

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MURRAY IRRIGATORS INC.

Minutes of the Committee Meeting No. 21 at the Swan Reach Hotel on Tuesday 5th August, 2003 commencing at 4.20 p.m.

PRESENT

T. Roe (Chairman), I. Zadow, R. Smyth, T. Whetstone, S. Newell, P. Martin, T. Woods, N. Shillabeer, J. Eckermann, F. Condo, P. McFarlane (Guests), M. Vegter (Executive Officer), S. Powardy (Assistant Executive Officer).

APOLOGIES

T. Daniell.

MINUTES

MOVED I. Zadow SECONDED R. Smyth That the Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 1st July, 2003 be taken as read and confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED.

MATTERS ARISING

N. Shillabeer's comment about the restrictions on allocation in the Lower Murray, should have been in regards to the Lakes, not the river.

T. Roe advised the meeting how many irrigators along the Murray are forming sub-committees in each of their areas, which he thought would be beneficial.

Ian Zadow, asked how the meeting with Minister Hill went at Berri. The Minister was told irrigators had to be informed on what was going on.

Peter Lewis had been helpful in organising a Meeting with Minister Hill at Murray Bridge for the 19th August.

F. Condo asked if there was data available on what actual flows came to South Australia each year, and where did it go. On average South Australia actually gets twice their entitlement each year.

R. Smyth stated that when we have these meetings with the Minister, SAMI should be taking a stand and be at the forefront. Once the part time Executive Officer is employed it will be his/her job to do this.

IRRIGATORS INC.

P. Martin and S. Newell reported on the Irrigators Inc. meeting held in Sydney.

Encourage our irrigators to have working meters. Irrigators Inc. would like to liaise with State organisations on this matter. They are recommending that a process and standard is put into place. They would like all state organisations to contact relevant State authorities

to discuss methods of resolving this. They would like each state to have an input into a paper on theft and compliance issues and methods to resolve.

Community Reference Panel - The decision of what will happen come September/October - no-one knows who will be making this decision.

There was talk of the Government buying water back from Retiring Dairy Farmers. SAMI thinks that a certain amount of water needs to go back onto those swamps each year.

The State organisations were to determine what is and is not acceptable as a market based system for water transfers by 4th July, 2003. A paper was prepared by MDBC and is currently being reviewed by Community Reference Panel members.

The VFF voted not to support Irrigators Inc. at their meeting. The Irrigators Inc. Chairman Laurie Arthur had concerns of Irrigators Inc. folding if there is no Victorian representation. John O'Brien the Chairman of VFF Water Committee indicated that they were attempting to deal with this problem.

P. Martin stated that in our Strategic Plan. We need to specify where we are going, who we are, what we represent. We perhaps need to involve the Commodity Groups involved from different areas.

Ian Zadow - what was the best way to deal with the restrictions. He had heard that the WAP was incorrect. T. Roe indicated that the WAP was not incorrect if you used the figures as relative between crops.

P. Martin - SAMI needs to get involved in a Taskforce, to be in a better position.

M. Vegter indicated that at all the meetings that they had the Government was talking 20% cut on usage, but this is not what happened. There has been sleeper water sold from interstate for use in South Australia. Not all water purchased from interstate would have been used.

S. Newell asked if SAMI, as a group agreed to the 35% cut, or we just go along with the decision. I. Zadow said that it is the irrigators who have been efficient and expanded that are now being penalised.

N. Shillabeer - We needed to have the 35% cut or the Lower Murray would not have any water.

The Government needs to do their homework in the future. They need to do more research before any more cuts are made.

MOVED P. Martin SECONDED S. Newell We recognise the need for the cut but we would seek a more equitable and scientific base for the cut for future restrictions.
CARRIED.

N. Shillabeer said that this motion may come back at us, as the Government may ask us what is more equitable. SAMI recognise that the Crop Factor would be more equitable.

R. Smyth indicated that a lot of people he had spoken to were happy with the decision.

P. McFarlane - Hold off on the Policy and incorporate it with the Strategic Planning when the position of Irrigation Project Officer is filled. Make sure that this is the thoughts of our members. We need to be careful.

S. Newell suggested that we could have a cut on area and not allocation. M. Vegter indicated that Qualco/Sunlands area have put this to their members. T. Roe said that two growers in that area did not agree this was the way to go and will not sign.

P. McFarlane - SAMI should develop a Task Force. P. Martin thought that this may have already been setup in the Riverland. SAMI should initiate it, and not Karlene Maywald. We could use the Murray Bridge meeting with Peter Lewis to initiate it.

R. Smyth asked if we are going to have a meeting with Minister Hill, Peter Lewis organised the one at Murray Bridge. Tony, Mike and Sharon to have a look at an Agenda for this.

Also check with Karlene if a Task Force has been implemented.

Resolution

The Chairman be empowered to push SAMI's presence in the Task Force.

R. Smyth - SAMI has not organised any meetings. The meetings that have occurred Karlene is being recognised.

PETER MCFARLANE

Listening to the tone of the meeting there is a clear need for a process to work through issues.

Budget 40% share for SAMI for the 1st year
50/50 thereafter.

Mike - Insurance/Audit on the low side.

Tony - Need to double insurance

Peter to investigate further.

Mike - Travel - 3 delegates in the past have attended interstate meetings. \$6,000 may not be enough and committee costs involved.

F. Condo - The Base Salary should be enough to attract the right applicant.

At a later stage we could look at a 5/6cent per ml levy, as they do in NSW. We could look at contribution through the RMC Levy to support this project. We could work towards this in the second year.

