
Date: 10 November 2023

To: **Rylington Park Committee**
Shire President
Deputy Shire President
Councillors
Community



MINUTES – RYLINGTON PARK COMMITTEE MEETING

TUESDAY 10 OCTOBER 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leonard Long". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "L".

Leonard Long
Chief Executive Officer



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AGENDA

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

The Presiding Member declared the meeting open at 6:10pm.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet and work.

The meeting will be audio recorded for minute taking purposes.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

2.1 ATTENDANCE

Councillors

Shire President	Cr Richard F Walker
Deputy Shire President	Cr Helen C O'Connell
Councillors	Cr Charles A D Caldwell (Arrived 6:33pm)
	Cr Darren E King
	Cr Kevin J Moir (Arrived 6:40pm)

Community Committee Member	Andy McElroy
	Joshua Stretch
ECU	Prof. Kerry Brown

Council Officers

Chief Executive Officer	Leonard Long
Rylington Park Farm Manager	Marc Deas
Rylington Park Farm Coordinator	Erlanda Deas

2.2 APOLOGIES

ECU	Kristy Gillian
Community Committee Member	James Johnston
Executive Assistant	Maggie Le Grange

2.3 REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil

3. PRESENTATIONS

Nil

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

4.1 FINANCIAL AND PROXIMITY INTEREST

Nil

4.2 DISCLOSURES OF IMPARTIALITY INTEREST THAT MAY CAUSE A CONFLICT

Nil

5. PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

5.1 RYLINGTON PARK COMMITTEE MEETING – 7 AUGUST 2023

Moved: Committee Member Mr. A McElroy Seconded: Cr D. King

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION RP 23/10/009

That the Minutes of the Rylington Park Committee Meeting held on 7 August 2023 be confirmed as being a true and accurate record.

CARRIED 6/0

**For: Cr Walker, Cr O’Connell, Cr King, Mr McElroy, Mr Stretch, Prof Brown
Against: Nil**

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

6.1 Rylington Park Aeration Trials

Feedback on the aeration of the soil done by Cr King and the progress made on the installation of the fence / cage suggested at the previous meeting.

Cr King had a look at the open day, no difference visible.

Aeration works best if the ground is damp so that it holds the structure better.

6.2 Decision Tree

As per the Committee Resolution 23/06/001, the Decision Tree grant application has been submitted to Wendy Perdon from South West Timber Hub.

The grant has been approved and the model has been run by PF Olsen on the areas of interest at Rylington Park. The details around the figures are expected in the coming weeks. Staff are also busy obtaining comparison figures on the current income generated from the paddocks being considered for the tree planting, which will be presented at a subsequent meeting.

It is suggested that a production estimation be calculated over the past 5 years. The cost of fencing must be considered or the area left out.

Refer to report and map as per **Attachment 6.2A.**

6.3 Western Australian Agricultural Collaboration (WAAC) – Research Funding Opportunities

Prof. Brown will be providing further feedback on the issue at either the October or November meeting.

Prof. Cobie Rudd has made arrangements for Prof. Brown to be seconded to be the liaison for Rylington Park ECU till end December 2023 (secondment).

Prof. Brown is doing a mapping of ECU research and update wish-list for research. Bring the wider ECU to Rylington Park and the Committee.

Rylington Park Committee agreed to provide emails and telephone numbers of Committee to Prof. Brown.

Refer to Prof. Brown's report as per **Attachment 6.3A**.

6.4 ECU Drone Usage Report

Prof. K Brown to provide feedback on the current projects that the drone is being used for.

Prof Brown in contact with David Blake; next step to put student onto it and put all algorithms together but is experiencing funding limitation.

Refer to Prof. Brown's report as per **Attachment 6.3A**.

Cr O'Connell suggested and the Committee agreed to display Current ECU Research Posters on social media and Shire pages/website to help the community visualise research projects at Rylington Park:

- Tracking Sheep Using LoRaWAN;
- Virtual Fences (Livestock and Cropping management and tracking without the use of physical fencing);
- Synthetic Plant Knowledge using L-Systems for Grain Optimisation;
- Drone Practices and Applications for Sheep Farming.

6.5 EvokeAg Conference opportunity February 2024

Prof. K Brown to provide update on the EvokeAg 2024 Conference opportunity.

Prof. Macau is in contact with EvokeAg and DPIRD on what they are offering as an incentive/paying for the delegation which would assist ECU in setting up a budget.

Prof. Brown has arranged a meeting for Thursday, 12 October 2023 with Prof. Flavio Macau, Cr O'Connell, Ms E Deas and Kristy Gillian to progress the planning of the field trip for delegates to visit Rylington Park as part of the Conference in 2024.

Refer to Prof. Brown's report as per **Attachment 6.3A**.

6.6 Grass Trees & Damage Caused by Parrots

At the Blackwood Basin Group (BBG) Committee meeting held on 20th June 2023, the subject of the health of grass trees in the local area was discussed.

