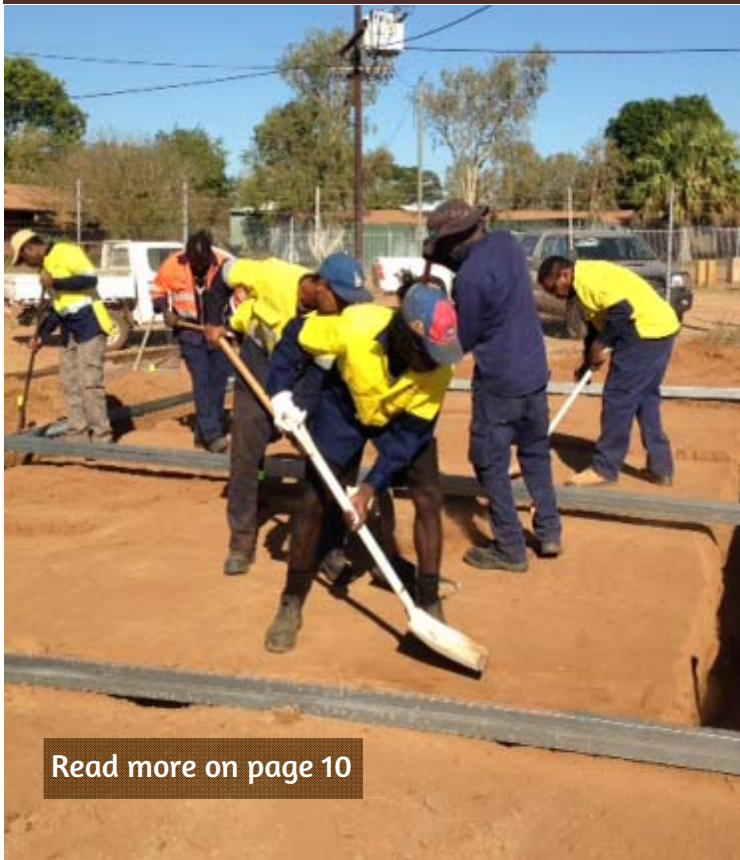


ROPER GULF REGIONAL COUNCIL

Newsletter

2014
AUGUST

RJCP Construction Project commences in Ngukurr



Read more on page 10

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Our Mission

Working as one towards a better future through effective use of all resources

Our Vision

Roper Gulf Regional Council, sustainable, viable, vibrant

Our Values

Honesty
Equality
Accountability
Respect
Trust



Message from the Mayor

August is nearly over, our Regional Plan and Budget is out and we are well into the tasks set out in the Plan.

Our budget is sound and the largest we have had since forming in 2008. We have good reserves, the Region is growing and we continue to offer quality services to our residents, however Territory and Federal budget cuts will reduce our bottom line and some of our services.

The Federal Government decision to freeze indexation of Federal Assistance Grants will mean Roper Gulf and for that matter all Local Government will have income reductions equivalent to the CPI from this

important grants scheme. Rural and remote Councils with low rates base and substantial roads infrastructure needs will be particularly affected. This is in effect a cost shifting on to local government.

The proposed fuel excise increase will also affect rural and remote local government. We are some of the lowest income Councils and carry a particularly large fuel bill due to our vast distances and dependence on vehicles.

I am also concerned about the real reduction in funding for Indigenous and human services and the impact changes to social security is sure to

have on many of our most needy residents. In our communities asking people on Job Search to make 40 job applications a week is absurd and out of touch.

On a happier note I was really pleased to hear about our Jilkminggan Jamboree Mob getting funding to produce local theatre under the Heywire Grants Scheme and the first meeting of the Hodgson Downs Local Authority. I am also looking forward to the next Council meeting at beautiful Numbulwar at the end of this month.



Message from the CEO

August is already with us and Council begins undertaking

their meetings in Communities with Numbulwar first up this month. The Community always looks forward to hosting Council meetings and having their say about what the issues and concerns are in their Community.

August has been a busy month with all Managers of the Council attending their respective meetings in Katherine which then culminates with an all-in meeting at the

end. These meetings provide a valuable opportunity for all Managers to hear about what's going on across the organisation and not just in their respective business units. It allows them to see the good stories that go on and also allows them to raise issues of concern around operations and to discuss possible solutions.

