

# Townsville Port Community Liaison Group

## Meeting Minutes



**Date:** Wednesday 2 February 2022, 5pm – 6.30pm

**Venue:** Microsoft Teams

**Chair:** Ranee Crosby, CEO, Port of Townsville

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### Attendees

1	Ranee Crosby	CEO, Port of Townsville (Chair)
2	Nigel Easterbrook	Senior Project Director – Channel Upgrade project (presenting)
3	Maximilian Hirschfeld	Environmental Graduate (presenting)
4	Elaine Glen	Acting Manager Environment and Planning
5	Kim Wheatley	Manager Corporate Affairs, Port of Townsville (presenting)
6	Sarah Mathiesen	Corporate Affairs Advisor, Port of Townsville (minutes)
7	Jessica Johnston	Capital Works and Corporate Affairs Officer
8	Leslie Sampson	President of Magnetic Island Community Development Association
9	Sharon Marks	VRM Biologik
10	Keith Noble	Community Rep
11	Ian Ferguson	Community Rep
12	Brittany Butler	Community Rep
13	Craig Knight	Community Rep
14	Holly Lambert	QF8 Volunteer Coastguard
15	Adam Smith	Local Marine Advisory Committee

### Apologies

1	Marissa Wise	GM Infrastructure and Environment, Port of Townsville
2	Heath Hatfield	Community Rep
3	Norman Rains	Townsville Birdlife
4	Leon Kippin	Community Rep
5	Rick Vernon	Magnetic Island Ratepayers Association
6	Emily Blumson	Community Rep
7	Brenton Creed	Community Rep

### Actions Summary

#### Actions from this meeting:

**ACTION:** Arrange a future CLG presentation about climate change action being taken by the transport and freight industries.

**ACTION:** Invite Hydrogen proponents to present an update at a future CLG meeting.

#### Outstanding actions from previous meetings:

**ACTION:** Port of Townsville to invite CLG members to see the Woomera.

**ACTION:** Arrange an outing on the Osprey once COVID-19 restrictions allow.

**ACTION:** Environmental advisor to talk about DMPA at upcoming CLG meeting.

**ACTION:** Port to present 30-year outlook plan to CLG at a future meeting.

## **1. Welcome/Apologies**

Chair Raneë Crosby welcomed members to the CLG's 32nd meeting at 5.03pm.

## **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (3 November 2021)**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 November 2021 were adopted without change.

All actions have been completed or were addressed during the meeting. Some outstanding actions will be covered as part of the agenda for future meetings when relevant updates are available.

## **3. Welcome to New Members**

Five new members have joined the CLG:

- Emily Blumson
- Brittany Butler
- Brenton Creed
- Craig Knight
- Holly Lambert.

Adam Hinks has resigned from the CLG.

The group conducted short introductions with each person in attendance sharing their role and interest in being part of the Community Liaison Group.

## **4. Nigel Easterbrook, Channel Upgrade Project**

Nigel presented an update on the Channel Upgrade Project.

The dredge *Woomera* arrived in Townsville from Brisbane on 16 January and welcomed at a ministerial media event that included a Welcome to Country by Brenton Creed and a traditional smoking ceremony by the Wulgurukaba Walkabout dancers.

Dredging is now underway to the western side of the new rock wall, to allow *Woomera* and barge access to the Temporary Unloading Facility (TUF). Until access to the TUF has been achieved, dredge material is being transported to the Townsville Marine Precinct via barge and trucked back to the reclamation area. This dredging is expected to continue until mid-to-late February, at which point the *Woomera* will move to the main shipping channel to begin channel widening.

In the TUF, *Woomera* is dredging about 2,000 cubic metres per day. Speeds will increase up to 10,000 cubic metres per day when the dredge is working in the Channel. *Woomera* will begin channel widening about one-third of the way into the channel, and make its way toward Magnetic Island, with dredging in the Sea Channel to occur during winter as the gentler weather conditions will assist in the relatively exposed site.

The outer Platypus Channel will be targeted first to extract the harder clay required for lining the reclamation area, which is an environmental condition.

Nigel noted that while he has worked on major dredging projects across the world, he has never seen such stringent environmental controls as those required by the Channel Upgrade Project. The real-time data be captured for the life of the project will allow the Port, Hall Contracting and the Independent Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) to continuously assess the project's environmental impact and adjust as required.

Communications activities have been undertaken to ensure public awareness and safety (particularly regarding increased vessel movements at the mouth of Ross River) around the project. Activities have included:

- Radio advertising on Triple M and Hit FM
- Advertising in the Townsville Bulletin's fishing section
- Social media posts
- Flyers to fishing and boating stores, recreational water sport groups and the Coastguard
- Letterbox drop to residents in South Townsville, Magnetic Island and along the Strand
- Direct email the Port's community and customer databases

#### **Discussion:**

**Les asked about procedures for keeping boaties a safe distance from the dredge.**

Cardinal markers will be placed 100m from the vessel to indicate an exclusion zone, and the Regional Harbour Master will advise vessels to stay a further 100m from the markers. This information is being relayed through the Port's communication activities, Hall's signage at boat ramps and through Notice to Mariners.

