

Minutes of the 164th FNQROC Board Meeting

Meeting No	164
Meeting Name	FNQROC Board Meeting
Date	1 February 2024
Time	10.30am to 1.30pm
Venue	Cairns Regional Council, Civic Reception, Cairns

REPRESENTATIVES

CHAIR

Cr Brett Moller, Dep Mayor	Cairns Regional Council
Cr Mark Nolan, Mayor	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Cr Peter Scott, Mayor	Cook Shire Council
Cr Trevor Pickering, Mayor	Croydon Shire Council (online)
Cr Michael Kerr, Mayor	Douglas Shire Council
Cr Barry Hughes, Mayor	Etheridge Shire Council
Cr Ramon Jayo, Mayor	Hinchinbrook Shire Council (online)
Cr Angela Toppin, Mayor	Mareeba Shire Council
Cr Rod Marti	Tablelands Regional Council

DEPUTY CHAIR

CEOS

Mr Andrew Graffen, CEO	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Mr Brian Joiner, CEO	Cook Shire Council (online)
Ms Jacqui Cresswell, CEO	Croydon Shire Council (online)
Ms Rachel Brophy, CEO	Douglas Shire Council
Mr Ken Timms, CEO	Etheridge Shire Council
Mr Steve Linnane, CEO	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council (online)
Mr Peter Franks, CEO	Mareeba Shire Council
Mr Gary Rinehart, CEO	Tablelands Regional Council
Mr Richard Wright, CEO	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

OBSERVERS

Ms Lucy Greene	LGAQ
----------------	------

INVITED GUESTS

Mr Mike Wassing	QRA
Mr Jimmy Scott	QRA
Ms Rachel Cliffe	Telstra
Ms Josie Pickering	Telstra
Ms Darlene Irvine	FNQROC

Ms Michelle Lees	Commonwealth Recovery Liaison Officer Taskforce
Mr Brett Carlsson	Commonwealth Recovery Liaison Officer Taskforce
Ms Elizabeth Stavreski	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Ms Kerry Bull	Cassowary Coast Regional Council

FNQROC STAFF

Mr Anthony Archie	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Travis Sydes	Natural Asset Management & Sustainability Coordinator
Ms Amanda Hancock	Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator
Mr Elliott Meelen	Regional Procurement Coordinator
Ms Paula Power	Executive Support Officer
Ms Maria Anselmo	Climate Resilience Coordinator

APOLOGIES

Cr Terry James, Mayor	Cairns Regional Council
Ms Mica Martin, CEO	Cairns Regional Council
Cr Mary Brown	Hinchinbrook Shire Council
Cr Jason Woibo, Mayor	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
Cr Bradley Creek, Mayor	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Ms Kiley Hanslow, CEO	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Cr Ross Andrews, Mayor	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

3144 WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The meeting commenced at 10.55am.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we met and paid respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

3145 BOARD PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Mike Wassing, Deputy Commissioner, Deputy State Recovery Coordinator, and Mr Jimmy Scott, Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA)

Mr Wassing provided a briefing on Disaster Recovery after the recent cyclone/flooding events, discussing where we are at regionally and the forecast – where to from here? Followed by a Q&A session. A copy of the presentation will be provided with the minutes.

Mr Wassing acknowledged the efforts of councils and communities.

Betterment Fund \$100 million – working through those with Councils and Commonwealth. Letters have been sent.

Disaster Ready funding - \$200 million Nationally available - applications close 20 March 2024.

Discussion from the floor:

- Bushfires and larger events. Need process to move more quickly, waiting for approvals takes too long.

- Mayor Scott thanked Nicky Boyd and the QRA team for their support during the recent events.
- Social responsibility for personal hardship payments. The need to have a more robust system rather than handing out money as this affects the community sometimes in a negative way. State needs to seek local knowledge on the ground.
- More clarity needed around authorisations and approvals of hardship payments.
- Compounding events – communities 2021/22/23/24 if processes could move more quickly for approval to do works. Committed to fixing.
- Discussed wages for businesses to make sure they can keep staff and assistance for those who cannot travel to work due to roads being in disrepair.
- A concerning trend was discussed regarding insurance premiums. Many residents have been compelled to increase their insurance excess in an effort to manage rising premiums. This adjustment, however, has led to a predicament where they are unable to lodge claims for goods damaged due to the prohibitive cost of the excess. Furthermore, there have been instances where insurance companies have denied payouts, attributing certain coverages to the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA), leading to confusion among policyholders. This situation is exacerbated by inconsistent communication from insurers following these events, underscoring the need for uniform messaging. The QRA is aware of these issues and plans to address them with the Insurance Council of Australia to seek a resolution that better supports our community's needs.
- Business impacted by natural disasters need cash flow to keep them going.
- The recent events have caused damage to our marine infrastructure. In response to this necessity, a proposal has been made seeking dispensation for marine construction activities. This would permit the release of smaller quantities of marine sediment during the repair process, facilitating timely and efficient restoration efforts. Such measures are crucial to ensure that our marine infrastructure is quickly returned to operational status, supporting both the local economy and ecosystem.
- Concerns raised and asked that temporary works locations on our arterial road network are given priority for approval to be appropriately fixed to ensure future weather does not result in further closure of our arterial road networks.
- Concerns have been voiced regarding the one-year timeframe allocated for clearing activities post event that allows for exemption under the Vegetation Management Act 1999. Members have highlighted that this period may be insufficient in certain regions, notably Cape Tribulation and the Bloomfield Track, where the scope and scale of the required clearing exceed what can feasibly be accomplished within such a limited timeframe.
- Chief Superintendent, John Bosnjak has been appointed as the Business Reform Coordinator for Disaster Management. He is meeting with Councils to get feedback following Cyclone Jasper. Collecting data on early recovery and key learnings. A debrief so Councils are better informed in the future.

