

LACHLAN SHIRE COUNCIL – 25 YEARS OF THE AMALGAMATED COUNCIL

Council should be aware that the Council as we now know it was formed 25 years ago when the former Lachlan Shire Council and the Condobolin Municipality amalgamated to form the current Lachlan Shire Council. This occurred on April 1 1977.

A brief history of the Council is detailed below.

Condobolin Municipality

In the Government Gazette of September 16, 1889, a petition signed by 69 persons was published praying that the town be declared a municipality. The population was said to be about 800 and the area of the proposed municipality 49 square miles. Some of the signatories were John Bouffler, HW Grey Innes, WH Tasker, Ben Roberts, Chas Jerrold, M Boulton and JB Horton.

The municipality was gazetted on Tuesday May 20, 1890 and the date of the first election fixed for July 9, 1890, but held on July 14, 1890 and the result declared the next day. The following aldermen were elected; Humphrey William Grey Innes, David Henry Tasker, John Bouffler, Richard David Jones, Thomas Johnston and Martin Kieley.

The first meeting of the Council was held at the Court House with Alderman HW Grey Innes (son of a former Colonial Treasurer and Postmaster of Tasmania) elected Mayor. A storekeeper, Grey Innes was an ex-newspaperman. His position in Condobolin included auctioneer, magistrate, licensing court magistrate, coroner, public school board member, secretary PA & H, secretary jockey club, established the first Condobolin newspaper, 'the Herald'. Killed in April 1889 when riding a horse – thrown, hit head. His widow died in 1958 aged 102.

The first meeting for the transaction of general business was held on July 28 in the office of the Mayor, with the first business discussed was the choice of a suitable place as a Council Chambers. It was decided to rent the old Lands Office premises temporarily at a rental of five shillings per week. The Council decided to advertise for applications for the position of Town Clerk and later James Tough was appointed to the position.

Original Lachlan Shire Council

The first temporary Council, which was appointed in 1906 and held its first meeting on the 14th of June that year, consisted of DH Tasker senr (Chairman), EMV Curr, Jas. Tout, WA Ewers and Jas. Knight.

The first permanent Council was elected on November 24, 1906 when the following gentlemen were returned: Crs DA Cameron (President), TF Mooney, Jas. Tout, Jas. Knight, DH Tasker snr and GM Gavel. In 1908 the number of councillors was increased to nine.

In 1915 the Shire had an area of 3.25 million acres and over 1,100 miles of dedicated road. Within it are the villages of Tottenham, Fifield, Cudgellico and Mineral Hill. There were 23 Public Watering Places under its control.

Proposed Amalgamation

At the meeting of the Condobolin Municipality held on Monday April 9th it was recorded in the minutes;

“that his worship the Mayor, Ald FA Adams, reported to Council that he had been advised that the Lachlan Shire Council had, in open Council, passed a resolution to apply to the Minister of Local Government for the amalgamation of Lachlan Shire Council with Condobolin Municipal Council. He had stated that he had spoken with the Shire Clerk, Mr PJ Cooley, who had confirmed this information. The Mayor added that he felt, before proceeding with Council’s business it would be advisable to discuss the matter of amalgamation and for Council to make its decision unanimously one way or the other. The Mayor then placed the matter to Council for general discussion. As a result of the discussion the following motion was passed.

Resolved that a Special meeting be called for Thursday 1st May, 1975 at 7.30pm for the purpose of discussing the proposed amalgamation of Lachlan Shire Council with Condobolin Municipal Council. (Ald J Brady/Ald R Fleming)”

At the Special Meeting of the Municipal Council held on May 1, 1975;

“the Mayor placed the matter of the amalgamation with Lachlan Shire Council and invited general discussion on the matter. During the discussion time, Aldermen were invited to, and did present their views. The Town Clerk, DP O’Shea, upon request by the Mayor and Aldermen presented a series of facts relating to Council’s financial management over a period of seven years to December 31st 1974. Mr O’Shea advised Council that from 1967 to 1974 available funds increased from \$22,305 to \$153,238, Reserves from \$48,759 to \$76,251, Total Expenditure from \$564,700 to \$930,108. He added that Council plant, valued at \$45,500 is fully paid for and the amount of non-self amortising loans in 1975 will absorb 13.5% of the rate incurred. At the conclusion of the discussion the Mayor Alderman FA Adams called for a motion.

