

## **Minutes of the Lachlan Regional Transport Committee Inc Meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at Blayney**

Suspension of standing orders was moved by G. Standen, seconded K. Thrupp – carried

G. Standen proposed that a minutes silence be observed as a mark of respect for LRTC member, the late Jan Kenworthy. Moved G. Standen, seconded K. Thrupp – carried. *The meeting observed a minute's silence.*

**Apologies** were received from: Noelene Milliken, Des Manwaring, Jock Smith, Mathew Dickerson, Troy Grant MP, Gordon Bradbery, Andrew Gee MP, Bill West, Michael Sweeney, Mark Coulton MP, John Toohey, Angus Taylor, Roza Sage MP, Lawrance Ryan, Rob Staples, Paul Toole MP, Stuart Freudenstein, John Ridley, Juliette Palmer-Frederick, Daniel Myles, Paul Trevaskis, and Chris Drinkwater.

Acceptance moved D. Lawrence, seconded K. Thrupp - carried

**Welcome:** Cr Scott Ferguson, Mayor of Blayney Shire, welcomed members and visitors. He indicated the importance of the meeting. He also expressed his appreciation of the work of LRTC President Maurice Simpson over his many years in local government. Mayor Ferguson thanked President Simpson for his continuing service to the region. Mayor Ferguson reported that he had recently met with Lord Mayor Bradbery of Wollongong City. The Lord Mayor offered LRTC his support and remains eager to drive the completion of the Maldon-Dombarton railway.

**Minutes of previous meeting held in Cowra on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2012:** Acceptance as an accurate record moved D. Lawrence, seconded J. Hannan

As LRTC is now using its website for communication, Chairman Simpson asked for people who do not have access to the internet to make themselves known so that other arrangements could be made for them to receive meeting agendas and minutes in the future.

**Secretary's report:** Secretary Duffey reported that more people, including members of the railway industry, are showing interest in LRTC activities. Acceptance of the report was moved by D. Figliomeni, seconded J. Hannan - carried

**Treasurer's report:** Acceptance of the Treasurer's report including payments as shown on the report was moved by D. Hughes, seconded K. Thrupp - carried

### **Council Reports :**

**J. Hannan** (Wollondilly): Wollondilly Council wants Wilton taken off the list of sites to be considered for a new Sydney airport. She noted that other areas, including Canberra, want a new airport. She reported that Wollondilly is passionate about the push for construction of the Maldon-Dombarton railway. Development is occurring on Picton Rd near the proposed route of the railway, and developers are known to be allowing for passenger stations.

**G. Braddon** (Blayney): Nothing to report since the Cowra meeting.

**M. Foster** (Cowra): A highway bypass is being planned. It might allow opportunities for interchange with rail.

**G. Braddon** – asked about an article in Cowra Guardian reporting that the Blayney-Demondrille line is to be reopened. M. Foster replied that the report was unfounded.

**A. Griffiths** (Weddin): Nothing to report.

### **Corporation Reports:**

**Lachlan Valley Railway** – no representative present but M. Duffey reported having met the LVR secretary, who said that they are happy to work with LRTC.

**D. Figliomeni** (Port of Port Kembla) expressed support for the sale of the Port and said there are 4 bidders for the 99 year lease from Australia and overseas. Port Botany may be included in the sale, depending on the plans of the bidders. There may be funding to flow to the Central West arising from the sale. Extensive development is taking place at Port Kembla and is likely to continue. The bidders are interested in rail. The Port is looking to upgrade its rail receipt facilities for grain.

**M. Duffey** asked if there has been discussion about minerals from Toongi and Copper Hill going to Port Kembla. D. Figliomeni said yes - no decisions have been made but the Port is looking to increase its capacity.

**M. Foster** asked if ARTC had expressed interest in the Maldon-Dombarton line proposal. D. Figliomeni replied that ARTC tends to focus on the Unanderra to Moss Vale line as they are responsible for it. Discussions have been held about coal trains using that route. B. Williamson suggested that there may be concerns about distances and fuel consumption. D. Figliomeni said that there is recognition within the New South Wales Government that success of the Maldon-Dombarton line project may be merely a matter of time.

