

**MINUTES OF STANLEY RURAL COMMUNITY INCORPORATED MEETING
HELD AT THE STANLEY SOLDIERS MEMORIAL HALL**

Sunday 4 March 2012 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT:

E. Tyrie (President), Ms. G. Milham (Vice-president), M. Byrne (Secretary), C. Brett (Treasurer), Ms. C. Ferguson (Committee Member), plus 25 (twenty-five) financial members and 11 (eleven) non-members

IN ATTENDANCE:

B. Gaffney (Indigo Shire Councillor)

APOLOGIES:

Ms. J. Willis (Committee Member), Ms. D. Peel, Ms. A. Hunter, M. Vlot.

WELCOME:

E. Tyrie (President) took the Chair, opened the Meeting and welcomed all present..

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS:

Mr. Tyrie read a summary of the Minutes of the Community Meeting & Special General Meeting (SGM) dated 19 June 2011 and explained that today's Community Meeting would similarly constitute a Special General Meeting (SGM), in which only financial members could vote.

Moved (that the Minutes be accepted): Ms. S. McKay; seconded: Ms. T. McNally. Carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Treasurer C. Brett reported that, as at 29th February 2012, SRCI's No. 1 bank account with Bendigo Bank showed a balance of \$21,354.91 and its No. 2 account balance was \$7,482.23, so that SRCI's financial situation was sound, although mainly as a result of three grants that had been received during the current financial year. These were: \$2,200.00 from Indigo Shire Council, \$4,954.50 from FaHCSIA Canberra and \$17,160.00 from FRRR Bendigo. He explained that the first account handles membership fees and other matters in connection with SRCI administration, while the second account is used for the financial dealings of the interim Stanley Post Office.

Moved (that the Treasurer's Report be accepted) D. Lyon; seconded: D. McKay. Carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION CONFIRMING ALTERATIONS TO RULES OF THE ASSOCIATION:

Secretary M. Byrne read out the proposed alteration to the Rules of the Association, after which it was resolved to put the proposed alteration to Rules to a vote.

Moved [that the alteration to Rule 20 – Committee of Management – sub-paragraph (3) be passed]: C. Kidd; seconded: H. Knopers. Carried unanimously.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON PROGRESS SINCE COMMUNITY MEETING OF 19 JUNE 2011:

Mr. Byrne referred to various initiatives discussed at the June 2011 meeting, listing successes in the following:

- (i) beginning a Stanley Youth Group (in conjunction with Council);
- (ii) the two grant applications submitted at that time, plus a third since;
- (iii) the Stanley websites and The Nine Mile News are now all managed and operated by SRCI.

He also pointed out, however, that:

- (a) the application to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund (VBAF) for a 'Memorial Park' grant had not been successful. This was because only the interest on \$1 million will be available to a number of fire-affected communities in Indigo (Stanley & Bruarong) and Alpine Shires. The \$1 million itself will form the investment capital in a proposed Community Foundation that is currently being established for the benefit of those communities. Thus the radio base stations had also not been funded, although SRCI hoped this may be possible at a later date;
- (b) SRCI had developed a sound relationship with Council;
- (c) as feared in June 2011 (when its annual income was estimated at \$12,000), the Post Office will not be viable without another business (general store and/or café), since its actual annual income is likely to be \$10,000;
- (d) the concept of an unlisted public company had not been pursued strongly to date, because this presently appeared unlikely to prove attractive to Stanley residents as investment proposition for the same reason.

REPORT ON INTERIM POST OFFICE/CURRENT ACTIVITIES:

Committee Member Ms. C. Ferguson informed the Meeting that the establishment of the interim Post Office, which opened for business on 21 March 2011, less than three months after the closure of the former Post Office, had been a resounding success. This was largely due to the sterling efforts of the 30-plus volunteers, who had undergone police checks and who had ensured that the Post Office had opened every day of the week for almost a year.

She informed the Meeting, however, that the temporary Post Office's opening hours restrict its activities to being a Community Postal Agent (CPA), with no BillPay or other electronic facilities. Only if it could become a Licensed Post Office (LPO) that opened all day from Monday to Friday could its potential income be increased by providing such facilities. Moreover, if Stanley continues as a CPA there is always the possibility that someone else could secure Australia Post's support by operating an LPO and thus SRCI could lose its licence, which is renewable every two years. An LPO has no fixed term and may be assigned at any time, subject to Australia Post's approval.

Ms. Ferguson confirmed that, as mentioned above, SRCI continues to investigate strategies for combining the Post Office with another business, such as a general store and/or cafe, with the intention that they would be mutually supportive and commercially viable, but that this was not possible in the current portable building in its present location.

UPDATE ON FUTURE PERMANENCY PROSPECTS:

The question was asked: 'does Stanley still want a Post Office?' and a substantial show of hands indicated this was the case.

Vice President Ms. G. Milham next reported on SRCI's ongoing discussions with Council's Planning Manager regarding the possible solutions to securing a permanent 'home for the Post Office. Since Stanley is currently zoned 'Farming', a change in this status will be necessary for any site in Stanley (with the possible exception of the former General Store & Post Office). She reminded the Meeting that Council's Rural Land Strategy, which commenced in 2009, continues to be studied, although Council had decided a few months ago to reinstate a 'township' area in the centre of Stanley.

She showed photographs of the four shortlisted locations and invited the audience to vote in order of their preference for each site, with a view to identifying the most popular, even though, as matters stand now, any 'final' choice will have to undergo scrutiny in terms of planning permission etc.

- The former General Store & Post office may not require Council Planning permission to operate again, as the exemption under which it operated in the past may still be available, although this is not certain at the moment. Its main drawback is expected to be the likely sale price.
- The former Presbyterian Church building is possibly for sale, with its owner interested in maintaining its heritage status, which may be positive for its use as a Post Office i.e. a community purpose, since this may entitle it to planning permission. Agreement from neighbours would need to be sought.
- The existing Uniting Church building is heritage listed, but it may be possible to build a separate structure behind it on the block to operate as a Post Office, but cost will be a factor. Also, the complication of building on land that is not owned by the party wishing to build may mean handing over 'our' structure to the Uniting Church if its P.O. role ended. Planning permission would also be required. Approval from neighbours would also be needed.
- The Recreation Reserve new pavilion already exists, with extension plans (thus potential cost factors would be lower since acquisition is not involved). The Stanley Recreation Reserve Incorporated Committee (SRRIC) had not yet replied officially to SRCI's enquiry (as to the possibility of installing the Post Office in the pavilion), but Mr. Richard Maskiell, SRRIC Chairman, advised the Meeting that the pavilion's Neighbourhood Safer Place (NSP) status was his Committee's first priority and Australia Post's security requirements may not be compatible with the NSP, to say nothing of the pavilion's role as a sports and social venue.

The Meeting paused at this point while refreshments were taken and voting by those present took place, with the four photographed sites to be displayed in the Post office, so that residents who were unable to attend the Meeting could also vote.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Mr. Tyrie reminded the Meeting that SRCI's first Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held in the Hall on Sunday 22 April 2012 commencing at 2.00pm. At the AGM a new Committee would be announced, provided nominations were made with the regulatory 7-day notice and proposed & seconded by two financial SRCI members.

CLOSURE:

The Meeting closed at 4.30PM

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