As an organisation we have been ramping up our efforts in putting Work, Health and Safety foremost in our daily work-lives. WH&S is now a standard agenda item in all staff and management meetings across the organisation

and we are currently preparing for a new initiative, 'Safe September' inspired by our very passionate WH&S Officer, Matthew Galloway. This is designed to build a WH&S leadership behaviour within the ranks by giving recognition and reward to those who inspire others in their everyday practices when it comes to work, health and safety. I am very much looking forward to this exciting event.

Till next time

Stay safe.

Employee Profile

Anne-Maree Low - Council Service Manager, Manyallaluk

Reports to: Director of Council Services and Infrastructure

What does your role as a Council Service Manager require you to do?

I start before 7.00am ...

- Taking chlorine, bore, meter and diesel generator reads. Service one of the three diesel generators or fill the diesel fuel tanks or see to power fuses are up on the power poles.
- Once a month collect water samples ready for the plane to pick up.
- Organise the days/weeks work for the Municipal Crew and work along side them as their Mentor/Supervisor:
- Keep the airstrip and the local roads safe especially in wet season.
- Irrigate the parks and trees. Mow the parks and open spaces. Cut down dead trees.
- Do the rubbish run and hard waste collection each Wednesday and keep the rubbish dump clean and organised.
- Back burn, create fire breaks, put out bush & grass fires, monitor bush fires near the community.
- Look after all of our vehicles, equipment and tools and council assets.
- Dig graves for people and pets. Look after the four cemeteries.
- Help Night Patrol at any time of the night. I've also done search and rescue in the middle of the night.
- Mentor Family and Community Services staff at the women's centre and the Sport

& Recreation Officer.

- Manage the mail for residents.
- Fortnightly pay preparation for staff. Staff Induction. HR matters for staff.
- Assess and organise house repair and maintenance for residents.
- Help local residents with enquiries.
- Assist visiting contractors, NGO's, government agencies, stakeholders, Roper Council staff and the odd tourist who wishes to camp for a few nights.

... and whatever else needs doing before 6.00/7.00pm week days or on the weekend.

How long have you been a CSM?

I started in April 2013.

What is your favorite thing about your community?

The local people are terrific. The kids are polite and lovely. The peace and quiet. No fighting. No vandalism.

The wildlife including frogs, geckos, lizards, buffalo, donkey, skippies and dingoes.

The dramatic changes in the local environment during wet season and dry season.

Tell us a little about yourself

I've worked in ... graphics arts, publishing, events management, marketing, communications consulting, conflict resolution, industrial safety, my own business, aged care, the disability sector, the corrections industry, primary health care (remote communities) and now local council (remote communities).

Focus on Safety—RGRC Safety Award Winners announced

The first recipients of the Roper Gulf Regional Council Safety Leadership Awards were announced by CEO Michael Berto at the recent Managers meeting held in Katherine.

Marc Gardner, Director of Contracts and Technical Services and Lara Brennan, Regional Manager Community Services were the first winners.

Marc was noted by Matthew Galloway, Work Health and Safety Coordinator, for his application and willingness to "...do the business and his attention to good workplace safety. He has strongly communicated the safety message and undertaken field surveys. His safety leadership is cascading down through his department"

Lara Brennan was commended for, "...her attention to management of compensation cases where injured workers were supported to get the best treatment for their recovery and showing staff they were valued. She also showed strong commitment to risk assessment and management across her depart-

ment." Matthew said.

Matthew praised the award recipients saying they both showed exceptional safety leadership. Matthew has been looking out for other good examples of great safety behaviour and leadership across the Council and will be awarding small prizes for strongly demonstrated leadership in safety.

Nominations for exceptional leadership in safety can be made directly to Matthew by any Council staff member.



Recognition of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander People

Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander people is back on the Federal Government's agenda and the Joint Select Committee appointed by the Australian Parliament to research, consult and prepare a report for the Parliament sat for one day in Katherine in August to consult and take evidence. Evidence was heard from Local government and a number of Indigenous organisations in the region.

RGRC's Director of Council Services and Infrastructure, Sharon Hillen addressed the Committee and told them that RGRC supported the move to

recognise Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander in the Constitution and the repeal of racially discriminating clauses from the Constitution.

If the Parliament accepts the Committees report and recommendations, appropriate wording will be prepared and a Constitutional Referendum will be held.

