

**City of Kingston
Special (Statutory) Council Meeting**

Minutes

30 November 2011

Minutes of the City of Kingston Special (Statutory) Council Meeting held at 1230 Nepean Highway, Cheltenham, on Wednesday 30 November 2011 at 7.00 pm.

Present: Cr Arthur Athanasopoulos
Cr Ron Brownlees
Cr Lewis Dundas
Cr Dan Moloney
Cr Paul Peulich
Cr John Ronke
Cr Trevor Shewan
Cr Steve Staikos
Cr Rosemary West OAM

In Attendance: John Nevins - Chief Executive Officer
Mauro Bolin - General Manager Community Sustainability
Paul Franklin - General Manager Corporate Services
Rachel Hornsby - General Manager Environmental Sustainability
Elaine Sowerby - General Manager Organisational Development and Governance
Phil DeLosa – Program Leader Governance
Sarah Bishop - Acting Manager Media and Communications
Kirsten Leiminger – Media Communications Officer

The Chief Executive Officer, John Nevins, opened the meeting at 7.02pm and welcomed the presence in the public gallery of former Mayors and Councillors of the City of Kingston, the Junior Mayor, Olivia Guhl, Village Committee Chairpersons, Inga Peulich MLC, Member for the South Eastern Metropolitan Region, Lorraine Wreford MLA, State Member for Mordialloc District, Donna Bauer MLA, State Member of Parliament for Carrum and former Deputy Mayor Kingston City Council, distinguished guests, friends and family of the Councillors, plus members of the public.

1. Appointment of Acting Chairperson

The Chief executive Officer called for nominations for an Acting Chairperson.

Crs West/Brownlees

That Cr Athanasopoulos be the Acting Chairperson

Carried

2. Apologies

Nil

3. Disclosures of any Conflicts of Interest

Nil

Address by Cr Brownlees - Mayor 2010/11

Cr Brownlees addressed the meeting, reflecting on his pride at Council's achievements during his term as Mayor. Cr Brownlees thanked his Councillor colleagues, the Chief Executive Officer and officers, and his family for their support.

Expression of Appreciation to Cr Brownlees

Cr Staikos, on behalf of all Councillors, paid tribute to the efforts of the former Mayor, Cr Brownlees.

The Acting Chairperson took this opportunity, on behalf of Council, to present a token of appreciation to the former Mayor's wife Marilyn Brownlees for her support to the former Mayor over the previous year.

4. Election of Mayor 2011/12

The Acting Chairperson, Cr Athanasopoulos, requested nominations for the Office of Mayor for the 2011/12 year

Cr Brownlees nominated Cr Ronke, and Cr Ronke accepted the nomination.

Upon establishing that there were no other nominations, the Acting Chairperson in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1989 and the Council's Meeting Procedures Local Law No 7, declared Cr Ronke elected to the Office of Mayor for the 2011/12 year.

The Chief Executive Officer invited Councillors Shewan and Moloney (South Ward colleagues of the new Mayor), to place the Mayoral Chains on the newly elected Mayor, Cr Ronke.

The Mayor, Cr Ronke, assumed the Chair and Cr Athanasopoulos returned to his seat.

Address by Newly Elected Mayor

The Mayor, Cr Ronke, proceeded to address the meeting, expressing his thanks to his family and supporters. He also expressed his thanks and appreciation for the endorsement of his fellow Councillors. The Mayor acknowledged the Chief Executive Officer and staff for their work to date, and outlined his intended approach for the forthcoming year. A copy of the Mayor's address is attached to these minutes.

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Expressions of Congratulations to Newly Elected Mayor

All Councillors in turn congratulated the Mayor on his election, and expressed their support and best wishes.

The Mayor, Cr Ronke, thanked his fellow Councillors for their words of congratulations and support.

The Mayor, Cr Ronke, took this opportunity, on behalf of Council, to present a token of appreciation to the former Mayor Cr Brownlees and his partner Marilyn Brownlees for their efforts over the previous year.

