

Shire of Bruce Rock

# Newsletter

March 2023



*Where friends become family*

# CEO Report

As we head towards the final quarter of this financial year staff have been busy implementing the final projects, roads / bridges program and other works in the 2022/23 budget as well as meeting all the legislative requirements. Now that summer sports are drawing to a close, our staff are preparing ovals and facilities in readiness for the winter sports. Its great to see the local sporting teams well into training and fully utilising our facilities,we wish them all the best for their upcoming seasons.

Below is a brief snapshot of current happenings, however if you want to know more or seek information on other Council related matters, please contact the CEO, President or one of the Shire Councillors.

## **Supermarket Update**

The earthworks and pre-lay of utility services are complete, and the concrete tilt up walls poured in readiness for the next stage, which is the installation of steelworks and the walls put in place. There will be a few weeks where the worksite will be quiet due to delays in delivery of steel (which is a statewide issue in the industry), this should arrive in mid April. However, offsite works are still continuing and there will be action back on site very soon. The project is still on track to meet our deadlines and to work in liaison with the successful retailer. I would like to make a special mention of the hard work that is still continuing with fundraising for this project and in particular the Bruce Rock Progress Association. Your hard work and continued dedication is appreciated.

## **Wheatbelt Medical Student Immersion**

It was great to see the Wheatbelt Medical Student Immersion Program back in full swing following a few disrupted years with the impacts of Covid. It was a fantastic week that provided University students training to be Doctors what its like living and working in a regional community. Thanks to all the host families for welcoming the students into your homes. We appreciate and thank our Emergency Volunteer personnel, community groups and other key agencies for continuing to be involved and host various events and activities over the week. Also thanks to Rural Health West staff who worked closely with our Community Development Officer, Caris Negri in delivering the program for Bruce Rock.

*Darren Mollenoyux*

# CEO Report

## **Council Representatives Talking Regional Collaboration**

On the 28th February 2023 four of our Shire Councillors and I attended the WA Local Government Association Zone Conference held in Merredin. The event was well attended with a large contingent of Councillors and Senior Managers attending from across the Wheatbelt to hear presentations and discuss regional collaboration. Topics covered included; Wheatbelt Secondary Freight Network, Aged Care, Accommodation, Emergency Management as well as presentations from various politicians, the Wheatbelt Development Commission and Regional Development Australia. The day was very informative and covered topics that are all relevant to Bruce Rock.

The following day Rick Wilson MP, Member for O'Connor and the Hon Steve Martin MLC Member for the Agricultural Region visited Bruce Rock and met with Council representatives, undertook a tour of the School and met with other members of the community.



## **Works Crew Supporting Community Events**

It was great to see the Bruce Rock Triathlon back on Saturday 18th March at the Bruce Rock Aquatic Centre. The event was well attended with competitors young and old testing their endurance. Congratulations to all the winners! Well done to the organizers of this event, and thanks to the Shire Staff who took time out of their weekend to assist, with Brock, Mike and Joanne keeping everyone safe with traffic control duties, as well as Gary the Pool Manger ensuring the facility was ready to host the event.

Earlier on the same day the Bruce Rock Progress Association undertook a private works busy bee where many community members came together for a yard clean up and raised further funds for the new supermarket. A special mention to Vern who volunteered his time to provide the use of the Shire Bobcat to assist in this fundraising effort.



# Update from the CDO

## Community Grant Program

Applications for the Shire of Bruce Rock's Community Grant Program are now open! The Shire of Bruce Rock will make an allocation of funds in its budget to be used to provide financial assistance to incorporated and not for profit community groups, including sporting organisations that can demonstrate an association with the Shire of Bruce Rock. An allowance for these funds will be included in the draft budget, to a maximum of \$20,000.

Examples of not for profit organisations include but are not limited to:

- Sporting clubs
- Service Groups
- P&C
- Art and cultural groups
- Other Shire of Bruce Rock local interest groups

Projects must seek to further the development of one of the following:

- Art and Culture
- Disability and Ageing
- Early Youth (0 to 4 years)
- Education and Training
- Environment
- Event Planning
- History and Heritage
- Minor Infrastructure, Equipment or Development
- Seniors
- Sport and Recreation
- Tourism
- Volunteer Upskilling
- Youth (5 to 18 years)



To receive an application package, please visit our website or contact [cdo@brucerock.wa.gov.au](mailto:cdo@brucerock.wa.gov.au) or 9061 1377.

# *Update from the CDO*

## **Wheatbelt Medical Student Immersion Program**

In the third week of March, Bruce Rock welcomed first year medical students from Notre Dame. The students were billeted by local families and experienced life in a small regional community as part of an immersion program which is a partnership between Notre Dame, WEROC and Rural Health West. The immersion program aims to address the state wide regional doctor shortage as studies have shown a link between willingness to work in a rural area and early exposure to rural medicine.

The students spent time with different arms of health service in Bruce Rock, and learnt how these services work together to deliver optimum patient care. They attended a panel discussion with health professionals, and then spent time with volunteers at the St Johns Ambulance. The school hosted a 'Teddy Bear Hospital', in which junior primary students brought in beloved stuffed animals with an assortment of ailments that the students cured. This helps students hold a positive memory of doctors and medicine when they next have to visit a doctor.

