

# Newsletter

Wentworth Shire Council

Volume 1, Issue 2, Page 1

## WENTWORTH MEETING WITH ACTING MINISTER

Wentworth Shire Council is still scheduled to meet in Sydney about water restrictions. Council is preparing a submission and will meet with Acting Minister for Climate Change Environment and Water, Nathan Rees. The Mayor, Councillor Margaret Thomson, said that Council was extremely keen to speak to the Acting Minister Nathan Rees about the Shire's water restrictions. "Whilst dis-

appointed that Minister Koperberg had resigned I am still optimistic that a deputation from the Shire previously set up with Minister Koperberg will meet on 13 March 2008," she said. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the General Manager will make up the deputation party. Mayor Thomson went on to say that Council had formulated its case for changes to the level of

water restrictions for the Shire. "We are seeking greater flexibility on how restrictions can be managed by the Shire, and will endeavour to argue for a greater weighting to be given to rural towns when water restriction decisions are made," she said. "We will argue that the Shire and its residents should be able to water lawns to keep them alive. We will also argue that this can occur within the current water restrictions limits." Mayor Thomson said that it is important to stress to the acting Minister that there are solid social, environmental and economic reasons for a change to the way water restrictions are applied in rural towns such as those in the Shire.

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## COMMUNITY ASSETS—WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Residents are asked to identify significant community assets (trees etc.) to conserve during this long drought period. Council wants to make sure that all priority community assets are covered and watered appropriately. Council has limited re-

sources to undertake large watering projects but Council would appreciate any suggestions from the community about saving the Shire's assets. Please send your submissions by post PO Box 81, Wentworth 2648, or facsimile 50275000, telephone

5027 5040 or even email us using:-

council@wentworth.nsw.gov.au

If there are any community members who would like to volunteer to assist in saving our assets, we would also like to hear from you.



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## MIDWAY COMMUNITY CENTRE

COUNCILLORS would like to see the Midway Centre at Buronga/Gol Gol get some more use. "It is a splendid facility," Mayor, Cr Margaret Thomson, said. "But it needs to be used more often." "It is an extremely versatile building. It has several areas that lend themselves to different types of events, everything from sports training and community group meetings to birthday parties and wedding receptions at extremely competitive rates." Anyone wanting more information on the centre is invited to call Julie on 5027 5027 Council's Customer Service Officer and for bookings please call Gwen Wilkinson on 0418 969 475. The charges for hiring the Midway are listed herewith: -

### Stadium Charges

The stadium is free of charge to each School within the Wentworth shire on one occasion per year.

Stadium Hire per day (with prior approval)	\$400.00
Bond	\$450.00
Regular User Groups (do not pay bond)	\$175.00
Speech Night/Presentations	\$175.00

### Sports Training

• Regular User Groups/hour	\$20.00
• Professional Teams & Groups outside Shire/hour	\$35.00

### Functions Room

This room is free to Senior Citizens Clubs.

• Social Functions	
<i>Hire</i>	\$250.00
<i>Bond (regular user groups do not pay bond)</i>	\$400.00
• Meetings	
<i>Hire per hour</i>	\$30.00

Council will clean the Stadium or the Function Room if required at a cost of \$275.00



Council's water tanker delivering much needed water to Council's trees in Adelaide Street Wentworth as part of its recycled watering regime for saving Shire community assets (trees/parks/sportsgrounds).



# Council Meeting Notes

## Joint MUROC/RIVROC meeting

It was reported to Council that the Murray Regional Organisation of Councils and the Riverina Regional Organisation of Councils are set to merge. The new group will consist of 18 Councils and this will become a strong lobby group.

## Meeting with NSW Department of Planning

The General Manager reported that recent concerns expressed in the media about the State Government taking Section 94 contributions from Councils appeared to have been allayed. The Director General of Planning at a meeting recently in Narandera advised that Councils will not have to transfer funds to the State Government.

The meeting was advised that there are new requirements in terms of Section 94 contributions that will apply only to designated regions in the Sydney north west and south west growth centres and other areas on a case by case basis.

## Western Division Conference

Council will be represented at the Annual Western Division Conference on 2-4 March 2008 in Cobar. See article on page 5 for more details.

## Policy Update

The following policies were either amended or introduced as new policies.

- Asset Disposal (Surplus to Needs)
- Employee Confidentiality Agreement
- Communications
- Public Forum

## Code of Meeting Practice

Minor changes were made to the Code. The main change was to give notice of business by the Thursday of the week immediately preceding the Council meeting.