3.3 Rachel Cliffe, Regional General Manager, Northern Queensland and Josie Pickering, Regional Engagement Manager, Northern Queensland, Regional Australia, Telstra

Ms Cliffe provided an update on Telstra ceasing 3G. A copy of the presentation will be provided with the minutes.

- 3G ceasing was announced in 2019 and will be closing June 2024.
- New satellite technology – Starlink, OneWeb
- 30 percent increase in data per year in Australia
- 5G 100 times more services can run on 5G
- Etheridge and Yarrabah haven't got a date for 4G as yet but will be before 30 June 2024.

- Possibility of 000 handset text by end of next year. Always looking at new ways to benefit customers.
- Dates of rollout to be confirmed for Mareeba and Cassowary.
- Highlighted the need to have Telstra representation at LDMG meetings.
- Blackouts and Battery power/generators. No mobile coverage to some areas during disasters.
- Blackspot program was discussed.

3.3 Lucy Greene, Lead Intergovernmental Relations (LGAQ)

Ms Greene provided an overview of LGAQ recent activities per the briefing note circulated prior to meeting.

- The LGAQ stands with FNQROC Councils and are always there to help, particularly across the natural disasters recently experienced throughout the region.
- On behalf of Wujal Wujal donations appreciated for parks and garden equipment etc.
- Caretaker period – advice has been circulated. Changes to Department processes to allow consideration and approval for major approval decisions.
- Cabinet reshuffle – new Minister for Local Government is the Hon Meaghan Scanlon.
- Launched cost shifting report after 18 months survey and analysis period. Over the past two decades, cost shifting onto councils has increased from \$47 million to \$360 million annually.
- Federal pre-budget submission – LGAQ travelling to Canberra on Sunday and promoting local government sector's budget asks and cost shifting work.
- USO review has been announced by Minister Michelle Rowland's. LGAQ can help with council submissions. Due 1 March 2024.
- Youth Crime – Action plan launched at October 2023 Annual Conference. Committee on Youth Justice Reform formed last year and called for submissions which the LGAQ provided. Hearing dates in Cairns on 7 February. Submissions were also provided by Mareeba and Townsville councils.
- Wished all Mayors best of luck for upcoming election – acknowledged Policy Executive Mayor Peter Scott in his retirement and wished Mayor Michael Kerr all the best with his new endeavours.
- Mayor Peter Scott asked LGAQ what the gap in FA Grants to cost shifting was. Council by council FA Grants allocations for 2023/24 can be found here.
- LGAQ to seek state wages case update for Yarrabah CEO Richard Wright.

3.4 Darlene Irvine, FNQROC

Darlene thanked the FNQROC Board for their contribution over the last 4 years and wished good luck to those running again. Darlene also thanked outgoing Mayors' Cr Peter Scott and Cr Michael Kerr for their support, guidance, and dedication to FNQROC during their time in office.

3146 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The draft minutes of the 163rd FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) Board meeting of 7 December 2023.

MOVED: Cr Barry Hughes

SECOND: Cr Rod Marti

Motion

That the FNQROC Board move that the minutes of the 163rd Board Meeting held on 7 December 2023 be confirmed and adopted.

CARRIED

3147 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Action items from 7 December 2023 FNQROC Board Meeting

Nil Actions from meeting of 7 December 2023.

Actions carried over from previous meetings.

Minute Number	Action	Responsible Person(s)	Status
3128	FNQROC to make contact with Tyre Stewardship Australia to invite them to present to the FNQROC Board on the results from the survey at the next meeting on 7 December 2023.	P Power FNQROC	On-going

Action 3128 – to be revisited in 2024.

3148 ADVOCACY

Nil

3149 STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLAN

Local Housing Action Plan Project

- Most councils at draft stage.
- Couple of councils – caretaker mode so can't be adopted.
- Another meeting prior to election. Share knowledge between councils, then can proceed with action plans for State sign off.

