

# SBCA Meeting

6<sup>th</sup> August

## Attendance

*Covid-19 attendance was recorded for contact tracing purposes*

40 Community Members in attendance. Meeting was live-streamed on the Sisters Beach facebook page.

Waratah-Wynyard Council representatives:

General Manager Shane Crawford, Director Community and Engagement Tracey Bradley and Councillors' Darren Fairbrother and Celisa Edwards

## General Meeting (to be followed by AGM)

SBCA President Jono Vincent welcomed everyone and introduced Council representatives. Gave a brief history of SBCA, formed around 25 years ago, with the aim of keeping Sisters Beach as a great place to live acknowledging the growth of the town over the last 50 years or so. SBCA gathers people together to share opinions and liaise with all levels of government.

## **Presidents Report**

Jono

Due to covid, SBCA have not met since January.

- Australia Day event. The biggest community gathering on the Sisters Beach calendar. Continues to grow with attendance over 200. The Event designed for all ages, has many kids activities including a colour fun run. Live music and stalls entertain other attendees. A free entry event helped by a grant of \$2000 from the Waratah-Wynyard Council (WWC). A Great amount of help from community volunteers. We do make a small profit from this event, Public liability insurance being our main expense for this event.
- Creek area. After years of no action and locals concerned about the safety and aesthetics of the creek area, taking matters into their own hands SBCA have worked to get permission from crown lands and Council for the maintenance of the creek banks on the Eastern side. Also working with the Penny Paper Bark Project headed by Colin Hocking who are replanting the creek area and forming a Wildcare group.
- Camping. Following the closure of camping at Boat Harbour Beach and plans by the Mayor to move camping to Sisters Beach. SBCA lobbied hard to halt the opening of camp ground and at least consult with the community and form a management plan before even considering a facility of this type. Some SBCA members joined a working group with council members and staff and used this forum to express the great concern of many SB residents around public camping in Sisters Beach. Council did a public survey of SB residents resulting in mixed opinions on the topic and have decided that if a camp ground is to be opened in Sisters Beach it will need to be operated by a community group or an individual. They have asked for expressions of interest from anyone wishing to operate such a facility.
- Town planning. Many Sisters Beach residents were concerned when a development application for a large-scale subdivision was put forward. A meeting was arranged for people to discuss their concerns and a planning consultant was engaged to check over the DA, she pointed out possible issues. Individuals in the community made submissions to the council. The application has been withdrawn

by the developer, we are unsure when this will be resubmitted. Council have been asked to consider long-term town planning of Sisters Beach.

- Sisters Beach Rec Park. After installation of an unsuitable and poorly constructed hard stand play area a few years ago SBCA have been lobbying council to have it upgraded. WWC have committed \$70K for this to happen. Talking with the young people of the town it was clear that an area for riding Skateboards, bikes skooters and a basketball court was what was needed. SBCA have taken the lead in contacting a designer and working with the Council via a working group.
- Virtual Fencing – we see a lot of Devil Road kills on a small stretch of Sisters Beach Road. Last year the Sisters Beach Community Association (SBCA) applied for funding for some Virtual Fence Devices through the Federal Governments Communities Environment Program. Unfortunately, we were unable to secure funding at that time. In June this year, Councillor Celisa Edwards put a motion to Council to start off a process whereby Council will work with the Sisters Beach community to install wildlife virtual fencing on Sisters Beach Road prior to this Summer. Save the Devil/Council have asked for community input to identify devil roadkill hotspots. A map has been prepared which identifies hotspots. Please visit Sisters Beach website for information on how the fences work and to give feedback on the hotspot map. Big thanks Councillor Celisa Edwards and WWC for helping to get this project happening.

Ben Saward

Gave a report on the Sisters Beach Rec Park. He spoke about the history – the old court was inadequate with water pooling in the middle. Council listened to community concerns and put 70K funds in to resurface. However, after SBCA consulted with the community/kids, it became apparent that they wanted more than just a sports court. SBCA took the lead engaging a specialist skate park designer. A working group was formed including community members, councillors and council staff, this team worked on the design, which included bball, skate, skoot and bike. A grant through the Tas Community fund was applied for which was headed by Jay McGough successfully securing a further 70K for the project. Currently out to tender for construction. The aim is to have the Rec Park completed by XMAS.

#### **Treasurers Report - Ben Saward**

See attached report

#### **Tracey Bradley, Director Community and Engagement, Waratah-Wynyard Council**

Freedom Camping – Council undertook a survey earlier this year to gauge people's opinions on Freedom Camping (the SBCA was not part of this process). A report was presented to Council. A decision was made to note the survey and to go out to the public with an expression of interest. Council will not provide camping at Sisters Beach. It is up to the community. Expression of interest will go out for 6wks and will begin toward the end of August. There may not be a viable option for freedom camping at Sisters Beach.