## Privacy Management Plan

This policy was adopted by Council to reflect the requirements of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW) and the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW). This Plan identifies the types of personal information Council can obtain and retain, and the various processes involved.

## Management Plan 2008/2009

Advertisements have been placed in local newspapers calling for any public input into the Management Plan process for this year. Expressions close on 5 March.

A community consultation process in relation to the Management Plan will occur in early April. Dates will be advertised closer to the time. The draft Management Plan will be considered by Council on Tuesday 13 May. The Management Plan will be adopted by Council on 18 June.

## Finance Quarterly Reports

Council considered the second quarter's finance reports for the period ending 31 December 2007.

## Dareton-Alcohol Free Zone

Council resolved to undertake public consultation in relation to the re-establishment of the Dareton Alcohol Free Zone.

## Wentworth Medical Practice

Council resolved that the General Manager be given delegated authority to undertake negotiations in seeking a doctor or other arrangements for the Medical Practice within 3 months and if in that time no doctor or arrangements can be made that the Medical Practice be closed.

## Recycling Options for Management Plan

Council resolved to consider recycling options in conjunction with its Management Plan for 2008/2009. See separate article on page 6.

## Review of Water and Sewer Services

The Mayor and General Manager attended a meeting in Jerilderie on 14 February to hear from the Minister of Water Utilities, Nathan Rees, about his Inquiry into the provision of water and sewer services in country New South Wales. See separate article on page 6.

## Watering Initiatives

Council resolved to approve a budget variation of up to \$50,000 to enable the immediate installation of additional dripper systems for the watering of community trees and gardens.



Pictured Left: Mayor Marg Thomson with P&G Supervisor Des Robertson at the distressed Fergie plantings at the junction



Pictured Right: The famous Inkberry tree has been saved with manual watering using recycled water



# WESTERN DIVISION CONFERENCE IN COBAR

Council will be represented in Cobar at the annual Western Division Conference on 2-4 March 2008.

Council has put 3 motions on the agenda for the conference. They focus on the following issues:

- Seeking a 10c refundable deposit on bottles and cans
- Extra funding/resources for planning department to allow decentralised planning in regional centres
- Seeking greater consideration for rural township water allocations when water restrictions are drawn up

## CHANGES TO PUBLIC FORUM

Council went down the path of making minor changes to the Public Forum Policy in order to allow staff more time to prepare for responses to be provided at the Forum itself which is held prior to Council's monthly Ordinary Council meeting.

A maximum of three minutes will be allowed for presentations. The most significant change to the policy is as follows:-

*"Individuals or groups are required to register to appear before Council by indicating in writing the statement to be made or question to be asked in as much detail that will allow the General Manager to prepare a response to the statement if considered appropriate or prepare an answer to the question to be delivered at the public forum, and that the written statement or question must be made to the General Manager's Executive Assistant prior to noon on the Monday preceding the meeting".*

## HORSES ON SHAREDWAYS

It has come to the notice of Council that the surface of the sharedways in the Shire is being damaged by horses.

The community is asked not to ride their horses on these sharedways—they are for the use of people walking or running, for prams, and bicycles. The horses are destroying the walking surface with Council having to spend more of its ratepayers money on maintaining the surface for the use of pedestrians.

Council urges the riders to refrain from using the sharedways—there

is plenty of room on the road side of the sharedways for animals to traverse.



Please help us to look after our community assets.

***The town of Wentworth turns 150 in 2009 and a Committee is enthusiastically preparing celebrations—stay tuned***

Wentworth Shire Libraries:-

Wentworth: (03) 5027 5060

Dareton: (03) 5027 4258

Buronga: (03) 5023 3078

Shire After Hours Emergency Number:-

(03) 5027 5091 (Marshall Security)

For all water, sewerage, rubbish tip hours, emergency dog matters, stray stock and cemetery emergencies.

## Next Council Meeting

The next Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 19 March 2008 at 2pm. Residents are welcome and encouraged to attend.

## WENTWORTH MEETING WITH ACTING MINISTER

(continued from page 1)

Our deputation will strongly argue that our residents will act responsibly when using water to ensure that the Shire stays within the 50% allocation cap which is in force.

"Wentworth Shire will make the point that, in a normal year, only 4% of water from the Murray Darling system is used for the towns." "Currently all towns along the Murray have had their allocations reduced by 50%. This effectively means that these towns draw upon only up to 2% of the system. This point will also be raised at the forthcoming Western Division Conference to be held in Cobar in early March." In Jerilderie on 14 February Councils in the Murray and Riverina areas of the State supported Wentworth Shire Council in its general thrust for further consideration on the way water restrictions are managed. The meeting resolved to write to the Minister seeking discretionary authority for councils in relation to lawn watering.

