



Shire of Merredin

Innovating the Wheatbelt

OUR COMMUNITY VISION

“Merredin is a sustainable regional centre with a bright future.”

Draft Minutes

Bushfire Brigades

Annual General Meeting

24 June 2020

4.00pm

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The purpose of Council Meetings is to discuss, and where possible, make resolutions about items appearing on the agenda. Whilst Council has the power to resolve such items and may in fact, appear to have done so at the meeting, no person should rely on or act on the basis of such decision or on any advice or information provided by a Member or Officer, or on the content of any discussion occurring, during the course of the meeting.

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1.0 Official Opening

The Chairperson Stephen Crook opened the meeting at 4.03 pm and welcomed all in attendance.

2.0 Attendance and Apologies

Delegates

Name	Organisation	Position
Stephen Crook	Collgar Brigade	Chief Bushfire Control Officer Chair
John Flockart	Korbelka Brigade	Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer/Captain
David Beck	South Burracoppin Brigade	Captain/Fire Control Officer
Michael Caughey	Nukarni/Nokaning Brigade	Captain/Fire Control Officer
Darren Major	Muntadgin Brigade	Captain/Fire Control Officer
Paul Wanless	Muntadgin Brigade	Fire Control Officer
Steve Higgins	Collgar Brigade	Captain
Glenn Crees	Collgar Brigade	Fire Control Officer
Kael Crees	Collgar Brigade	Lieutenant
Cr Phil Van Der Merwe	Shire of Merredin	Council Delegate

Officers

Name	Organisation	Position
Mark Dacombe left meeting at 5.03 pm	Shire of Merredin	Temporary Chief Executive Officer
Andrina Prnich	Shire of Merredin	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Stacey Jaskiewicz	Shire of Merredin	Ranger
Gabriella Rechichi	Shire of Merredin	ASO – Minutes

Non-Voting Delegates

Name	Organisation	Position
Cr Julie Flockart	Shire of Merredin	President
Cr Mal Willis	Shire of Merredin	Deputy President
Cr Mark McKenzie	Shire of Merredin	Councillor

Apologies

Name	Organisation	Position
Colin Miller	Hines Hill Brigade	Captain/Fire Control Officer
John Goodier	Korbelka	Fire Control Officer
Joe Alvaro	Nukarni/Nokanning	Fire Control Officer
Chris Barnett	Burracoppin	Fire Control Officer
Nigel Edgecombe	South Burracoppin	Fire Control Officer

3.0 Confirmation of Minutes

3.1 Confirmation of Minutes of 21 March 2019 (*Attachment 1*)

CMRef 82349 Bushfire Control Officers Annual General Meeting Minutes of Meeting 21 March 2019

Recommendation: That the Minutes of the Bushfire Control Officers Annual General Meeting held 21 March 2019, as amended be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

Moved: Stephen Crook

Seconded: Glenn Crees

Carried

4.0 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Risk Management – risk to resource increased new solar farm

5.0 Election of Officer Bearers – 2020/2021 Fire Season

To nominate for the vacant positions, nominations must be made by an accredited Fire Control Officer. Andrina Prnich was nominated as Returning Officer.

Moved: Stephen Crook

Seconded: John Flockart

Carried

The Returning Officer declared all Bush Fire Brigade positions vacant and called for nominations for the below positions:

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Glenn Crees nominated Stephen Crook

Moved: Glenn Crees

Seconded: Steve Higgins

There being no further nominations Stephen Crook was re-elected to the position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer. Stephen Crook accepted the position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

Carried

Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Glenn Crees nominated: John Flockart

Moved: Glenn Crees

Seconded: Steve Higgins

Steve Higgins nominated Michael Caughey

Moved: Steve Higgins

Seconded: John Flockart

John Flockart and Michael Caughey departed the room to allow for the meeting to conduct a secret vote which resulted in John Flockart receiving 5 votes and Michael Caughey receiving 1 vote.

After receiving the majority of votes, John Flockart was re-elected to the position of Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, which he accepted.

Carried

Fire Control Officers

Nominated: As listed below.