A large number of grass trees are in a poor state of health, with a significant number having died due to the damage being done by Australian Ringnecks, commonly known as '28' parrots. Current examples are in the bushland just south of the Mayanup reserve grounds where grass trees are in various stages of damage by the 28's.

The problem was identified over 30 years ago. From 1996-2003 the Boyup Brook Land Conservation District Commission organised grants to support the conducting of radio tracking trials of the parrots to assess feeding habits. CALM Wildlife Branch issued damage licences to farmers to control the parrots.

A 'parrot committee' was formed, chaired by a Boyup Brook resident, the late Cr Noreen Tuckett. Other attendees of the committee included representatives from the Shires of West Arthur and Kojonup, CALM Wildlife, CALM Sharefarms, WACAP, Bunnings Sharefarms, Conservation Council of WA, Greens politician the late Dr Chrissy Sharp MLC and Dr Hilda Turnbull MLA.

On behalf of the BBG Committee, I would like to request that this matter is considered by the Shire of Boyup Brook and Edith Cowan University as a research project to be undertaken at the Rylington Park Facility.

Cr Adrian Price, member of the Blackwood Basin Group Committee compiled a scope of works for consideration by the Rylington Park Committee as a potential research program for ECU at Rylington Park.

"My thought of bringing this matter to BBG and then to the Shire of Boyup Brook was to obtain DBCA regulations, advice or support regarding control of Australian Ringnecks, such as issuing 'damage licences' which were common 20 years ago, to include cage trapping or shooting, to reduce the population of these parrots. I contacted DBCA six weeks ago and am awaiting their reply. Landholders wish to know what controls are acceptable. In 1997, CALM Wildlife Dept engaged me to issue 'damage permits' to landholders in the Shires of Boyup Brook, West Arthur and Kojonup to be restricted to cage trapping or shooting. This was following my observation of farmers applying poison grain in vineyards because of the damage to growth of vines. The parrots concentrated on the vines while non-target bird species consumed the poison grain.

Regarding Rylington-ECU, the bush reserve just south of Mayanup is currently impacted by these parrots and may be an ideal research site for ECU such as:

1. Why some grasstrees are attacked and eventually killed when other grasstrees nearby are not yet attacked?
2. Can substances be applied to grasstrees to discourage attack by parrots, though this may cause parrots to attack grasstrees which have not been treated? This was the case when wire cages were placed on top of grasstrees in the early stage of attack.
3. Does ECU have electronic methods of deterring parrots from attacking grasstrees without being detrimental to other fauna?
4. Raptors are a natural predator of these parrots, but the population of raptors have been reduced by secondary poisoning from vermin baiting. A number of the various falcons

in the SW of WA have the speed, agility, desire and ability to kill 28's in flight. Is it unrealistic to encourage breeding of these raptors, or at least, minimise secondary poisoning?"

Cr O'Connell informed the Committee that Cr Price has spoken about damage at numerous Blackwood Basin Group meetings over the last couple of years and suggested to put it to ECU for research.

Rylington Park has not been affected but farms in the Mayanup region have been damaged. Parrots tend to congregate on the edges of crops and spillage from trucks.

Prof. Brown will add it to her mapping and identify whether ECU researchers has the expertise. ECU to get in touch with Blackwood Basin Group and Cr Price.

6.7 2023 Rylington Park Field Day (keep as a standing item)

Mrs E Deas to provide feedback on the Rylington Park Field Day held on 14 September 2023.

Unable to provide statistics on attendance.

Countryman not committed on date for article on field day (newspaper full)
Afternoon talks to be capped/shorter to have people stay longer, Have some talks in the morning

Feedback from stall holders (include all Committee members in the review process for feedback):

- Request an Official response from vendors (run sheet for reviewing at every field day)
 - On Shire documents (letterhead), minimum requirement = thank you for coming, your feedback and thoughts on doing things better, participate the following year (verbal feedback to be followed up)
- Set up vendors closer together to the shed;
- Put together event plans for years to come;
- Bring back to Committee in May to start planning for next field day;
- Potentially contact McIntosh to see if they can demo an autonomous tractor (active displays keep people there);
- Field day to cater to many people's needs (something for everyone);
- Remote site (5 min drive) – isolating the genetics involved in the trial (biosecurity where many vehicles drive over paddocks);
- Have a bus with a presenter to have a running commentary on what is done in paddocks;
- Need to develop a way to get attendance statistics, might need to have someone on the gate.

Prof. Brown to check with her team to set up a Rylington Park Team site.