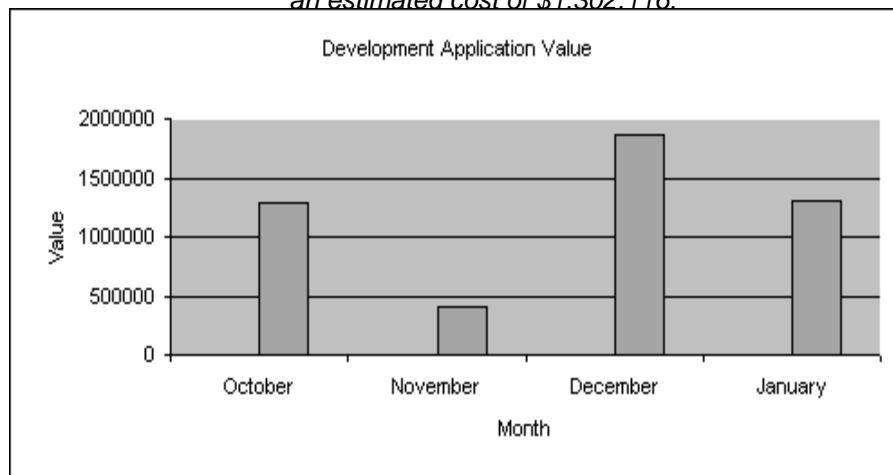
Wentworth Shire  
Council  
The Shire Where the Two  
Great Rivers Meet

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26-28 Adelaide Street  
Wentworth 2648  
Or  
PO Box 81 Wentworth NSW  
2648

Phone: 03 5027 5027  
Fax: 03 5027 5000  
email:  
council@wentworth.nsw.gov.au

## Development Applications for January 2008

*There were 9 Development Applications approved under delegation at an estimated cost of \$1,302,116.*



The 4 month trend of development application values

## WENTWORTH MEDICAL PRACTICE

Council considered a report detailing various options in relation to the future of the medical practice. They include (1) proceeding with an expression of interest from an Interstate Doctor, (2) continuing to pursue an expression of interest from a Doctor from overseas, (3) approaching Tristar or other parties to take over the Medical Practice on a break even basis, (4) approach Tristar or other parties to take over the Medical Practice based on an additional contribution by Council or (5) close the Medical Practice.

Council resolved as follows:-

*"That the General Manager be given delegated authority to undertake negotiations in seeking a doctor or other arrangements for the Medical Practice within 3 months and if in that time no doctor or arrangements can be made that the Medical Practice be closed."*

## RECYCLING FOR WENTWORTH SHIRE?

Council resolved to consider recycling options in conjunction with the 2008/2009 Management Plan.

Council considered the following options:

- landfill and transfer station facilities
- local drop off centres
- door to door collections

In his report, the Director for Infrastructure & Assets indicated that a number of requests for recycling facilities or services have been made by individuals, schools and community groups. He recommended that recycling options be promoted in conjunction with a consultation process for the 2008/2009 Management Plan.

Council will be seeking comments and submissions on the need for recycling, the preferred type of service and the costs to individual ratepayers would be prepared to pay.

## STATE GOVERNMENT INQUIRY INTO THE PROVISION OF WATER AND SEWER SERVICES

In January 2008 the Minister for Water Utilities, Nathan Rees, announced the Inquiry into "secure and sustainable water supply and sewerage services for non-metropolitan New South Wales".

The Minister met with 18 Councils in Jerilderie on 14 February 2008. Wentworth Shire Council was represented by the Mayor and General Manager.

The Minister said that the purpose of the Inquiry is to identify the most effective governance arrangements for the long term provision of water supply and sewerage services in country New South Wales, and to ensure that these arrangements are cost effective, financially viable, sustainable, optimised whole of community outcomes, and achieve integrated water cycle management.

Information on the Department of Water & Energy website indicates that submissions for the Inquiry must be received by the Department by 7 March 2008. Public hearings will be held in April 2008. The closest venue for this Shire is Broken Hill.

The Minister advised that the New South Wales Government will respond to recommendations made by the Inquiry by November 2008.

Wentworth Shire Council currently provides water and sewer services throughout the Shire. Council will be working with other Councils in the Murray and Riverina areas to examine possible future models that will not disadvantage the residents and ratepayers of the Shire.