Tracey spoke about the working groups and their function. Council set up a combined Council/community working group to tackle 3 priorities

- Hard stand (Rec Park)
- Freedom camping
- Community Centre Feasibility

It became apparent that a Community Centre would require a completely new working group to be formed for this one project. An expression of interest to be a part of this working group will be made public soon, it will look at feasibility, how will it function, who will manage it, where, what etc.

Comment from public about public camping, concerns about increases influx of people. Request for road counters to know exactly how much traffic has increased here. Can council do more – town greening, a town plan, footpaths or some traffic safety measures - if the town is going to increase in population? Does the Council's Settlement Strategy address this? Can Council introduce something like public open space contribution?

Comment from public about the Camping survey – questioned the survey methodology, it wasn't a Yes/No survey, it was a subjective survey asking for opinions, yet Council interpreted these wide range of opinions into either Yes/No and reported results to Council as statistics? 50 people responded. Asked for clarification that the expression of interest will expire at the date it finishes. Tracey said it would be up to Council if they want to go out for the expression of interest again. It was suggested that any incumbent could meet with SBCA to discuss their plans, and perhaps Council could include this as a condition of the expression of interest.

Jono raised the topic of the Waratah-Wynyard Council's recent decision to investigate a second road into Sisters Beach.

Councillor Darren Fairbrother was invited to speak. Councillor Fairbrother said he should apologies to SBCA for not consulting before putting motion forward. Spoke about Boat Harbour landslide and their secondary access road that Council investigated. Also talked about Council's iCEP. Darren claimed that there was public support for a second road, and cited 1 comment from facebook on January 11. Jono reminded the Councillor that there are around 900 people on the facebook group he was referring to and not all are from Sisters Beach. A second road has not been discussed at any SBCA meeting. Cr Fairbrother/General Manager indicated that a draft Terms of Reference for the project will be made available to the SBCA.

Question - What is intent of this road, emergency or public access? Councillor Fairbrother said it was for emergency only.

Question – is the emergency road for emergency vehicles only or for the public (is the intent for a 2wd vehicle to be able to travel on this road) – this was not answered.

Public Comment – support an emergency entrance. Plan for future.

Public Comment – what is the cost to Council? Is there a financial benefit to any stakeholders? General Manager said a full report would be given to community.

Public Comment – Dr. Colin Hocking (has worked on fire ecology for 25 years), proposed we look at the need for a second road before doing what this motion asks for which is investigating 'where would a road go'. It is a seductive notion that when there is a fire you can get on the back road and drive out, the Fire Plan for Sisters Beach says leave early or stay, do not go at the last minute on an emergency road. Highlighted that NW Tasmania is different to other parts of the country in terms of fire ecology. Spoke about the Fire Danger Index. Mallocoota bushfire had a fire index of 115, Dunalley bushfire had a fire index of 90, the maximum fire index you get in Rocky Cape National Park is 25. Proposed an amendment to the Councillors motion and asked that he amend it in good faith 'to look at the need and priority of an emergency road first'. Also - during covid, for non-urgent issues, issue that may be controversial and stressful at this time, please defer for a time when the fragility of the community is not heightened. Added that the Tasmanian Fire Service have not been consulted at all about this proposal – concerning.

Public Comment – can the project scope be shown to community before going any further/ahead? General Manager agreed.

Public Comment – blind spot on Kenelm corner (near walkway)

Public Comment – speed limit on Sisters Beach Rd (speeding), lack of policing, general question about speed humps. A suggestion that there may be some better designs available now. Speeding on Irby Blvd is a problem.

Public Comment – Council should consult community about footpaths, roadways, speeding on Irby Blvd, planning for future of town.

Notice - Tas Fire are starting their Spring Fire Reduction Burns – starting on Monday (subject to suitable weather conditions and to the fuels having the right moisture levels on the day). Notice on Sisters Beach website.

Ben encouraged everyone to come to Tas Fire's next education session, as numbers are traditionally low. If people are concerned about fire risk they should attend, educate and prepare.

Colin reminded everyone that we are in a good position here in Sisters Beach; we can stay and defend or leave early. Everyone should make a fire plan.

## **AGM**

There were no new nominations. Existing positions were re-filled.

President – Jono Vincent

Vice President - Vacant

Treasure – Ben Saward

Secretary – Mark Loughran

Term until 21 February 2020

It was agreed that the SBCA would hold quarterly meetings

Information is always placed on the website [www.sistersbeach.org](http://www.sistersbeach.org)