

MINUTES OF THE SHOALHAVEN ARTS BOARD

Meeting Date: Thursday, 14 February 2019

Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra

Time: 2.00pm

The following members were present:

Clr John Wells - Chairperson

Clr Mark Kitchener

Alison Chiam

Karen Akehurst

Barbara Dawson

Dr Peter Lavelle

Robert Crow

Jenny Thompson

Others present:

Dr Vanessa Barbay – left the meeting at 2.45pm

Stephen Dunshea – Director, Finance Corporate & Community Services

Jane Lewis – Manager, Recreation Culture & Community

Bronwyn Coulston – Manager, Arts & Culture

Karen Patterson – Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre Manager

Nicole Lonesborough – Collection & Resources Manager

Apologies / Leave of Absence

An apology was received from Sarah Taylor, Library Services Manager.

Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLVED (Peter Lavelle / Robert Crow)

That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Arts Board held on Thursday 29 November 2018 be confirmed.

CARRIED

Declarations of Interest

Nil

PRESENTATIONS

AB19.1 Bherwerre Wetland Art Panel Project - Sanctuary Point HPERM Ref: D19/2539

Dr Vanessa Barbay gave a presentation to the Board on her Bherwerre Wetland Art Panel Project, installed at Larmer Avenue, Sanctuary Point. Council has funded the third stage of this four-stage project, which aims to raise awareness of and help to protect the Wetland.

Bay and Basin Community Resources approached Vanessa in May 2016 about painting twelve 122 x 122 cm panels featuring native birds and orchids that inhabit the wetland. Local photographer Chris Grounds provided photos for reference.

Some funding was initially available but the first seven panels Vanessa completed on a volunteer basis for the BBCR. The BBCR Great Mates Shed framed four of these murals and constructed two of four rotating stands that hold three panels each. During stage three, she has continued working to finish the remaining five panels, the final three having just been completed.

Vanessa added it has been gratifying to note the local community pride in the project, and the Men's Shed in particular has expressed their sense of ownership.

She has given public acknowledgement of the Shoalhaven Arts Board's support on BBCR community radio 92.7; on 4 June at Sandholme during SeeChange 2018; and in local media.

Members of the Arts Board expressed their appreciation to Dr Barbay for the artworks presented, and congratulated her on the success of the project. Special note was made of the project's role in generating community pride.

AB19.2 Presentation - Strategic Plan for Nowra CBD including Shoalhaven Regional Gallery and Library HPERM Ref: D19/14906

Gordon Clark (Manager Strategic Planning) presented the most recent plans for revitalising the Nowra CBD, and its implications for the Gallery and Library precinct.

The CBD Urban Design Masterplan adopted in 2014 sets out Council's long-term vision and strategic direction for revitalising the Nowra CBD. Nowra should be considered a cultural gateway. Six potential sites have been identified for key initiatives: Stewart Place, Junction Court, Berry Street, Junction Street, Egans Lane, and the Princes Highway. Pertinent to the Arts Board is the potential to strengthen a cultural precinct in Berry Street and adjacent areas. Proposed areas for new civic/retail space may incorporate other cultural and community uses close to the Library and Gallery.

The Nowra CBD Revitalisation Strategy Committee, also launched in 2014, has its own budget and is currently focusing on public domain improvements such as an additional mural, upgrading the Berry Street footpath, an historic walk app and signage, banners and lighting.

Gordon then summarised the Riverfront Masterplan, which was exhibited and adopted in 2018. Council is awaiting finalisation of the Nowra Bridge plans from RMS. Progress is also being made on the Shoalhaven Gateway Project. It is recognised that better use needs to be made of Nowra's riverfront; however, the topography of Nowra means the land on the north side of the CBD is all flood prone, so the city historically was built at a distance from the river to avoid flooding.

Although funding will be required for these initiatives, Council does play a significant role, as it owns many of the identified sites.

Jenny Thompson asked whether the Roxy Cinema may be at risk from the potential inclusion of a cinema multiplex in the plans for Stewart Place. Gordon Clark clarified that this suggestion had been contained in the Retail Hierarchy Review Report prepared for Council by a consultancy, which has not at this stage been adopted by Council. He added that the Roxy's heritage significance is recognised in the Local Environmental Plan.

Gordon also confirmed that Council is not currently looking at any potential impact of the riverfront plans on the Berry Street arts hub. Bronwyn Coulston (Manager Arts & Culture) confirmed that the

\$50,000 proposed for a Creative Economies Strategy is subject to a budget bid.

In response to a question about encouraging businesses to remain open at the weekends, Gordon clarified that the planning controls have been amended to allow mixed-use zoning in a ring around the CBD to allow residential development. Depending on whether developers take up this opportunity, this might facilitate use of the CBD at weekends and off season. Similarly, there is a need to encourage visitors to use Nowra, not just the coastal villages. Gordon noted that hotel accommodation in Nowra capacity has been shrinking and ideally we would attract a 4½-5 star hotel to the riverfront. Additional capacity will also support the SEC's conferencing facility.