Moved: Steve Higgins

Seconded: Michael Caughey

That the following people being appointment as Fire Control Officers of the Shire of Merredin for the 2020/21 fire season:

Name	Brigades
Chris Barnett	Burracoppin
Nigel Edgecombe/David Beck	Burracoppin South
Steve Higgins/ Glenn Crees	Collgar
Colin Miller/Cam Gethin	Hines Hill
Chris Hooper/John Flockart/John Goodier	Korbelka
Darren Major/Paul Wanless	Muntadgin
Joe Alvaro/Michael Caughey/Neil Smith	Nukarni/Nokanning
Stephen Crook	Shire of Merredin

Carried

Fire Weather Officers

Nominated: As listed below

Moved: Steve Higgins

Seconded: Michael Caughey

That the following people be appointed as Fire Weather Officers of the Shire of Merredin for the 2020/21 fire season.

Name	Brigades
Chris Barnett	North East
Nigel Edgecombe	South East
Neil Smith	North
Chris Hooper	South West
Stephen Crook	Central
Paul Wanless	South
Cam Gethin	West

Carried

Dual Fire Control Officers

Nominated: As listed below.

Moved: Darren Major

Seconded: Glenn Crees

That the following people be re-appointed as Dual Fire Control Officers of the Shire of Merredin for the 2020/21 fire season.

Name	Brigades
Chris Hooper and John Flockart	Bruce Rock
Cam Gethin and Colin Miller	Kellerberrin
Michael Caughey and Neil Smith	Nungarin

Carried

After conducting a voting process for all positions, it was declared that the positions for the 2020/21 fire season remained the same as the 2019/20 fire season with the exception of former Shire of Merredin Ranger Kim Friis, who was removed from any positions he previously held.

6.0 Brigade Reports

6.1 Chief Bushfire Control Officer

With the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic, the severity of the bush fires engulfing the eastern states and large areas of the eastern goldfields at the start of our fire season are now a distant memory.

Back in early Nov, with DFES resources already deployed to the horrendous fires in the eastern states, the fire at Balladonia was cutting road and rail links and drawing more and more DFES resources.

On Nov 10, John and I were asked to join a DFES phone hook-up with other CBFCO'S and listen to a report from the Balladonia Incident Controller. This was both an enlightening and frightening experience. I heard in real time the complex issues surrounding incident management. My initial thought was that this phone hook-up would lead to a request for volunteers to be deployed out to Balladonia, but instead I was asked if we had any concerns about our own level of resources if we had a significant fire because DFES assistance may be limited. DFES asked us to take every precaution to reduce our fire risk. (NOTE we had FRS, SES and BFB volunteers register for deployment, I believe four went).

During this November period, Merredin Bush Fire services had its own structural issues. With a newly elected Shire President, the staff changeover of the Shire CEO, the Shire Ranger, the Shire Works Forman, placing a lot of the BFS responsibilities on the Acting CEO, Kellie Bartley. The two operational issues that occurred at this time was Water Corp ordering the Shire to lock up the standpipes, and the Solar Farm, Monford Construction pushing the boundaries on TFB and HB compliance.

I wish to acknowledge the timely assistance given to me by the then DCEO come Acting CEO Kellie Bartley. Kellie was contactable 24/7 to roll out the TFB and HB

whisper SMS, authorize Shire works resources, and getting the standpipes unlocked and the many other issues that arose this year.

With these past disruptions in mind , I am prepared to continue my role as CBFCO, for another year, if nominated, but ask that your due consideration be given to the election of the DCBFCO, as I have already passed the maximum ten years I set myself.

Incident Dates

Oct 28 TFB + HB

Nov 9 TFB + HB

Nov 10 TFB + HB

Nov 14 header fire -Nokanning

Nov 16 TFB + HB

Nov 18 header fire - Nokanning

Nov 19 TFB no HB

Nov 22 – header fire Muntadgin

Dec 1 – 3 lightning strike Burracoppin

Dec 4 car fire Burracoppin

Dec 4 lightning strike Muntadgin

Dec 6 TFB + HB (BK Shire did not impose HB when FDI 58 during the TFB)

Dec 7 TFB + HB

Dec 24 HB whisper by new ranger Stacey Jaskiewicz

Dec 25 lightening strike Burracoppin,

Dec 26 fire Nungarin

Jan 1 HB

Jan 28 TFB + HB (FDI 63)

Feb 5 HB

Feb 6 Lightning strike Nungarin boundary

Feb 7 TFB + HB

Feb 9 week old lightning strike Muntadgin (Yilgarn Shire, ESE Naremben).