Proposal is that the Irrigation Project Officer will work on a 50/50 basis with SAMI and Horticultural Council. 2.5 days on irrigation and 2.5 days across the commodity groups. The Commodity groups who are represented are:-

Wine Grapes

Citrus

Almonds

Stone Fruit

Concern was expressed that onion and potatoes was not represented in the commodity groups. It was stated they would be represented under the irrigators.

N. Shillabeer indicated that there were three or four different areas within the Lower Murray and they need to be represented on SAMI. If the irrigators could see this happening they would be a lot happier.

P. Martin asked if the representative should come from an area or a commodity group.

M. Vegter indicated that we have 9 positions on SAMI, made up of three representative from each of the following:- Upper Murray, Mid Murray and Lower Murray. There was no reason why we could not look at this.

P. McFarlane - Full consultation will be required of the whole area, strategic planning with the Irrigation Project Officer. Then we can look at better representation from the Border to the Mouth.

P. McFarlane went through the milestones with the meeting.

P. McFarlane will wait to hear back from M. Vegter on some of the Expenditure figures, before going ahead with the budget.

It is up to the SAMI representatives from each area to go back to their irrigators and ask them to join up.

Before I. Zadow handed a cheque from the Lower Murray Irrigators to SAMI, he stated that he was not convinced that SAMI was looking after the irrigators in the lower end of the Murray and there has been a lot of frustration.

With the \$8,000 cheque given to us from the Lower Murray Irrigators SAMI would have enough money to give the go ahead with the Irrigation Project Officer position.

P. McFarlane needs to have the approval from the committee to lodge the application to Horticultural Australia Ltd. We would need to have \$21,000 available within two months after the application was approved.

MOVED P. Martin SECONDED I. Zadow That we support the project outlined by Peter McFarlane, subject to budget changes. CARRIED.

S. Newell was worried about SAMI's contribution of 50%, that the commodity groups would benefit greater than the irrigators. P. McFarlane indicated that for the first 9

months of operation SAMI was being charged for 40% and in future years it would be 50%, but this could be negotiated.

If we get the position in place and up and running in the first year and then if we need to we can negotiate in future years.

To guarantee our funding we could:-

- Compulsory levy
- Look how SAMI membership is structured
- Could we have access to monies through RMC Levy
- Corporate Sponsorship

We can look at different ways next meeting for extra funding. Look at our membership and different rates for each category.

CORRESPONDENCE

OUT

Karlene Maywald

IN

Minister John Hill, M.P.

A public meeting with the Minister has not happened at this point in time.

FINANCE REPORT

Bank Reconciliation as at 28th July, 2003
List of cheques and Receipts as at 28th July, 2003
Sunlands Irrigation Trust Invoice - \$772.68
S. Newell's A/c - \$335
P. Martin's A/c - \$268.70

MOVED T. Whetstone SECONDED I. Zadow That the Financial Report be Received and the accounts be passed for payment. CARRIED.

OTHER BUSINESS

The AGM will be held on 11th November, 2003 at Swan Reach at 4.00 p.m.

What will our commitment be to Irrigators Inc? - Approximately \$2,500.

Next meeting will be on 9th September, at 4 p.m. at Swan Reach.

Next Tuesday there is a meeting at Swan Reach between Minister Hill, Warren Truss, M.D.B. and the Premier.

S. Powardy to have numbers on how many members in each irrigator category for the next meeting.

T. Roe to talk to Karlene if a task Force has been formed, and if so how SAMI can slot into it.

The River Murray Catchment Water Management Board has organised a meeting of the River Murray Drought Liaison Group at Murray Bridge on Tuesday 12th August. T. Roe, M. Vegter, I. Zadow will be attending.

SAMI should be having a bigger impact with the Catchment Board. We should be talking to the Minister and the Catchment Board to find out what is happening.

We should find out from Murray Darling Basin Commission what is actually in storage.

R. Smyth - Feels like SAMI has missed opportunities.

We must be certain that I. Zadow has all the facts together, dot points, briefing for the meeting with Peter Lewis at Murray Bridge, when he is compiling the agenda.

C.I.T. LETTER

The letter from Central Irrigation Trust was tabled.

It was the view of the Directors of Central Irrigation Trust that SAMI was only representing a few larger corporate irrigator views and they were not very happy with this. They feel SAMI should be representing all irrigators. It was felt that irrigators do not know what SAMI is doing.

Rob Smyth was asked if C.I.T. actually sends information to their growers, informing them of SAMI's involvement. R. Smyth indicated that the cost involved in this would be extremely high.

It had been reported to the Directors of C.I.T., that M. Vegter had stated that the growers within the C.I.T. area would be better off than most growers. M. Vegter replied by stating that Geoff Parish had actually indicated this at the Public Meeting held at Waikerie.

P. Martin took offence to the fact that C.I.T. indicated that SAMI was only looking after the interests of a few large corporate interests rather than the majority of family owned farms. There has been a lot of criticism from C.I.T., some about P. Martin's comments over the media about salinity. When challenged they did not even know what Paul had said. C.I.T Directors may need to take a step back, and stop making it SAMI vs C.I.T.

P. Martin indicated that he has been to many meetings from the Border to Meningie and there were no Central Irrigation Trust representatives at any of the meetings that he saw.

We recognise that there is a lot to be done, but it all takes time.

Whether it is C.I.T. or S.A.M.I. we must be putting the views of the irrigators across.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.

CONFIRMED.....
CHAIRMAN

DATE.....