

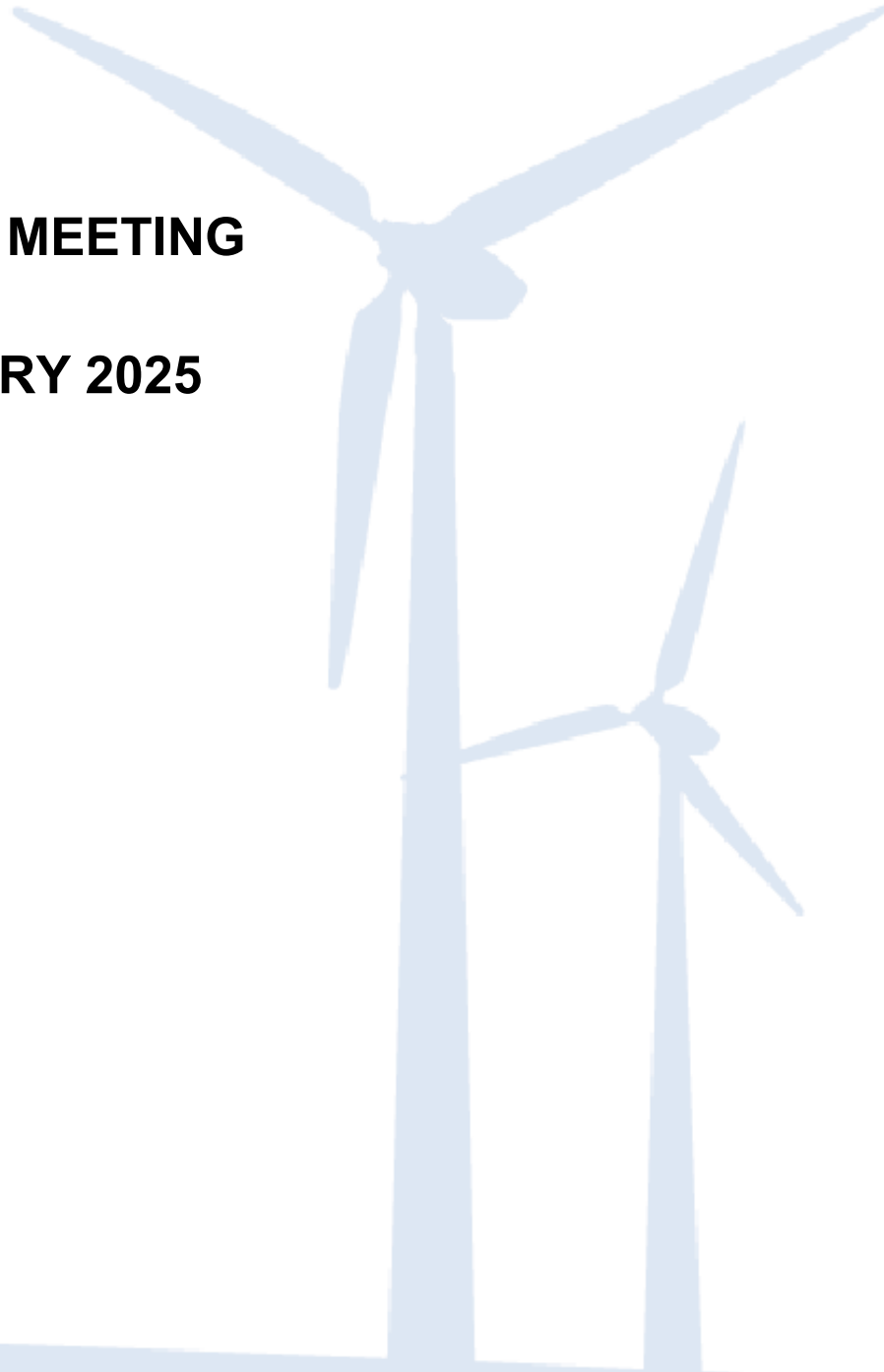


**Shire of Esperance**

**ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING**

**TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2025**

**MINUTES**



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### **ETHICAL DECISION MAKING AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Council is committed to a code of conduct and all decisions are based on an honest assessment of the issue, ethical decision-making and personal integrity. Councillors and staff adhere to the statutory requirements to declare financial, proximity and impartiality interests and once declared follow the legislation as required.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Please be advised that in order to save printing and paper costs, all attachments referenced in this paper are available in the original Agenda document for this meeting.

### **RECORDINGS**

The Meeting will be audio recorded. The recording will be made publicly available as soon as practical following the meeting.

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**SHIRE OF ESPERANCE**  
**MINUTES**  
**OF THE ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING**  
**HELD IN ESPERANCE CIVIC CENTRE ON 4 FEBRUARY 2025.**

**1. OFFICIAL OPENING**

The Acting Shire President declared the meeting open at 6:01pm and did an acknowledgement to country.

