**Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative**

**Community Meeting**

**Monday 18 March 2019**

**62 Morgan St, North Geelong**

**Commenced 5:30pm**

**Attendees:**

Emma Cotsell, Fiona Ryan, Doreen Griffiths, Tayla Marshall, Gwenda Black, Hayley Couzens, Libby Lesock, Edel Conroy, Luke Searle, Kristi Watts, Vicki Figg, Jasmine-Skye Marinos, Shaun Coade, Mick Ryan, Craig Edwards, Wendy Brabham, Sarah Milo, Judith Dalton-Walsh, Lisa Briggs, Sue Tapping, Naomi Surtees, Eileen Smith, Tania Dalton, Shantelle Baillie, Shellee Strickland, Sandra Brogden, Naomi Edwards, Megan Frazer.

1. **Welcome by Chairperson**

Craig Edwards thanked all attendees for taking the time to be present at the meeting; he noted that of 110 staff with around 60% being Aboriginal the turnout of staff is a bit disappointing and we need to improve upon attendance from both staff and community. Judy Dalton-Walsh performed the Welcome to Country.

1. **Respect protocol – Minute’s silence**

Before proceeding with the meeting Craig Edwards spoke about the skeletal remains that were unearthed by Major Road Projects on the Princes Highway near Colac’s Murray Street Bridge. These remains have been repatriated in Colac. Wendy Brabham also acknowledged the 50 deaths in Christchurch, New Zealand and as an organisation and Community we offer our condolences to the Muslim Community who have suffered a terrible loss. The Chairperson then held a minute’s silence for those who we have lost recently.

**ACTION: Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative on behalf of the organisation and our Community are to send formal condolences to the Muslim community in Christchurch, New Zealand.**

1. **Apologies**

Renee Owen, Sandy Manning, Jo Chester, Margie Hayes, Justine McCarthy, Renee Howell, Herb Goonan, Samantha Watts, Stephen Walsh, Michael Thorne, Lachlan Edwards, Tegan Edwards, Jordan Edwards, Tahlia Dempsey, Kevin Bartlett, Joel Tapping, Jessica Tapping, Phil King.

1. **Previous minutes**
   1. **Business arising from previous minutes**

No business arising.

* 1. **Acceptance of 17 December 2018 minutes**

Craig Edwards clarified agenda item 8, Other General Business a) Pako Festa, when referencing all Traditional Owners he was speaking of the Wathaurong Traditional Owners and the Registered Aboriginal Party group Traditional Owners located in Ballarat.

**Moved:** Naomi Surtees **Seconded:** Kristi Watts

1. **Finance Update**

**Discussion:** Lisa Briggs advised that as recorded earlier, Wathaurong’s Finance Manager Kevin Bartlett is an apology - however, she provided the following quick update on Wathaurong’s new funding announcements that were received since the last meeting:

* Indigenous Australian Health Program (IAHP) Primary Health Care Activity $6,927,500 - Wathaurong have submitted for this Health Service grant – our current funding is $1.2 million grant
* Aboriginal Workforce Development Initiative (AWDI) $481,700 – looks at developing staff by assisting them in obtaining Certificate III to Diplomas in relevant areas of study
* Colac Gathering Place $120,000
* DHHS-Aboriginal Learning grant – which is a $5,700 scoping grant for workforce development

Wathaurong is carrying a surplus for 2018/2019 of $300,000 which is expected to be spent by end of financial year.

Craig Edwards put forward a motion that the members note the Wathaurong funding announcements received for the January – March 2019 period.

**Moved:** Fiona Ryan **Seconded:** Doreen Griffiths

1. **Gunyanggurta Yanabil ‘Trusted Visitor’ Aboriginal Volunteers Reference Group presentation**

**Discussion:** Mick Ryan presented a short PowerPoint about Gunyanggurta Yanabil ‘Trusted Visitor’, an Aboriginal Volunteers project currently in development at Barwon Health; with the Gunyanggurta Yanabil ‘Trusted Visitor’ Aboriginal Volunteers Reference Group that consists of Mick Ryan, Renee Owen, Libby Lesock, Renee Howell, Vicki Figg, Janis Koolmatrie, Colleen Howell, Alfie Oram, Shellee Strickland, Fiona Ryan and Megan Frazer. Mick noted the following:

* This presentation listed data collected about Aboriginal patients at Barwon Health, such as:
* There are more than 3,000 Aboriginal people living in the Greater Geelong region
* In 2018 over 1,500 Aboriginal people presented at the ER, over 3,700 Aboriginal patient admissions to hospital, and there were 60 Aboriginal babies born.
* He noted that many Aboriginal people who are admitted to hospital sadly do not get visitors, especially long stay admissions. There is a high number of patients who don’t receive visitors which is clearly impacting their health, so these visits can make a big difference to a patient.
* This is where the idea for an Aboriginal Volunteer program came from and is currently being developed.
* Barwon Health do currently have a Volunteer Program with over 1,300 volunteers in various roles but none of the volunteers are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The proposed Aboriginal Volunteer program will engage Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.
* It’s the Aboriginal Health Unit who are starting a volunteer visiting program at Barwon Health. These volunteers will visit Aboriginal Community members while they are in hospital. If you or someone else in the Community is interested, you can speak with Mick Ryan or anyone on the Gunyanggurta Yanabil ‘Trusted Visitor’ Aboriginal Volunteers Reference Group to register your interest.