6.8 Water Security on Farms (keep as a standing item)

Sheep

- Merino lambs were marked and ewes mated to merino rams crutched

Ewes mated to merino rams	Lambs marked	Lambing %
1466	1620	110.5%

- Weaned all XB lambs
- Dam water levels and pasture volume much lower than usual
- Mating strategy and sheep numbers for 2024
- Ram purchases

Cropping

- In-crop spraying and Flexi-N
- Spraying firebreaks
- Spray thistles & radish
- Pull radish in hay

Trials

- GRDC oat NVT
- Boyup Brook Ag Supplies trials
- Summit fertiliser retained seed trial
- Phil Nichols (UWA) sub clover variety trial
- Decision Tree – grant application sent in
- DPIRD red legged earth mite trial

Schools / Events

- Field day 14 September
- Shearing school 2-6 October

General

- Prisoners finished painting the kitchen and ablutions
- JD 6420 tractor with loader (7000 hours) – head gasket replacement and head reconditioning etc.
- Meeting with AWI – Rylington Park priorities & requirements – 26 September 2023
- Plan water management due to low stock water dam levels
- Truck
- Roof replacement to commence end of October 2023

What lies ahead

- Checking sheep – flystrike
- Crutch hoggets
- Wean merino lambs
- Ram sales
- Market cull for age ewes
- Class hoggets
- Market cull hoggets
- Hay
- Setting up Synergy program to suit Rylington's reporting

Calendar:

- Crop inspection with David Lane - 9 October 2023
- Shearing schools dates:
 - 23-27 October 2023
 - 13-17 November 2023
 - 18-20 December 2023 – improver school
- Ladies day – 15 March 2024

7. REPORT OF OFFICERS

7.2 Rylington Park Scholarship 2023	
File Ref:	Nil
Previous Items:	Nil
Applicant:	Nil
Author and Title:	Magdalena Le Grange, Executive Officer
Declaration of Interest:	Nil
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority
Attachment Number	Nil

Moved: Cr H. O'Connell**Seconded: Cr K. Moir****COMMITTEE RESOLUTION RP 23/10/011****That the Rylington Park Committee Resolve to:**

- A. Nominate Cr Caldwell and Mr Andy McElroy and Cr King as proxy to sit on the panel to consider the applications for the Rylington Park Scholarship.**

CARRIED 8/0**For: Cr Walker, Cr O'Connell, Cr Caldwell, Cr King, Cr Moir, Mr McElroy, Mr Stretch, Prof Brown****Against: Nil****SUMMARY**

Rylington Park Scholarship is an annual scholarship awarded to Boyup Brook Year 9 or Year 10 students who commit to attend an Agricultural College in Year 11 and 12.

BACKGROUND

The Rylington Park Scholarship was initiated by the then Rylington Park Management Committee Inc. as a way of promoting Eric Farley's vision to engage and support the young people of Boyup Brook in agricultural pursuits.

REPORT DETAIL

The scholarship of \$1,000.00 will be awarded to Boyup Brook Year 9 or Year 10 students who commit to attend an Agricultural College in Year 11 and 12. The scholarship provides support for the student and will ensure the sustainability of agriculture in the Boyup Brook community.

Year 10 students will receive the funding when they go into Year 11. Year 9 students who choose to go to agricultural college in Year 10 are eligible for the funding during Year 11 of their studies.

The funding will be allocated in two (2) disbursements during the year. 50% will be paid at the commencement of Year 11 and the balance will be paid at the commencement of Year 12.

To ensure the integrity of the scholarship, the Rylington Park Committee would like interested students to submit a short-written expression of interest and participate in an informal interview. Students are to write a short (200-500 word) expression of interest for the scholarship. The panel will be looking for a genuine interest in agriculture as an on-going career. A commitment to bring the skills and knowledge gained back to the Boyup Brook community at some stage in the future will be highly regarded.

Interviews will be conducted with students who will be asked questions to provide information that demonstrates:

- A genuine interest in agriculture;
- A commitment to the Boyup Brook community;
- An ability to be academically successful in the Agricultural College environment;
- Excellent interpersonal skills and values; and
- Knowledge of the Rylington Park Institute for Agricultural Training and Research and its benefit to the community of Boyup Brook.

The questions are designed to learn about each student and their thoughts and feelings on the subject of agriculture. The interviews will be informal, but the panel is looking for students with a genuine interest in agriculture who may bring the knowledge and skills that they gain from their studies back to the Boyup Brook community.

Teacher judgements will also be taken into account when awarding the scholarship.

The interview and the written expression of interest will be combined to arrive at a final assessment.

REPORT DETAIL

Workforce

Nil

end

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

- **Trial Agreements**

CEO is currently reviewing the agreements and will in due course put a 'letter of agreement' in place for all commercial and collaboration agreements and that it encapsulates that results of trials be communicated to the Committee and that researchers should showcase at Rylington Park Field Days.

- **Potential research project proposed by Greening Australia (rehabilitating creek line and establishing a native plant seed bank).**

Professor Brown communicated that the collaboration with Greening Australia has been put back due to a delay at government level.

Prof. Brown communicated that the collaboration with Greening Australia is back on the table.

Refer to Prof. Brown's report as per **Attachment 6.3A**.

9. FURTHER BUSINESS

Nil

10. NEXT MEETING AND CLOSURE OF MEETING

Next meeting to be held on 8 November 2023 at 5:00pm at Rylington Park.

Note: due to a change in circumstances the meeting is to be held on 8 November 2023 at 6:00pm in Council Chambers.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:38pm.

Presiding Member

Date