

OBERON COUNCIL

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Present: The Mayor, Councillor K Sullivan (in the Chair), Councillors M J McMahon, N Francis and C L McCarthy.

Staff: The Acting General Manager, Mr John Chapman; the Director of Engineering, Mr Leigh Robins.

Volunteers: Craig Gibbons, Patrick Dwyer, Barry Richard, John Armstrong, Anthony Francis, Lee Cook, Ray Fitzpatrick, Brett Fitzpatrick, Gavin Colley, Peter Hammond, Anthony McGrath, Leon Booth, Steve Butterfield, Malcolm Graham, John Critten, Robert Webb, Greg Coles, David Nielsen, Mick Colley, Mark Cully, Peter Whalan and Andrew Stirling.

The meeting was called for discussions with Rural Fire Service Group Captain, Captains, Deputy Captains and volunteers in relation to current arrangements with the Rural Fire Service for management of the Chifley Zone and Bathurst, Oberon and Lithgow Districts.

Discussion points included:

- It was generally agreed that issues associated with management of the Chifley Zone had improved in the last eight months. It was noted, however, that the number of fire incidents during that period was low.
- It was generally agreed that Oberon Council should make no financial contribution towards the construction of a new headquarters in Bathurst.
- Concern was expressed at the lack of Rural Fire Service volunteers partly due to the number of absentee owners in the area. Volunteers appeared to have lost interest.
- More money is needed to take adequate care of Oberon District assets
- Smaller rapid response equipment is being taken from Local Brigades, leaving basically only tankers to service each Brigade.
- The financial and staff resources implications (if Oberon District was to split from the Chifley Zone) were discussed.
- There is a feeling that Oberon Brigades are being left out - Bathurst district Brigades appear to get priority with the allocation of new equipment. There is a perception that there are currently two groups within the zone.
- The Lithgow District operates independently with assistance from the Chifley Zone.
- Currently there are Fire Control Centres at three locations: Oberon, Lithgow and Bathurst. The management and business centre is currently located at Bathurst.
- It was agreed that Oberon should remain in the Chifley Zone provided an equitable share of staff resources and equipment is received.
- A revised formal agreement with the Rural Fire Service is required.

Minutes of the duly convened Special Meeting of the Oberon Council held at the Council Chambers, Oberon on Tuesday 24 August 2010, commencing at 6.30 pm.

General Manager

Mayor

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- Oberon affairs should be run from the Oberon headquarters - 40% or at least two full-time staff should be located at Oberon.
- Notification should be sought from Rural Fire Service management prior to the transfer in future of major equipment to Brigades in other districts.
- Group Captains will ensure that at least two Chifley Zone meetings of Group Captains are held each year.

Matters to be raised at the proposed meeting between Rural Fire Service officers, and senior staff from Bathurst Regional and Oberon Councils on 25th of August 2010 include:

1. Oberon is willing to remain in the Chifley Zone, provided an equitable share of staff resources and equipment is re-established and maintained.
2. Oberon has no objection to the proposal for the establishment of a new control centre in Bathurst, but will not contribute financially.
3. A revised formal agreement is required.
4. Oberon District affairs should be managed from Oberon (i.e. at least 2 full time staff **or** 40% of staff resources).

This concluded the business and the meeting rose at 7.35pm.

Confirmed this _____ day of _____ 2010.

General Manager.

Mayor.

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General Manager

Mayor