The chairman thanked D. Figliomeni and J.Hannan for travelling to weekend meetings.

**Freight and Ports Strategy** – I. Gray reported on the strategy published by Transport for New South Wales in November 2012. The Strategy predicts that freight movement will approximately double in 20 years. Because so little non-bulk regional freight is on rail, road freight is likely to continue to grow. He noted a tendency in the Strategy document to focus on NSW ports, especially Port Botany, when a lot of regional industry benefits, or would benefit, from access to interstate ports. I. Gray recommended that a submission be made to the Strategy process putting a case that

- a continuing need for access to interstate ports should be recognised
- local government can become involved in rail transport issues in relation to local economic development and planning
- local knowledge can be valuable in planning for rail development.

G. Standen moved, K. Thrupp seconded a motion that such a submission be made – carried.

### **Subcommittee re transport for people to medical facilities:**

**G. Dun** reported that Cowra has a community transport service run by the neighbourhood centre. It is only a service for non-drivers.

**M. Simpson** said that it is important to have doctors on side. K. Thrupp advised that community transport capacity has been reduced because two drivers are now required, one of whom occupies a seat. G. Standen advised that community transport now runs from Bathurst to Orange Base Hospital.

The chairman said that the Minister for Transport is on side, but we need to encourage the politicians to make a bigger effort.

### **Other reports:**

**G. Dun** advised that Road and Maritime Services (RMS) are holding a meeting re safety on the Great Western Highway between Mt Victoria and Katoomba. RMS wants input on how to spend funds leftover from the Hartley deviation.

### **General Business:**

**B triples** – M. Simpson reported that they are unlikely to start operating for 2-3 years due to public reaction against such as from Goulburn. G. Standen advised that they are to be on the Hume Highway only. M. Duffey reported that LRTC was advised that they would use the Great Western Highway also. M. Simpson added that farmers would have problems finding roads suiting such trucks.

**Southern Councils and community transport** - M. Duffey reported that four councils had said that the government subsidy does not compensate the full cost of providing the service so the councils may withdraw their own subsidy. M. Simpson said that he didn't think this would apply to other councils, at least not yet.

**Bathurst train service** – M. Duffey reported that the train patronage is good but there are parking problems at Bathurst as a vacant block has been fenced. G. Standen reported that the block is controlled by John Holland. K. Thrupp said that there may be an asbestos problem on it. G. Braithwaite said that people need to book seats on the train for medical appointments. G. Standen replied that there are plenty of seats. M. Simpson suggested a letter be written to Paul Toole, Member for Bathurst, with a copy to the Transport Minister, raising these issues. Moved G. Standen, seconded K. Thrupp – carried.

**Orange airport extension** – noted

**Maldon-Dombarton railway.** M. Simpson reported that a Memorandum of Understanding between the Coalition of Councils for the Maldon-Dombarton Rail Link for the Completion of the Maldon-Dombarton Rail Link has been drawn up. He pointed out that LRTC could express support for the MoU, but could not speak for member Councils. He suggested a change to the document presented, with M. Simpson to be the LRTC representative, not M. Foster. M. Foster said he did not doubt that councils would support LRTC in its work. J. Hannan said that all support is very important and all councils would be keen to have support from LRTC. Despite some discussion in areas like Wingecarribee and Newcastle, there is widespread support for the railway to be completed. G. Standen moved, J. Hannan seconded a motion that LRTC endorses the MoU and sends it to all member councils for their consideration.

**L. Durkin** from Cabonne Council apologised for leaving early as he had a previous engagement.

**D. Figliomeni** commented that the NSW Draft Freight and Ports Strategy tends to be 'Sydney-centric'. There is a congestion problem with trains through southern suburbs, but the Maldon-Dombarton line should be regarded as part of a bigger strategy with Port Kembla developing as a container port. He pointed out that the initial cost, met by the Commonwealth, is \$25m. If the construction stage does not proceed, that money will have been wasted. Transport for NSW has committees working on the issue, to complete by June 2014. A proposal would then go to Infrastructure Australia. The Commonwealth Government appears to be supportive, but a multi-prong approach involving NSW and the Commonwealth Government would be necessary to secure support.