*The Shire of Esperance acknowledges the Kepa Kurl Wudjari people of the Nyungar nation and Ngadju people who are the Traditional Custodians of this land and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and we extend that respect to other Aboriginal Australians today.*

The Acting Shire President welcomed Councillors, staff, guests and members of the public to the meeting.

**2. ATTENDANCE**

**Members**

Cr J Obourne	Acting Shire President	Town Ward
Cr G Johnston		Town Ward
Cr S McMullen		Town Ward
Cr L de Haas		Town Ward
Cr W Graham		Rural Ward
Cr S Starcevich		Rural Ward
Cr S Flanagan		Town Ward
Cr C Davies		Town Ward

**Shire Officers**

Mr M Walker	Acting Chief Executive Officer
Mr R Greive	Director External Services
Mrs F Baxter	Director Corporate & Community Services
Mrs C Hoffrichter	Executive Assistant
Mr J Friend	Coordinator Civic Centre
Mrs M Bidstrup	Shire of Esperance Media

**Members of the Public & Press**

Christiane smith	L-A Shabish
Reuben Molinari	Colin Ingram
Trevor Furniss	Andrew Holter
Dianne Furniss	Tania Holter
Natasha Burnett	Michelle Gray
Marilyn Burnett	Marcus Gray
Janice Davis	Yvette Mansted
Merle Williams	Veronica Mickel
Kathryn Virgo	Ian Mickel
Cindee Hage	Deb Witt
Elaine Siemer	A Witt
Sue Starr	Ben Willmott
Dan McCallum	E. Lawrence

S. Coupar	Winton W
J. Dalling	Cherrie Vincent
R. Melville	Michelle Fowler
C. Piercey	Peter Paxton
D. Piercey	Kelly Pope
Debbie Reid	Jason Lowe
Sally Creasey	Jenny Karaterpos
William Reid	Karen Milligan
Darren Dixon	Lorraine Lowe
Michael Florisson	Laurie Lowe
Corrina Rawlinson	Conrad Lowe
Alec Farrert	Liz Gibbes
Doug Cary	Marc Payne
Tim Currie	T. Butler
Storm Mansell	M. Agnew
Tina McCaskill	Rob Agnew

**3. APOLOGIES & NOTIFICATION OF GRANTED LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Pres. R Chambers has a granted leave of absence.  
Mr S Burge leave.

**4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**Moved: Ms C Smith**  
**Seconded: Mrs E Siemer**

**AEM0225-016**

**That the Minutes of the Annual Electors Meeting held Tuesday 6 February 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.**

**CARRIED**

**5. PURPOSE OF MEETING**

**MOTION**

**Moved: Mrs E Siemer**  
**Seconded: Mrs S Starr**

**AEM0225-017**

**That the 2023/2024 Annual Report be received**

**CARRIED**

**6. GENERAL BUSINESS**

**Question 1 - Mr Cary**

About \$200,000 was set aside for reef creation around the jetty and I was wondering what stage that process is at please?

*The Acting CEO advised we are working with Recfish West developing that, so we have put a formal submission into the Federal Government their Environmental Department to get that permit which we require for the reef ground, so are progressing the permit requirements before the works, but it just takes time.*

Mr Cary asked do you have an idea of timeframes for how long that might take?

*The Acting CEO advised, we've been asked for supplementary information, I am unsure on the exact timeframes, but it will be a number of months from my understanding.*

**Motion 1**

**Moved:** Mrs E Siemer

**Seconded:** Mrs S Starr

**That Council commit to a landscaping plan with capital investment for the Esperance Cemetery.**

**CARRIED**

**Motion 2**

**Moved:** Mrs K Virgo

**Seconded:** Mrs E Manstead

**That Council;**

- 1. Publicly oppose the South Coast Marine Park; and**
- 2. An independent investigation into the community consultation process.**

**CARRIED**

Motion 2 Explanation:

Point 1

- Given that over 50% of the affected electorate have Mandated the State government to stop all negotiations relating to imposing restrictions upon the electors on the basis of establishing a Marine Park, the Shire publicly declare its opposition to the South Coast Marine Park.
- The Shire formally communicate to the State Government that the marine park lacks public support and legislation enabling the park should be reversed.

Point 2

- We would like full transparency of PEW and other international organisation's full involvement in the recommendation of this area and the science they put forward, and the drafting and implementation process, as they are foreign organisations to Australia.

**Motion 3**

**Moved:** Mr C Ingram

**Seconded:** Ms L-A Shibish

**That Council;**

- 1. Take a more proactive role in engaging with State Environmental Agencies on environmental and conservation issues in the Shire of Esperance;**
- 2. Meet with the Minister for Environment and raise concerns about the performance of State environmental agencies operating in the Shire of Esperance; and**
- 3. Invite key environmental agencies to participate in a quarterly or regular forum with Council to inform it about current activities and can raise important issues and questions.**

### Question 2 – Mrs Rawlinson

I'd like to ask a question for clarification on the Shire's authority over the South Coast Marine Park issue. There has been some public confusion possibly influenced by lack of transparency in the narrative chaired by certain community leaders. Could the Shire clarify its role in the State Government matter to ensure the community has an accurate understanding.