5. Appointment of Councillors to Committees and Organisations

The Mayor advised the next order of business would be the appointment of Councillors to Committees.

Crs Staikos/Peulich

That the appointment of Councillors to various Committees and Organisations for 2011/12 as attached be adopted.

Carried

6. Planning Committee and Special (Statutory) Council meeting dates for 2012

The Mayor advised the next order of business would be the setting of the meeting dates for Ordinary Council, Planning Committee and Special (Statutory) Council meetings for 2012.

Crs Shewan/Moloney

That Ordinary Council Meetings, Planning Committee Meetings and the Special (Statutory) Council Meeting for 2012 be held at 7.00pm at the City of Kingston Offices, 1230 Nepean Highway, Cheltenham, on the dates set out below:

Monday 6 February – Planning Committee
Wednesday 22 February – Planning Committee
Monday 27 February – Ordinary Council Meeting
Wednesday 21 March – Planning Committee
Monday 26 March – Ordinary Council Meeting
Wednesday 18 April – Planning Committee
Monday 23 April – Ordinary Council Meeting
Wednesday 23 May – Planning Committee
Monday 28 May – Ordinary Council Meeting
Wednesday 20 June – Planning Committee

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Monday 25 June – Ordinary Council Meeting
Wednesday 18 July – Planning Committee
Monday 23 July – Ordinary Council Meeting
Wednesday 22 August – Planning Committee
Monday 27 August – Ordinary Council Meeting
Wednesday 19 September – Planning Committee
Monday 24 September – Ordinary Council Meeting
Wednesday 17 October – Planning Committee
Monday 22 October – Ordinary Council Meeting
Thursday 1 November – Special (Statutory) Council Meeting
Wednesday 21 November – Planning Committee
Monday 26 November – Ordinary Council Meeting
Wednesday 12 December – Planning Committee
Monday 17 December – Ordinary Council Meeting

Carried

7. Setting of Time Limits for Ordinary Meetings

The Mayor advised the next order of business would be the setting of time limits for the Ordinary Council Meetings and Planning Committee Meetings for 2012.

Crs West/Dundas

That a time limit of 3 hours be set for Ordinary Council Meetings and Planning Committee Meetings (with scope for extension by Council resolution if required) in accordance with Clause 25 of Meeting Procedures Local Law No 7.

Carried

Reception for Councillors/Guests

The Mayor invited Councillors, guests and members of the gallery to the 6th floor Oakleigh Room for a reception.

The meeting closed at 7.52pm.

Confirmed.....His Worship The Mayor 19 December 2011.

Address: Mayor Cr John Ronke

On behalf of my fellow councillors and everyone here associated with the City of Kingston – I extend a warm welcome and thank you for joining us this evening.

Before I go any further, I would like to offer my personal thanks to Ron Brownlees for his contribution as Mayor over the past 12 months. Im sure we would all agree that if there is anyone born for the role of Mayor - it's Ron.

As I said on Monday evening during Ron's last night in the chair, his casual style and genuinely warm personality not only reflected well with his role as Mayor but also put those around him at ease, particularly those having their first contact with a Mayor which I know from first hand experience, can be quite intimidating.

But those who know Ron also know the important role that Marilyn played and I ask that she accepts a heart felt thanks from my wife Sandy and myself for her company and friendship, particularly over the past year. Marilyn has many obvious wonderful traits, however the one that stands out most is her amazing ability to sum up in 5 words what Ron has tried to say in 50.

To all of my fellow councillors – a sincere thank you for the vote of confidence you have given me tonight and the opportunity to play a key role in shaping the future of our wonderful city.

With some of you, I have enjoyed a long association whilst others have been relatively short by comparison.

- Ron and Trevor off and on over the past 14 years.
- Arthur for over 10 years.
- Rosemary since 2003.
- Steve, Paul and Lew for the past 3 years; and
- Dan joining us at the start of the year when Donna left us for the robust world of State politics.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working with you all and am proud of what we have achieved together.

