

MACALISTER CUSTOMER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF MEETING 191
Held 10.00am Tuesday 24 May 2022
SRW, Maffra**

PRESENT

Mrs Raelene Hanratty, Chair
Mr Benn Thexton, Deputy Chair from 10.15am
Mr Norm Drew
Ms Kate Lamb
Mr Alan Clyne
Mr Graeme Anderson, OAM
Mrs Jeannette Howie
Mr Brad White

SRW Representatives

Ms Joanne Butterworth-Gray, SRW Board Chair
Mr Cameron FitzGerald, Managing Director
Mr Hugh Christie, General Manager Service Delivery
Mr Simon Wilkinson, Manager Water Supply
Mr Craig Smith, Manager Strategy and Business Planning
Mrs Pamela Crawford, Customer Relations Officer

APOLOGIES

Mr Steve Dwyer

2. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES; AGENDA LISTING

The Chair opened the meeting by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land and waters of the MID.

The Committee noted the apologies and welcomed SRW Chair, Ms Joanne Butterworth-Gray, to the meeting.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Committee discussed, as part of the request to document specific conflicts of interests associated with location of farms in the Macalister Irrigation Area, the need to declare interests that directly benefits the individual rather than general interests.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The committee **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on **Tuesday 26 April 2022**.

Moved: Mr G Anderson

Seconded: Ms K Lamb

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Meeting	Agenda Item #	Action	Action Officer	Status
April	6	Mrs Crawford to co-ordinate the creation of a Conflict of Interest table for the agenda.	Crawford	In progress
April	6.6	Mr Wilkinson to include a definition and map of the Thomson Macalister system in the MCCC workshop pack.	Wilkinson	In progress

The Committee discussed the following with regards to the Conflict of Interest table:

- The table is to include an interest that may be pecuniary or beneficial to the individual.
- Can list where they are irrigating so that when conversations like modernisation and upgrades occur, it's recorded where members are located.
- Mrs Crawford agreed to resend email with Conflict of Interest information template.

6. PRINCIPAL MATTERS

6.1 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

- The Chair provided a report which included:
 - Attended the water trading workshop last Tuesday. Thank you to those who also attended.
 - Pricing Submission drop-in sessions. Though only 3 irrigators attended, good conversations were had that were seen to add value to the pricing deliberations.
 - The Chair has a DELWP PCG meeting tomorrow regarding the Phase 2 project.
 - Committee recruitment was discussed. There are 3 vacancies presently due to resignations with another 3 up for renomination in September. Members are requested to think about who may add value to the Committee and encourage others to nominate. The need for diversification across all areas of the district was discussed, including different enterprises, though it was agreed that members need to be enthusiastic and involved (this discussion also referenced issues with attendance that had also been raised by the individual prior to the meeting due to other commitments).

6.2 SIGNIFICANT ISSUES OR ACTIONS

- There are no significant current issues or actions.

6.3 MATTERS REFERRED BY THE BOARD

- The Committee was provided with the following update:
 - The Pricing Submission continues to be a focus. Information sessions are being held, though have not resulted in a lot of engagement. Radio clips to the ABC and media releases encouraging participation have been prepared.
 - Prices for next year will be in line with CPI as per the current price submission.

- The Committee asked when the Board may next meet with the MCCC. Mr FitzGerald advised that the next Maffra Board meeting will include an opportunity for MCCC interaction.

6.4 MANAGER WATER SUPPLY UPDATE

- Mr Simon Wilkinson, Manager Water Supply provided an update which included:
 - During the 2021/22 irrigation season, approximately 552,000 ML has been released down river.
 - Deliveries for the season are just under 70,000ML with the 5-year average being double this amount. Rainfall is also well above average.
 - There will be an end of season wrap up included in the next agenda along with a brief update on the salinity program and impacts of above average rainfall.
 - Preliminary results of Customer Satisfaction Survey include increases in satisfaction across the following areas:
 - Expectations.
 - Value for service
 - Water supply and access
 - Customer service
 - Communications.

The Committee discussed:

- Mr Drew spoke of a program he is involved with through another committee that is considering monitoring nitrogen in groundwater and also transfer into the Gippsland Lakes as run off. He suggested that SRW could look to help with this program through the monitoring bore network.
- The need to educate the community on the river release figure, so that the flush that has occurred this year is understood, including benefits to both the environment and flood mitigation. Mr Christie said that this information could be included when reviewing the season.

6.5 GLENMAGGIE RELEASE STRATEGY

- The paper included with the agenda was noted by the Committee.

The Committee discussed:

- Spillway level was determined on historic inflows and allowance for air space. This level also allows for gate maintenance.
- Gippsland Water's new treated water pipe through the wall as part of supply arrangement for Coongulla.