*The Acting Shire President advised, in a nutshell our responsibility to the community was to advocate on behalf on the whole community throughout the processes and to try and ensure our communities views were represented. I understand that not everyone feels like we did a good job in that, but I can ensure you I have been on Council for 6 years and right from the very beginning all we did is advocate for the community and people didn't see that because they are not a part of the meetings. We did however issue a whole heap of media releases post meetings because you are not there to hear what we are saying and how we are standing up for the community. We also tried not to divide the community, because our job is to represent the whole community, and tonight shows there is a wide variety of views.*

*The Shire's position is not to be for or against the marine park it was to represent our whole community in a submission, which we spent a very long time on trying to find the balance on how our community felt, and I stand by our submission that we lodged, I felt we worked very hard to hear what the people had to say and to make a submission that was reflective of everyone's views.*

*To answer your question we are not the State Government, we are neither impose or not impose the marine park, that is a State Government's marine park so if you want to make a change, you can have you opinion on 8 March 2025 when there is a State election.*

### Question 3 – Ms M Fowler

I refer to an article published online 2 February 2025 by ABC Esperance. The article states the iconic pink lake on middle island, Lake Hillier has lost its characteristic colour due to and I quote "human induced climate change" the article goes on to report the local Shire and other stakeholders are working on a project to pump brine from another nearby lake, this is to speed up the lakes return to the colour pink, thus rendering it fit for purpose as a tourist attraction much sooner than if it was left to naturally evaporate. Could the Shire of Esperance please explain how the inescapable use of fossil fuels to access the island to carry out this human intervention and the subsequent use of fossil fuels through boats, helicopters and aircraft to then view the outcome is a responsible and ethical use of rate payers money. I am not sure if a grant has been given, is it the Shire? Isn't it the Shire? Is it Lake Hillier? is it Pink Lake?

*The Acting Shire President advised, I think the article has made a mistake in their reporting, Lake Hiller on middle island has lost its pink hue since excessive rainfall events in 2022, there is nothing the shire is planning to do about that, nature will take its course and it will restore its colour over time.*

*Pink Lake near lake warden was over mined for salt and that is the reason it has lost its pink colour, and the shire has been working with DBCA to work on a plan to pump brine form the nearby Lake Warden, we did go out for funding to the Federal Government and that funding was rejected, we are aware we need to do something about that, it is a major tourists attraction, loved by locals, we have a plan we are working with DBCA and scientists on an actual science evidence based plan, we just need the money for it, we are working on it.*

Ms Fowler asked, could you perhaps contact the ABC and clarify that then as its complete misinformation then.

*The Acting Shire President advised, our media officers are in the room and have confirmed that will happen.*

**Motion 4**

**Moved:** Mr P Paxton  
**Seconded:** Mrs C Hage

**That Council;**

1. **consider putting ablution facilities similar to Observatory Beach at Eleven Mile Beach; and**
2. **investigate putting bins at popular beach locations along Twilight Beach Road through to Eleven Mile Beach.**

**CARRIED**

**Motion 5**

**Moved:** Mr P Paxton  
**Seconded:** Ms K Pope

**That Council join the of section of Keenan's Road South to Keenan's Road North.**

**CARRIED**

*Councillor Wes Graham read the following letter from the Captain of the Daylup Bushire Brigade, Scott Lawrence.*

Id like to bring to the Shire's attention the severity of lack of access we have had on Murray Road for the fire in Daylup. Local residents below the ignition point had now way out, and were in extreme danger and those of us that arrived to fight the fire, had to drive through active fire to evacuate residents and fight the fire. As the fire intensified on track to the east, which was later at night, we then had no access through Telegraph Road, the road was completely overgrown, with boggy sand and tracks that were impassable. In this instance we had to wait for a dozer to clear an access line through the farm land and get fire trucks and machinery into the next farm as the fire approached. Luckily, there was some machinery close by, and the time lost was not severe, but many resources had to take a 35km round trip get around the fire to get the man power that was required. However this has bought to my attention that road within the Shire need be maintained as a minimum as a fire access road, I would like to invite the Shire to reach out to our local fire brigades for submissions for roads that require maintenance for fire access. I feel this is something that is important for our community and safety and needs to be dealt with in a timely manner. This lack of access could have cost people their lives and property. I look forward to the Shire's response.

*The Acting Shire President thanks Cr Graham for his statement and bringing it forward in a timely manner after everything that has happened.*

**7. CLOSURE**

The President declared the meeting closed at 7:15pm.



**These Minutes were confirmed at a meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_**

**Signed \_\_\_\_\_**

**Presiding Member at the meeting at which the Minutes were confirmed.**

**Dated \_\_\_\_\_**