Mayor.

Cr Simic seconded the nomination.

Cr Crawford nominated Cr Gross for the position of Deputy Mayor.

Cr Bond seconded the nomination.

The Chairperson, Cr Voss, called for a vote by show of hands.

A vote was taken for those in favour of Cr Baxter. Cr Baxter received four votes.

A vote was taken for those in favour of Cr Gross. Cr Gross received five votes.

Cr Gross was declared elected.

10. DEPUTY MAYORAL ADDRESS

The newly elected Deputy Mayor, Cr Dick Gross addressed the Gallery:

“Thanks very much Madam Mayor. I wish I could say that I didn’t really appreciate this appointment, I wish I could say it’s like “water off a duck’s back”, but it’s something that is incredibly important to me and something that I deeply appreciate.

Local Government is a creator of statue, and in the Local Government Act the office of Deputy Mayor is not even mentioned (so to some extent it is a bit of a confection) and yet it is very important to me that I actually got this. Sometimes the Deputy Mayor is used as a “fop-off” for those who couldn’t be trusted with Mayoralship - I hope that isn’t the case here - and sometimes it is an opportunity (as demonstrated last time) for someone to work with the Mayor and to enhance the office of both holders and I trust that this will be the case this time.

To the Mayor, I think you played a blinder last Mayoral year; I used to sit at the end of the table and think to myself “she is so organised, and I am chaotic. She has a great memory and mine is really porous. She is determined to get on top of every detail, where I am a big-picture man.”

I thought it was a very challenging year: nine very different, high-calibre Councillors, very opinionated, from



three separate parties and a contest of policy and position with basically every meeting's agenda.

So now let me go off-piece:

Fifty years ago I played in Julius Ceasear - I played Calpernia, Ceasar's wife, in the Shakespearian version of Julius Ceasear. Now, Julius Ceasear is basically a play about the second in charge. What does this second in charge do when confronted with disappointment in the leader? Well, back in those days they stabbed them to death, nowadays we get in an outside consultant and have a team-building session.

So whilst I can't remember what happened yesterday, I can remember from fifty year's ago that:

*"graves have yawned and yielded up their dead.
Fierce, fiery warriors walked upon the clouds
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;
Horses did neigh, and dying men did curse,
And ghosts did squeal and scream around the Capitol.
O Caesar, these things are beyond all belief,
And I do fear them."*

Anyway, he didn't listen to his wife, he went off to the Senate and got murdered. And his final words were "Et tu, Brute?" The vocative of Brutus, his great friend.

Let me go forward to Mark Anthony's great speech in the forum - the first thing you know: "friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears. I've come to bury Ceasear, not praise him"; and then he said "the evil that men do live after them. The good is oft interred in their bones." In other words, everyone always remembers the muck-ups, everyone remembers the betrayals, the mistakes, the disasters.

But the good is often interred in their bones, and for me (fifty years minus eight), I had to reflect on that - when I had my little holiday from being a Councillor, when I went to the naughty-corner - and I didn't want my life to be defined by what the community had interpreted as the great stuff-up, which was the St Kilda Triangle. So it's amazing that over forty years later, when I was sort of suffering a political demise, that I recalled those words and their utter wisdom, and for me, the unfortunate wisdom that the good would be interred with my bones but the evil that men do lives after them.

So, my second go at being a Councillor has been an opportunity to address that overwhelming political truth that people remember the bad things, and never give credit to the good. So that is why this is a very emotionally charged moment for me.

The second thing is what it says about the relationship between a political leader and the 2IC. I think, of course we live in far more civilised times, but if you got through the speech about Brutus and Julius Ceasear, you will find extraordinary truths about how, in political office, you deal with conflict. I still read that speech occasionally, and still welcome the chance to celebrate it today when I am now a 2IC to a leader whom I'm looking forward to working with.

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It has to be said, all nine of us have butted heads and at this stage of our relationship it has never been closer, we've had to share some cruel truths with each other, but we have come out with a more mature and more robust relationship.

Thank you for listening to my off-piece. It's a huge honour and relief to me to be taking this next step in my political rehabilitation, and I'm really looking forward to the year.

Thank you very much."

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 7.02pm

Confirmed: 15 November 2017

Chairperson _____