Resolved: that Council strongly oppose any attempt to amalgamate the Municipal Council with the Lachlan Shire Council. (AH Hall/RJ Moran) Voting 5:1”

In the book ‘1890 – 1990 Condobolin Where the Lachlan Flows’ it records that in;

“1976 from February until June – meetings on the amalgamation, Councils informed June 1976: Council mergers on the way, amalgamation of Local Government Bodies will be introduced shortly.

June 22nd. How long do Condobolin Municipality and Lachlan Shire have before they are amalgamated? One would think that with all the work entailed it would take at least a year. However we are told 6 months, which will probably be January 1977, which would be a logical time to make a start.

September 7th, 1976 “Forty Years of Bickering”. For forty years bickering has been going on concerning the transfer of Lands and the amalgamation of Condobolin Municipality with the Lachlan Shire.

It is most likely that the Local Boundaries Commission will be put before the State Minister for Local Government, Harry Jenson, who will make the final decision. If the Commission’s recommendation is in favour of amalgamation, the Minister has a choice and has the power to uphold or reject their opinion.

December 1976, Council to amalgamate. Condobolin Municipal and Lachlan Shire Councils, have been advised that the two Councils will be amalgamated as from 1st April, 1977. The new Council will be known as the LACHLAN SHIRE COUNCIL and will comprise eight representatives from the existing Shire Council and six from the Municipal Council.”

New Lachlan Shire Council

On February 16, 1977 the Governor of NSW, Sir Arthur Roden Cutler, proclaimed that from April 1, 1977 the two councils would be united with the new area named ‘Lachlan Shire Council’. The Provisional Council was to consist of 14 councillors pending the election of a council upon a date to be proclaimed. The 14 councillors were;

- ◆ FA Adams Esq – CMC
- ◆ JK Armstrong Esq – LSC
- ◆ RL Fleming Esq – CMC
- ◆ FE Haase Esq – LSC
- ◆ A Hall Esq – CMC
- ◆ TE Hall Esq – LSC
- ◆ Mrs VK Hall – CMC
- ◆ JM Hill Esq – LSC
- ◆ KG Hordern Esq – LSC
- ◆ RG Keen Esq – LSC
- ◆ AWJ MacKinnon Esq – CMC
- ◆ AG Press Esq – CMC
- ◆ BL Ridley Esq – LSC
- ◆ Mrs EM Strudwick – LSC

This is Page No. _____ of the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Lachlan Shire Council held at the Lachlan Shire Council Chambers at 10.00 am on Wednesday 20 March 2002.

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General Manager

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Mayor

The Provisional Council was empowered to exercise during the period between 25.2.77 and 1.4.77 the powers of a council in relation to;

- i) The election of a President
- ii) The provision of an office for the Council
- iii) The transfer and appointment of servants; and
- iv) The preparation, performance and carrying into effect of all such acts, matters and things as in the opinion of the Provisional Council are necessary or expedient to enable the Council to exercise and discharge all or any of the powers of a council as from 1.4.77; provided, however, that no arrangement with respect to the transfer and appointment of servants shall take effect prior to 1st April, 1977.

The members of the Provisional Council were advised that the first meeting of the Provisional Council of the Shire of Lachlan was to be held on Thursday March 10, 1977 at 2.15pm at the Lachlan Shire Council Chambers, Condobolin.

At the April Council meeting the Council considered ridings for the new Council. It was moved at that meeting that;

“the new Council comprise 5 riding areas for electoral purposes. An amendment was moved that the Council comprise of an open undivided area for electoral purposes. A foreshadowed amendment was moved that the matter of division of the Council for electoral purposes be held over to the April meeting of Council for a decision.

The amendment was lost 8 votes to 6.

The foreshadowed amendment was lost 10 votes to 4.

The original motion was carried.

The Council then resolved that the number of councillors per riding be 3.”

It is RECOMMENDED that Council note the 25th anniversary of the Lachlan Shire Council.

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