6.6 MODERNISATION UPDATE

- Mr Simon Wilkinson, Manager Water Supply, led discussions which included:
 - Negotiations have progressed with the preferred tenderer and designer to make changes to the materials used to deal with current market prices.
 - The preferred tenderer is redeveloping their schedule to ensure works are complete in time for the irrigation season commencing August 2023.
 - Affected customers will be contacted when the contract is locked in.
 - Separate to Newry/Nuntin, work has progressed on the automation of the Boisdale pipeline outlets this winter and an upgrade to the SCADA canopy network to support all the additional modernisation in MID (these are both elements of the Phase 2 MID Modernisation scope).

6.7 MACALISTER DEMAND STUDY PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

- The paper included with the agenda was noted by the Committee.

The Committee discussed:

- The Survey provided interesting information. Consideration should be given to expanding to Kilmany and Winnindoo also.
- Demand for current area is approximately 11GL. Mr FitzGerald said there may be other opportunities to expand without compromising the current area and customers. The organisation also needs to grow so this will be an opportunity to do that.
- This expansion would also require new customers paying for access to the supply network, which will help protect the current area by balancing prices.
- The Committee commented that this year has been very unique in terms of rainfall, and that planning needs to allow for dry years as well.
- Mr Christie said that the conversation will continue, with the need to keep testing demand as when proposed costs are provided this may impact on the level of final demand.
- SRW's commitment to the Committee is that we keep looking at these scenarios with a view to the long-term sustainability to the current resource.
- The Committee is happy to continue discussions on this matter.

6.8 MCCC WORKSHOP – WATER MARKET TRANSPARENCY PROJECT

- The paper included with the agenda was noted by the Committee.

The Committee discussed:

- Members who attended the workshop said it was worthwhile and a good start to more progress.
- A highlight was the discussion regarding how to get unused water on the market with some customers choosing to engage a broker.
- The Committee were informed that SRW has received funding from DEWLP to complete this project. The information obtained may go towards the development of an exchange platform, possibly within the Water Register.

6.9 PRICING SUBMISSION OBSERVATIONS

- Mr Simon Wilkinson, Manager Water Supply discussed.
 - 3 customers attended the Maffra sessions.
 - Observations were that those who did attend were engaged and were able to have a more meaningful discussion being one on one.
 - The Committee considered ways to engage with more customers including social media surveys and information in the District Update.

7.0 FOR NOTING

7.1 CORRESPONDENCE

- The Committee noted correspondence.
 - There was a general discussion regarding the Board appointment process following a reply to correspondence from the Committee by the Hon. Lisa Neville MP (Minister for Water).

7.2 FEEDBACK REGISTER (RELEVANT TO MID)

- The Committee noted feedback.

7.3 COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

- The Committee noted the Communications report.

ACTION – Invite Gemma Abela, Manager Communications and Engagement to a future meeting (Crawford)

8.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

- The Chair referred to the conflict of interest table and invited members to declare other interests.
- No further interests were declared.
- Review of Conflict of Interest table wording – Mr Drew
 - Good that this is now out in the open.
 - The table does not need to include common things that we know people have an interest in, i.e. irrigator or dairy farmer.
 - The Committee were encouraged to submit any conflict of interest they may have.
- The Committee also discussed the ongoing state of the Glenmaggie Caravan Park and future management of the site.

9.0 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting No. 193 of the Macalister Customer Consultative Committee is scheduled for 10.00 am on Tuesday 26 July 2022.

Topics to be discussed include:

- Chairpersons report
- Customer Satisfaction Survey (subject to consultant completion)
- Manager Water Supply Update
- Modernisation update
- Salinity program update

Meeting	Date
MCCC 193	Tuesday, 26 th July 2022
MCCC 194	Tuesday, 27 th September 2022
MCCC 195	Tuesday, 25 th October 2022
MCCC 196	Tuesday, 13 th December 2022

10.0 MEETING CLOSE

With there being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.46am.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST TABLE

Name of Committee member	Description of interest	Interested parties	Is the interest current?
Kate Lamb	Beef grazing operation in Denison	Kate Lamb	Yes

	July 2021	Sept 2021	Oct 2021	Dec 2021	Feb 2022	April 2022	May 2022	July 2022	Sept 2022	Oct 2022	Dec 2022
Raelene Hanratty	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Graeme Anderson	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apol	✓	✓				
Stephen Dwyer	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apol		Apol				
Jeanette Howie	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apol	✓				
Norm Drew	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Malcolm Sellen	Apol	✓	✓	✓	Apol	Apol	N/A				
Alan Clyne	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Robert Webber	✓	✓	✓	Apol	Apol	N/A	N/A				
Kate Lamb	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Brad White	Apol	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apol	✓				
Benn Thexton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				

- ✓ Attended Meeting
- Apol Notification of apology
- Blank Did not attend