Shayna Campbell led a cultural engagement activity during which the students learnt some basic Noongar language, bracelet braiding and learnt from Shayna's personal cultural experience. Tony and Valmai Buller invited the students to tour around their farm, providing an insight into the regions main industry, and the rural lifestyle. Bruce Rock Engineering provided a tour of their workshop, highlighting the lack of barriers for large industrial businesses to operate in rural settings. The Bruce Rock Mens Shed and Museum volunteers also welcomed the students to their facilities, demonstrating to the students how clubs and groups forge a sense of belonging and community, and have a positive effect on mental health. Colin Turner and Paul Hutton gave a guided tour of Remembrance Park and spoke to the students about their experience founding and running the Back to the Bush Veterans Reunion.

To everyone who gave up their time to introduce the medical students to life in a rural area and especially to the billet families who opened their homes: thank you!

The Immersion Program is a really valuable program, if you would like to get involved next year by hosting students or meeting with them as a part of a community organisation or business, please get in touch with Caris Negri, Community Development Office at [caris.negri@brucerock.wa.gov.au](mailto:caris.negri@brucerock.wa.gov.au) or 9061 1377



# From the Works Manager

## Construction Works Crew

Construction works on the Old Beverley Road, Shackleton/Kellerberrin Road, Doodlakine Road and Totadgin Road are nearing completion with the final sealing works to be completed by the end of March.

## Maintenance & Patching Works Crew

The crew have been completing patching works throughout the Shire. With construction works completed the crews will be undertaking maintenance in addition to starting the Shire's major roads works program; clearing saplings and drains for the winter season.

## Town Gardens and Recreation Centre Crew

Gardeners have been busy in the Bruce Rock townsite keeping all the parks, garden beds and public areas tidy. If anyone sees a break in any of the reticulation, please report it the Administration Office know so we can repair it straight away.

## Town Crew

The Town Crew have been undertaking the bridge works program. The current bridge being worked on is on Belka East Road, when this is completed the crew will move on to Erikin North Road.



## From the Crews

As we enter the Easter break, please be mindful on the roads and drive to the conditions. Please have a safe journey when travelling around the area or state.

## From the Works Manager

I would like to remind all that as we are approaching the winter season and with seeding is set to begin. Please be aware of large vehicles on the road and drive to the conditions.



# Council Meeting Outcomes

Council held its recent Ordinary Meeting on Thursday 16th February 2023, where Council considered various matters. Below is a brief overview of some of the items and Council decisions from the meeting.

## **Adoption of Disability Access & Inclusion Plan**

Following the close of public submissions period for comments and feedback on Council's Draft Disability Access & Inclusion Plan 2023 - 2027, there were no public submissions received. At the March 2023 Council Meeting the revised Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2023-2027 (DAIP) was fully endorsed by Council and will now be lodged with the Disability Services Commission. A copy of the final Plan can be found on Council's website.

## **Statutory Requirements Endorsed**

Council considered and endorsed two important legislative requirements at the March 2023 Council meeting, being the Review of Delegated Authority Register and the 2022 Compliance Audit Return. The Delegated Authority Register is created from the Local Government Act 1995 which allows for a Local Government to delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the exercise of any of its powers or the discharge of any of its duties under the Act. All delegations made by the Council must be by absolute majority decision and is to be reviewed annually. The submission of an annual Compliance Audit Return is mandatory and is to be submitted to the Department of Local Government by the 31st March each year. The return is to ensure Council's statutory compliance with the Local Government Act 1995 and associated regulations are met and reported on.

## **Amendment to Firebreaks Policy**

Discussion at the Bushfire Advisory Committee Meeting held in September 2022 included whether it was still appropriate or necessary to have the requirement for 3 meter firebreaks on rural properties, and whether a 2.5 metre break would suffice. This is due to 2.5m being wide enough to enable firefighting appliances through, and more accurately reflects modern farming practice. This issue was discussed again at the March 2023 Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting and was recommended to be brought to the next full Council Meeting for consideration.

Council endorsed the recommendation of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee to vary the Firebreaks Policy to state that a 2.5 meter firebreak is the minimum requirement and the information to be be circulated to the community in advance of seeding.

# Council Meeting Outcomes

## **Annual Budget Review**

The 2022/23 Budget Review was undertaken by staff and presented for consideration at the March 2023 Council Meeting. With only minor variations occurring this was reviewed and adopted by Council.

## **Regional Involvement**

Council were provided with updates from various Regional Meetings held in February / March 2023. The President, Deputy President & CEO attended these meetings which included the WA Local Government Association Great Eastern Zone Meeting and Wheatbelt Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils (WEROC) which both provide Council with opportunities to work with neighbouring Councils for the betterment of our communities in the region. Council representatives also attended the Central East Accommodation & Care Alliance Inc (CEACA) Meeting to continue to work with nine other like minded Councils to achieve improved accommodation options for our local communities and lobby for avenues to continue to provide support for aged care.