Feb 14 lightning strike Nokanning

Feb 15 HB

Feb 19 -21 lightning strike Korbalka (sw belka. Coolihan RD)

Water catchment reserve , crown vested in the Shire, DEPAW
have mitigation but not response , it was Shire problem.

Feb 23 train engine fire – Burracoppin, (FRS 1am)

Mar 30 uncontrolled burn on Chandler rd 3 brigade units and six farmer units
while trying to maintain social
distancing.

March 31 received notification from Emergency Serv Commission of decision
to extend RBP through to the end of April.

May 22 TFB imposed for the 23/24 May super storm. Issue with town residents
not aware.

At LG level , we are already imposed a Prohibition On Burning.

May 25 truck stopped on hwy with overheated brake , WAPOL did not request
assistance.

May 29 uncontrolled burn railway line west of Burracoppin. 12am – 330 am found
nothing.

In summary. 10 TFB, 13 HB, 16 fires for brigades plus the two controlled burns
in town during prohibited.

Well done to all those brigade vollies who attended these incidents or were on
standby. No injuries or major damage to brigade units or private vehicles. Some
scratches and two tyre punctures.

Thanks to new DCEO Andrina, who while busy getting a handle on her new
position, made the effort to contact me. Then came Covid 19, self-isolation,
phone hook-ups, Zoom meetings and the postponement of our AGM.

Thanks also to new ranger Stacey, hit the ground running in December with the
whisper SMS keeping everyone in the Shire informed and now working her way
through the PPE distribution and brigade truck servicing. I think enjoying putting
HR licence into action. Stacey is keen to get to know you all and work through
issues arising in Bush Fire Services. I know our relationship with ranger services
has been scarred over three years, that is now past, and we need to reset our
understanding of the support role LG plays in helping volunteers to keep our
Shire bushfire safe.

Need to accumulate big budget that needs replacing. Speed up replacement
vehicle process replacement/operating budget which will be followed up by the
Shire.

Shire's Permit books are incorrect. Need to investigate if current books can still
be used or need to be replaced in case an issue needs to go to court.

Thankyou

Stephen Crook

6.2 Shire of Merredin

Stacey Jaskiewicz:

Servicing of all vehicle's is almost complete for the 2019/20 financial year with the two remaining light tankers from Burracoppin and Colgar to be serviced once arrangements have been made with the Captains.

Available to attend brigade meetings with prior notice and organise dates for distributing uniforms, DCEO will also attend.

DFES update, the regional duty coordinator number was provided to the meeting. If unsure of anything when on scene, it is a good number for back up. Chemical spills, road closures, if need Water Corporation or Western Power. Etc. Comms centre can be frustrating, all recorded.

Please send the Shire of Merredin copies of the Permit's to burn.

Andrina Prnich:

Indication from DFES that next year's budget will be increased as per grant request. Budget is based on previous years expenditure, each year the available budget will increase. Ranger is currently undergoing the necessary training in order to maintain the administrative fire permit matters for town site.

Cr Van Der Merwe:

Advised the meeting if volunteers that Councillors are happy to speak direct to the CEO if there are any issues that need to be resolved.

6.3 Burracoppin Brigade

No representative in attendance

6.4 Burracoppin South Brigade

David Beck

Two fire call outs resulting from lightning strikes, which took 5 hours to shut power off. Issues with main hose on back of truck.

Only 4,000 litres of water available at overhead concrete tank which needs major repairs. This tank takes too long to fill, tank needs to be filled need a new system.

Unable to source water out of 50,000L tank as it was decommissioned by Water Corp. Was told the tank was going to be recommissioned in a couple of weeks' time by a Shire employee back in August 2019.

Currently using private water.

Waiting on different size fire unit.