In 1997 when I was elected to council, we were in serious financial trouble. The amalgamation process had left us with debt of around \$20 million and shortly after we were given the news that we were also responsible for unfunded superannuation liabilities which added a further \$9 million. I think we all agreed at the time that if we were a company, we probably should have been wound up.

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As a result, since 1997 the focus on financial responsibility has been nothing short of outstanding and this group of councillors is no exception, culminating with us being debt free for all of 5 minutes before we made an historic decision to secure this building as our corporate home.

You should all be proud of the role that you have played in securing the long term financial future of this council and the communities it serves.

Kingston is also blessed to have hundreds of dedicated staff who are committed to the community and they are led by a management team that is second to none and I am particularly looking forward to working more closely with them. Paul, Mauro, Elaine, Rachel and especially our CEO John Nevins.

Paul and John in particular played a key role in turning our financial fortunes around

If it wasn't for the decisions made in those early years and continued by this group of councillors, this city would not be in a position to maintain our asset renewal or implement some of the major infrastructure projects.

Again – I congratulate you all on being resolute and staying the course, often under difficult circumstances where, for some of you, supporting rate rises of the level needed went against your previous election commitments.

Together, we have established a \$1 million foreshore fund which will see several key projects come to fruition. The exciting new Carrum Life Saving Club is just one example.

Together, we also established a \$1 million fund that will compound over the coming years for land acquisition in the Green Wedge for the establishment and provision of sporting fields and public open space.

One of my priorities as Mayor will be to progress discussions with neighbouring councils with the view to – hopefully - jointly develop land in the Green Wedge for recreation purposes. All this, of course is subject to the implementation of the Green Wedge Management Plan currently being undertaken by council.

At council and in the broader community, we constantly talk about our 13 kms of magnificent foreshore as the jewel in the crown of Kingston – and rightly so. However, I have no doubt that should we get the Green Wedge Management Plan right, then over the coming years, the north of the city will compete with the south for that title.

This can only be done if there is a willingness to listen to and acknowledge other peoples points of view and opinions, and be willing to make compromises. Anything else will almost certainly jeopardise what we all want – and that is another jewel in the crown. **A Place Of Distinction.**

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Some of the other important issues to face next year will be:

- A review of our Planning Scheme
- Progressing the planning scheme amendment process for the recently adopted structure Plans for Mentone, Parkdale and Cheltenham
- A final decision made and work commenced on Kingston's section of the Bay trail.
- And a major priority for me is to officially open the new Aspendale Gardens sporting field during my term as Mayor.

There are a lot of certainties in life and one of them is that there will always be new challenges for Council and we will deal with them as a group.

The other certainty is that we will always be able to look to the various community groups, local businesses, council committees and volunteers right across the municipality to work with us and guide us. Over the years I have been fortunate to meet and work with so many groups and individuals in Kingston, and continue to be impressed by their commitment to their community.

One of the aspects I am most looking forward to over the next year as Mayor is further developing and enhancing these relationships, and playing an active role in supporting them to continue their great work.

On a personal note.

- **To all my close friends here tonight** - thank you for sharing this night with us.
- **To my wife Sandy** – what can I say that I haven't said hundreds of times before but perhaps never as public as this. I love you and we both know that if it wasn't for you I would have probably been a one or two term councillor. You always know just what to say at just the right time when I'm venting at home... and I know that you will enjoy the coming year.

As much as Ron was born for the role of Mayor, you were born for the role of Mayoress.

- **John and Daniel** – This must truly be a big deal for you because you both gave up a social night to be here and that just never happens. Thank you!

In closing – my aspirations as Mayor for the coming year are pretty simple.

- To remain a boring council that is in the headlines for all the right reasons.
- That we continue with robust discussions and when we disagree, direct the arguments against the TOPIC and not the PERSON delivering it.
- It's an absolute fact that politics is a team sport and none of us can achieve anything without the support of others. The closer we work together – both as Councillors and Senior Management – the more we will achieve.

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- And of course it will always help if you all agree with me, but somehow I know that just isn't going to happen.

There are now some quick formalities go through before I close the meeting and we can continue upstairs.

Thank you.