Moved M. Duffey, seconded G. Standen – that LRTC write to the New South Wales transport and roads ministers, Infrastructure NSW and the Commonwealth Transport Minister urging work be continued on the Maldon-Dombarton project - Carried

**Cost of green slips** - noted

**Blayney-Demondrille railway.** M. Foster reported that far more traffic would be available for the line than is needed to make it a viable railway operation. Grain is only a small proportion of the available traffic. Potential operators and investors have been identified, but attempts to connect them with government decision-makers have failed. Work has been done on a Memorandum of Understanding with the State Government, but the process has bogged down. M. Simpson pointed out that there would be a large volume of traffic between Blayney and Melbourne.

D. Figliomeni supported M. Foster's report saying that government officials may not be sufficiently aware of the possible range of projects. M. Foster added that public service redundancies have not helped and it may be necessary to approach ministers directly.

**I. Gray** offered to draw up a proposal for a public forum to discuss issues concerning the process of railway revival, related to and arising from the Blayney-Demondrille project. He also offered to seek the support of Charles Sturt University with a view to holding a forum similar to the Regional Rail Symposium held at the University in 2007. S. Ferguson suggested Blayney as a potential venue. D. Figliomeni suggested late May would be a good time in relation to the Federal Budget and the Federal election later in the year.

Acceptance of I. Gray's offer was moved G. Standen, seconded K. Thrupp – carried.

**M. Simpson** suggested that the forum be held in conjunction with the May LRTC meeting as a special meeting.

**D. Figliomeni** suggested that, if members of parliament are to be involved, the shadow federal transport minister be invited to the forum and also Sharon Bird, Federal Labor Member for Cunningham.

The Chairman invited M. Foster, G. Braddon, J. Hannan and I. Gray to join him on a sub-committee to plan the forum/meeting.

**G. Braithwaite** reported regarding the Toongi mine railway development that no support was forthcoming from Dubbo Council and the local MP. The proponents are waiting for government approval. G. Braithwaite recommended that LRTC write to Dubbo Council urging support for the project. J. Hannan suggested that LRTC advise Dubbo Council that the issue might become the focus of a later meeting. That such a letter be written was moved J. Hannan, seconded A. Griffiths – carried

**Blayney container terminal** – noted

**Councils need for road funding** - noted

**Goulburn and very fast train route** – noted. M. Duffey reported an alliance of four councils in support. B. Williamson pointed out that the train would have to stop.

**Wilton as new airport site** – J. Hannan commented as per her report above. There was some discussion about the likelihood of a new Sydney airport including its possible association with the very fast train proposal.

**Dubbo community transport meeting** – G. Braithwaite to attend as LRTC representative. Moved B. Williamson seconded G. Dun - carried

**Railcorp executives** – M. Simpson said redundancy is happening across the public service.

**Bathurst car park** – see discussion reported above

**Maldon-Dombarton railway** – see discussion reported above

**B-double accident** – That LRTC write to NSW transport and roads ministers asking

1. what types of heavy vehicle are permitted to use the Great Western Highway and Bell's Line of Road over the Blue Mountains?

2. what type of vehicles have been involved in recent accidents?

Moved B. Holland, seconded G. Braddon - carried

**Other items:**

R. Dawe of Greenethorpe Rural Fire Service advised the meeting that there is a need to prevent fires and control weeds around disused railway lines, and the burden is falling on local bushfire brigades. G. Braddon said it is unfair to farmers who suffer from the weeds and suggested that LRTC we write to local members on this issue. Moved G. Braddon seconded D. Lawrence that we write to local members, transport department with copy to Rural Fire Service – carried

**G. Dun** commented that we have no road user advocacy group in the Central West. There is concern about lack of progress in the road system and a lack of input into planning. M. Simpson said that LRTC has raised road issues. I. Gray mentioned that road issues have been raised in recent submissions to government planning.

**S. Ferguson** (Mayor of Blayney) – Blayney Council has made countless submission to RMS. LRTC support is appreciated but councils also work individually.

**Date of next meeting : Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2013 at Blayney**