**Response:** There were concerns by those present about transport and parking costs that the volunteers would have to pay. It was agreed that further discussion needs to be had as the economic scale/income of an Aboriginal person is different, and this financial standing needs to be considered.

Sandra Brogden suggested that Aboriginal students year 10-12 could volunteer as part of their hours of placement, if they were undertaking a Certificate in Community Services (Community Work).

1. **Other General Business**
   1. **State-wide Basketball tournament**

**Discussion:** Craig Edwards announced the Wathaurong teams’ outcomes from attending VACSAL’s State-wide Basketball tournament in Shepparton from 10-12 March. The WestVic Eels, comprised of local players from Geelong and Warrnambool, won the finals in Men’s A Grade. Wathaurong’s Men’s B Grade won one game and enjoyed participating in the tournament. Wathaurong’s two women’s teams played, with the U12’s made it to the semi-finals and the Women’s B Grade team made it to the finals but lost by 3 points. Craig acknowledged Naomi Edwards and Duane Luki for their hard work in ensuring our mob had proper representation at the State-wide Basketball tournament; and noted how important it is for our mob to come together with other mobs and hope to see more of this at future sports carnivals. Shellee Strickland echoed that sentiment and credited Wathaurong and the Board for achieving this positive outcome and supporting Community.

* 1. **Renewing the Reconciliation Action Plan with City of Greater Geelong**

**Discussion:** Tania Dalton spoke about the City of Greater Geelong being in the process of renewing the Reconciliation Action Plan by consulting the Aboriginal Community by asking: what the council does well; what spaces/services are used and could be improved; and what do you want the council involved in with the Community. An example of what the council could do is place acknowledgment plaques as significant sites, Aboriginal names on buildings, developing a satellite Health Service. For further information contact Adam Muir at City of Greater Geelong.

* 1. **Wada-ngal – Celebrating all things Deadly**

**Discussion:** Mick Ryan advised that on Thursday 21 March between 4pm-7pm the City of Greater Geelong were holding a Closing the Gap event called Wada-ngal at Johnstone Park, Geelong. Wathaurong will have a tent set up there and the ‘I Dare Ya’ program will be held there instead of Morgan St. There will be Cultural activities available as well as live music and performances, plus light refreshments.

* 1. **Koorie Academy of Excellence**

**Discussion:** Sandra Brogden updated the Community on the submission for a Koorie Academy of Excellence to be established in Geelong. An Expression of Interest was put forward and unfortunately didn’t get approved. Some funding was still promised and they’re now looking at putting together a survey on what people will want when considering the education of young Community members.

* 1. **Wathaurong’s Draft Organisational Review**

**Discussion:** Lisa Briggs presented a short PowerPoint on Wathaurong’s Draft Organisational Review which provided informative data sourced from ABS and Wathaurong; these were Wathaurong’s profiles on Corporate Staff, Health Services, Family Services, Early Years, Aged Care & NDIS, Justice Related Service, and Community Engagement. The draft reviewed the organisations infrastructure and showed how realigning the business units assists Wathaurong moving forward.

Lisa acknowledged the staff for their co-operation and input, and noted that the Board of Directors also provided direction for Wathaurong’s Draft Organisational Review.

**Response:** Craig Edwards thanked Lisa, Edel and supporting staff, and fellow Board members for their commitment to improving our Co-operative.

* 1. **Community Announcements**

**Discussion:** Lisa Briggs referred to Wathaurong’s Community Announcements flyer and noted the following:

1. **Grand Mothers (grandfathers) Against Removal forum** – to be held on the 4-5 April at Camp Jungai. Discussion around Child Protection lawyers, Children and Young People’s Commissioner, Ombudsman’s office. There’ll be an opportunity for having a yarn, bush time and a camp fire.
2. **Treaty Update** – information will be sent out to members shortly. We’re also asking that you register your interest for attending a Treaty Consultation with Jill Gallagher with us.
3. **AHV Housing & Homelessness Framework** – Wathaurong will be attending a housing summit on 5 April. Community members with knowledge and expertise in Aboriginal housing issues can register their interest in attending.
4. **Government Consultation Process** – soon the Department of Human Services (DHHS), Prime Minister & Cabinet and Department of Justice & Regulation will all be holding separate Community consultations. These consultations need Community input to support Self-Determination.
5. **Health Services Announcements**

* Community should enquire about their eligibility for Practice Incentive Program (PIP) – this will give you access to free or reduced cost medication.
* Health Check appointments now available – Adults receive a $25 Woolworths groceries gift card on completion. Children who complete one are eligible for the Back to School Packs filled with goodies.

1. **Meeting closed 7:42pm**