FNQROC Achievements over last 4 years

- Summary of FNQROC achievements 2020 - 2024. A good summary to look at what has been achieved over the last 4-year period. A copy was circulated with the agenda.

3150 DISCUSSION TOPICS

Nil

3151 CORRESPONDENCE

Incoming – The Hon Pat Conroy MP – Response to FNQROC letter supporting PNG NRL.

Noted.

Outgoing – The Hon Stephen Jones MP – Letter of Support for CQ University CBD Campus Project.

Noted

3152 FNQROC POLICY REVIEW

Nil

3153 FNQROC REPORTS AND MOUS

Nil

3154 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet – 1 July 2023 to 24 January 2024

MOVED: Cr Peter Scott

SECOND: Cr Rod Marti

Motion

That the profit and Loss and Balance Sheet Reports for the period FY 1 July 2023 to 24 January 2024 be adopted and accepted.

CARRIED

3155 ATTENDANCE & MINUTES OF MEETING

Noted.

3156 LGAQ POLICY EXECUTIVE DISCUSSION – CR PETER SCOTT

Nothing to report. If any issues, please raise with Cr Peter Scott to take to LGAQ Policy Executive.

Cr Peter Scott encouraged the group to become involved and put hand up for the position with LGAQ.

3157 MINUTES OF ADVISORY COMMITTEES

FNQROC Regional Water Capacity Meeting #1 (Contract/Pre-start) – 10 January 2024

Noted

FNQ RRTG TC Meeting – 12 January 2024

Noted

3158 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

FNQROC Regional Bio-solids Sub-Committee – 9 January 2024

Noted

Regional Coordinator, Disaster Management

The position would establish a Climate Resilience Technical Committee to design and develop scope and terms of reference for Disaster Management Response review and then make recommendations on delivery back to the board.

MOVED: Cr Michael Kerr

SECOND: Cr Barry Hughes

Motion

Apply for grants for a Regional Coordinator of Disaster Management and Resilience.

CARRIED

Transparency of ageing State/Federal Infrastructure

MOVED: Cr Barry Hughes

SECOND: Cr Mark Nolan

Motion

Transparency of ageing State/Federal infrastructure – send a letter to both ministers requesting regular periodic transparency with local government on aging infrastructure, including asset management.

CARRIED

Disaster Exemptions

Action: FNQROC to investigate post disaster exemptions for environmental related regulation – This should include Wet Tropics and Marine Infrastructure, is 1 year enough time. and consider what was allowed post Yasi.

Risk of temporary fixes on arterial routes in the region

MOVED: Cr Angela Toppin

SECOND: Cr Rod Marti

Motion

FNQROC to investigate and write a letter to LGAQ in regards to the risk of temporary fixes on arterial routes in the region. The aim is to seek transparency and assurance of priority for these sites.

CARRIED

Kuranda and the Ranges

Action: FNQROC to send letter to the new minister and DG TMR. Correspondence should remind of previous requests and the recent event highlighting extreme need for a robust resilient route.

Reseal Types

Action: FNQROC to investigate and seek pricing on a study to understand the whole of life cost pricing for different seal types across our region to better inform decision when procuring.

Feral Pigs

- FNQROC contributing to collaborative bid made by regional NRM Groups and essentially consulting with NAMAC on what is agreed.

FNQROC Away Board Meeting (June 2024)

- Reminder that the next Away FNQROC Board meeting will be held on Thursday 6 June 2024 in Tully to mark the Centenary. Reminder to book accommodation early.


FNQROC Away Board Meeting (October 2024)

- Tablelands Regional Council has requested to hold the October Away Board meeting in their region.

3160 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at **Barlow Park in Cairns at 2pm on Thursday 18 April 2023**. This date may be rescheduled if new Mayors haven't been sworn in by that date.

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 1.04pm.



.....

Cr Michael Kerr, FNQROC Chair

AGREED ACTION ITEMS

Thursday 01 February 2024

Minute #	Action	Responsible person
3159a	Disaster Exemptions - FNQROC to investigate post disaster exemptions for environmental related regulation – This should include Wet Tropics and Marine Infrastructure, is 1 year enough time. and consider what was allowed post Yasi.	A Archie FNQROC
3159b	Kuranda and the Ranges - FNQROC to send letter to the new minister and DG TMR. Correspondence should remind of previous requests and the recent event highlighting extreme need for a robust resilient route.	A Archie FNQROC
3159c	Reseal Types - FNQROC to investigate and seek pricing on a study to understand the whole of life cost pricing for different seal types across our region to better inform decision when procuring.	A Archie FNQROC

FNQROC Board Meetings for 2024

Date	Venue
Thursday 1 February 2024	Cairns
Thursday 18 April 2024	Cairns
Thursday 6 June 2024	Tully
Thursday 1 August 2024	Cairns
Thursday 3 October 2024	Tablelands Regional Council
Thursday 5 December 2024	Cairns