The Board members thanked Gordon Clark for his comprehensive presentation.

REPORTS

AB19.3 Shoalhaven Arts Board Art Acquisition Subcommittee Report

HPERM Ref: D19/30982

Bronwyn Coulston drew members' attention to Option 2 in the report, which suggests using solely funds in the Arts Reserve rather than undertake crowdfunding for the Guy Warren *Big River* works.

Although there are sufficient funds available, the Board felt that a crowdfunding campaign would provide an opportunity for public engagement. The recommendation as printed was preferred.

Clr Wells stated this had been the most impressive acquisitions report yet presented to the Arts Board. The Margaret Dredge proposal for 13 works is outstanding. Bronwyn noted the Judy Cassab works in person are spectacular.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That Shoalhaven Arts Board

1. Acquire the nine (9) works making up the *Big River* series by Guy Warren through a combination of Cultural Gift, purchase and crowdfunding.
2. Accept the offer of a donation by photographer Riste Andrevski for the work *Elisabeth Cummings*.
3. Purchase the thirteen (13) remaining works on paper by Margaret Dredge.
4. Acquire twenty four (24) works by Judy Cassab through the Cultural Gift Donations process.
5. Decline the offer of donation of various works from the Estate of Elizabeth Howcroft.

RESOLVED (Alison Chiam / Barbara Dawson)

That Shoalhaven Arts Board

1. Acquire the nine (9) works making up the *Big River* series by Guy Warren through a combination of Cultural Gift, purchase and crowdfunding.
2. Accept the offer of a donation by photographer Riste Andrevski for the work *Elisabeth Cummings*.
3. Purchase the thirteen (13) remaining works on paper by Margaret Dredge.
4. Acquire twenty four (24) works by Judy Cassab through the Cultural Gift Donations process.
5. Decline the offer of donation of various works from the Estate of Elizabeth Howcroft.

CARRIED

AB19.4 Shoalhaven Arts Board One Off Grant Program**HPERM Ref:
D19/31006**

A workshop on this topic was held prior to the Arts Board meeting, which produced the recommendation that the Shoalhaven Arts Board fund a grant program, titled "Arts Practitioners Professional Development Grants", for amounts up to \$3000. Details are to follow on eligible activities, compulsory criteria, the impact on the activity to the development of the Shoalhaven Arts Community, etc. Individuals and Groups resident in the Shoalhaven are eligible to apply.

The program will have a closing date in early April, in time for the next Arts Board meeting and for a report to be submitted to the Council meeting in May. The funds will be disbursed by 30 June.

It was confirmed this recommendation can be resolved under delegation, so that advertising can commence immediately.

Action: Bronwyn Coulston to circulate the final wording to all members.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That following a workshop held on 14 February 2019, the funds of \$9,300 remaining in the Cultural Activities Budget (21596 / 22521) will be spent as follows:

1. Details to be filled in at meeting following the workshop.

RESOLVED (Barbara Dawson / Alison Chiam)

That following a workshop held on 14 February 2019, the funds of \$9,300 remaining in the Cultural Activities Budget (21596 / 22521) will be spent as follows:

1. The Shoalhaven Arts Board fund a grant program, titled Arts Practitioners Professional Development Grants, for amounts up to \$3000;
2. Grants will be open to individuals and groups to undertake activities related to their development including (but not limited to) Mentorships, Residencies, Performances, Presentations, Exhibitions, Forum / Conference / Workshop attendance, travel, study or venue hire. The applicants will be required to demonstrate the impact of the proposed program on their career and on the growth and development of arts in the Shoalhaven.

CARRIED

GENERAL BUSINESS**AB19.5 Additional Item - NOW Contemporary**

Bronwyn Coulston confirmed the public exhibition of the NOW Contemporary Art Prize entry fees has now closed, and the fees (\$40/\$30) will be adopted. Arts Board members are encouraged to inform their contacts and colleagues who may be interested in sponsoring or donating, and to contact Bronwyn for a sponsorship pack. Jane Lewis (Manager, Recreation Community & Culture) advised that electronic copies will be circulated to members.

AB19.7 Additional Item - Australia Day Awards

Alison Chiam advised the Australia Day Awards, presented on 24 January, had seen 13 artists nominated and 6 being celebrated.

The award winners who are artists were:

- Jenny Robertson – Citizen
- Karen Akehurst – Outstanding Emerging Artist
- Dora Rognvaldsdottir - Outstanding Contribution to an Inclusive Shoalhaven
- Alison Tait - Outstanding Contribution to Arts and Culture

and those who were highly commended:

- Max Dingle - Outstanding Contribution to Arts and Culture
- Ona Frazier - Outstanding Contribution to Arts and Culture

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 3.14pm.

Clr John Wells
CHAIRPERSON