Holly added that the Coast guard is also broadcasting the message daily across their radio; and sharing information through their digital channels.

**Les asked whether the 3.5 million cubic metres being removed from the channel would be enough to fill the reclaim.**

The reclamation area is purpose-built to house all capital dredge material and it is expected to be filled upon completion of dredging.

**Adam urged caution in saying there would be 'no environmental impact', noting that all dredging has an impact but that he believes it will be minimised through the Port's controls. He asked what consideration had been given to offsetting the carbon emissions associated with the Channel Upgrade project.**

Nigel noted the controls in place for the project are to ensure there is 'minimal impact'. Elaine advised that Port will be conducting a port-wide carbon and energy audit in 2022, which will factor in emissions from the Channel Upgrade project, with the intent being offset emissions. This part of the

Port's existing commitment to be carbon neutral and powered 100% by renewable energy by 2025, and for the port community to be climate positive by 2050 under our 30-year sustainability plan, Port Vision 2050.

**Keith said that through discussions with Townsville City Council and the work being done by industry leaders like the Port, Townsville is well positioned to be a leader in responding to climate impacts on a city-wide level. Keith would be interested in seeing the figures that compare the carbon emissions of larger but fewer ships visiting Townsville, compared to the number of more, smaller ships.**

Ranee suggested the CLG might have a focussed session on the climate change action being taken by the transport and freight industry and the opportunities and challenges that exist.

**Craig asked how long it would take for dredge material to settle in the reclaim and the Port could build on it?**

Leaving the material to settle itself can take about 10 years, however it can be consolidated faster through a range of compaction techniques if required. A 'trafficable' reclamation will be achieved by the end of the project, however further work will need to be conducted as the Port and its customers identify specific uses for the land and the level of piling or other works required for infrastructure.

**Les said he would like to see the project's environmental data reported to the community in a regular, simple and easy to understand format.**

The Port has in place a real-time dashboard as the principal tool for the Port and ITAC to monitor the environment. A simplified version of the dashboard will be made available to the public by mid-2022. This will need to convert some measurements (e.g. measuring turbidity in NTUs) into more accessible language in order to bridge the gap between the scientific and general communities.

## **5. Maximilian Hirschfeld, The Cleveland Bay Story**

One of the key objectives of the Dry Tropics Partnership for Healthy Waters is to educate the community about our aquatic ecosystems.

The goal for improving the community's understanding of the health and dynamics of Cleveland Bay is to share information through a series of stories hosted on digital platform ArcGIS.

The challenge is bridging the gap between available knowledge of the scientific community and the general community's scientific literacy. ArcGIS Story Maps are online interactive stories available on phones and desktops, which can easily integrate GIS information to combine credible data, with something fun and user-friendly.

The Partnership has commenced work on its first Story Map, about seagrass in Cleveland Bay, which will include an interactive map demonstrating the changing nature in response to environmental factors and weather events, as well as animated graphics.

Other stories to come in the series include those about hydrodynamics, sediment and dredging and geologic history.

## **6. Social Media Update, Kim Wheatley**

While the growth of the Port's combined audiences is fairly steady (2% year-on-year), reach and engagement have both roughly doubled, and video views have increased ten-fold.

The Port is beginning to see distinct differences between the best performing content across different channels, with LinkedIn users engaging more with 'people' and 'prosperity' themed posts while Facebook users engage more with 'community' and 'planet' themed posts.

## **7. Intro to Ann Sherry**

CLG members watched a video message from the Ann Sherry OA, the Port's new non-Executive Chair of the Board of Directors. In the video Ann introduced herself, her professional experience, and her interests in the future growth and development of the Port of Townsville and the region.

## **8. Port Updates**

Hydrogen discussions are advancing rapidly. The consortium NQH2 is now bringing together all parties investigating opportunities in hydrogen to work together to secure funding to move developments forward. There's been a multitude of investments, particularly by Korea Zinc, to reach their carbon goals. The Port will invite some of those proponents to provide updates to the CLG again soon.

Reef 2050, the Australian and Queensland Governments' long-term sustainability plan, was released in December and is highly significant. With the recent warmer weather some coral bleaching is expected. Rain and cloudy conditions in coming weeks are needed to help cool the waters.

Trade is tracking approximately 90,000 tonnes up on last year. We are seeing the mines supply to domestic refineries rather than overseas.

The Port held a Community BBQ at Environmental Park in November for residents of South Townsville. We had a great show from local residents, and enjoyed showing them the air monitoring station, hosting some tree plantings and taking them on port tours.

## **9. Around the Table & General Business**

No points were raised during this session.

**Meeting closed at 6.27pm**

**Next CLG Meeting scheduled for 4 May 2022.**