6.5 Collgar Brigade

The shed at Collgar is rapidly deteriorating and a replacement shed will need to be quoted.

Having the same issues as South Burracoppin with having to source private water as the tanks require works.

6.6 Hines Hill Brigade

No representative attended the meeting

6.7 Korbelka Brigade

John Flockart

One fire call-out on Crankston Road, attended a fire in Burracoppin fire permits were restricted due to COVID-19. Repeater needs service. 12 watt charger for each handheld needed (CBFCO, DBCO and each brigade). Would like to hold a meeting so that uniforms can be distributed to members.

6.8 Muntadgin Brigade

Darren Major

There has been one fire call out in the last 8 months.

Muntadgin has damaged tanks and water resources is a major issue for the Shire, requested water be a priority to the Shire.

There is an issue with the roller door on the fire shed which was reported at the previous meeting in October 2019 and is still to be responded to by the Shire.

Keys for the Muntadgin tanks, which were delivered in September/October also open the South Burracoppin tanks.

9 new recruits through recent meeting.

Noted: The roller door has been re-reported to the Shire Ranger for repairs

6.9 Nukarni/Nokanning Brigade

Two house fires one truck fire people did not take safety seriously air conditioning unit blew up. Phone projection was not working.

3-day fire with no State resources.

There was a total fire ban on 6-7 December which neighbouring Shire did not put out ban notice which makes things frustrating.

7.0 General Business

7.1 Brigade Incident Reports

Monthly incident reports need to be sent to the Shire Ranger prior to be sent to DFES to ensure reports are not misplaced. Week permits are recommended as it can be pointless giving 2-3 day permits. Ranger is to be included in messages when photos of permits are sent around. Risk to resources needs to be completed and submitted to DFES

7.2 DFES ID Forms

Permit books still reflect FESA rather than DFES. Concerns that this would no longer be valid.

Noted: This has since been followed up by Ranger with DFES who have advised that the books are still valid and do not need to be disposed of and replaced.

7.3 Standpipe Keys

Every unit including the FCO's need to have more than one set of keys that work. Shire needs to unlock water standpipes. The new Shire EMDS will need to speak with Stephen Crook as the previous engineer is no longer in the position.

7.4 Vehicle Fuelling

The meeting discussed the process for paying for the re-fuelling of fire vehicles. The previous process of using Great Southern petrol cards is no longer available and volunteers have been paying for petrol with their own personal credit cards which means payments are not reflected in the operational budget. The Shire will investigate what options are available including issuing new petrol cards.

7.5 PPE

Uniforms need to be re-issued after being issued for five years to be compliant with insurance. Protective helmets need to be issued to each volunteer's I.D number. Boots can be re-issued if damaged if they were issued as part of uniform and not personal boots. 30 kit bags are available and more to be ordered.

7.6 Training & Training Dates 2020

DFES will provide training, limit of one trainer per 4 people so will need to give DFES sufficient notice. August is a possible option to avoid clashes with farmers. The issue was raised that training needs to be relevant as current course is too heavy for what is required and training not take up more than 2 days or held on weekends. Cr Van Der Merwe raised the issue that if training is made only relevant to Merredin that if someone moves to another district, they will not have the correct knowledge on what to do. Training remains the same state-wide. There are two volunteer trainer assessors in the area. Need to investigate options.

7.7 Firebreak Orders 2020/21

Recommendation: Firebreak Orders to remain the same

Moved: Darren Major

Seconded: Michael Caughey

Carried

7.8 Prohibited/Restricted Burning Periods

Recommendation: Prohibited/Restricted Burning Periods to remain the same

Moved: Darren Major

Seconded: Michael Caughey

Carried

7.9 – *Other Matters Raised*

Risk to resource view now required

Contact list to comms centre requiring updates and circulation

Each unit requires at least three radio and they need charging.

8.0 Next Meeting

Schedule of Meetings:

Pre-season - Fire Control Officers 2020	October 2020
Bush Fire Control Officers AGM 2021	March 2021

9.0 Meeting Closure

There was no further business and the Chairperson closed the meeting at 6.47 pm thanking all those in attendance.