Everyone on the electoral roll can vote. A majority of voters and States voting "yes" is required to pass the referendum.

Stay tuned for further news on these important proposed changes to the Australian

Constitution which have important implications for Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander Peoples and all Australians.

An interim report from the Joint Select Committee outlining the process, arguments and recommendations of an Expert Panel was released in July this year and can be viewed or downloaded at:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Constitution-al/Recognition_of_Aboriginal_and_Torres_Strait_Islander_Peoples.

Call for Indigenous Leaders in the Northern Territory



Northern
Territory
Government

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

First Circles Engagement

Supporting the next generation of Indigenous leaders

First Circles is looking for 30 Indigenous leaders from across the Territory who will help drive change and bring new voices to the conversation with government.

Members will:

- take part in community projects and policy development
- develop their leadership skills
- share views and talk to government.

Nominations are open for Indigenous Territorians. You can nominate yourself or someone else.

To find out more about First Circles or to nominate call **8999 8385** or visit www.communityservices.nt.gov.au

First Circles Engagement is about identifying, mentoring and supporting Indigenous emerging leaders.

The term 'First Circles' combines two concepts:

- Acknowledgment of 'First Peoples'
- 'Circles' which represents the collaboration between people and communities as the main drive behind improving outcomes.

First Circles Engagement will focus on engaging future Indigenous leaders from across the Northern Territory to bring new voices to the conversation and help build the next generation of community leaders.

Roper Gulf is now on Facebook



Roper Gulf Regional Council is proud to announce the launch of their Facebook Page.

Please 'like' our page so you can keep up to date with all of the latest, news, events and goings-on around Roper Gulf.

If you have any good photos or stories you would like posted to our Facebook Page, please send to

roper.governance@ropergulf.nt.gov.au

Employees of the Month

Congratulations to all of the July Employee of the Month Winners:

Head Quarters: Raju Koirala

Barunga: Margaret Tiati

Beswick: Joyce Robinson

Borroloola: Chantelle Johns

Bulman: Robbie Dalywater

Eva Valley: Janelle Hood

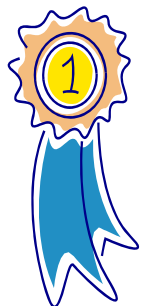
Jilkminggan: Scottie Hendersen

Mataranka: Richard Moore

Ngukurr: Paul Amarant Jr.

Numbulwar: Dale Murrungun

Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication.



Out & About

PHOTOGRAPH OF THE MONTH

'R' for Recognise

To learn more about the Recognition of Aboriginal and Torre Straight Islanders in the Australian Constitution, please visit www.rocognise.org.au

Roper Gulf Regional Council's Elected Members, Executive and Governance Team in Numbulwar



Community Barbeque in Numbulwar



Ordinary Meeting of Council in Numbulwar

Roper Gulf Regional Council's Elected Members met in Numbulwar on the 27th September 2014 for their Ordinary Meeting of Council. The ocean breeze and the scent of sea salt created an ambiance for the meeting like none other.

Council discussed and deliberated on a variety of issues. The successful applicants of Round One of the Community Grants were determined, section 19 leases for many of our communities were approved and exciting presentations on the Youth Services and Aged Care Programs currently operating in the Region were just some of the topics Council conversed on.

The Council were particularly impressed with the many youth of Numbulwar who attended the meeting as part of the audience.

"Their enthusiasm and interest in the future of Numbulwar is great to see. We look forward to seeing these up and coming leaders at

more Local Authority Meetings" said Mayor Tony Jack.

A community barbeque was also held which allowed the Council to mingle with the local residents. Approximately 50 residents enjoyed the evening with the Elected Members.

The Council would like to thank the entire RGRC team at Numbulwar for their hard work with this meeting. The Council can not wait to return and catch a few more fish.



Out & About

Community Barbeque in Numbulwar



Community Round-up

The new public toilets are open in Ngukurr



After a considerable time waiting for the completion of the project the clearly relieved Mayor of Roper Gulf Regional Council has announced to the Council at its recent meeting the opening of the new public toilet.

"I am not kidding you it is finally open and it was used at the Ngukurr Festival" the Mayor said.

This long awaited project received generous funding through the 2013/14 Special Purposes Grants through the Department of Local

Government and Regions but was held up due to changes to the planning scheme. Finally with an approved location and power and water attached, the new toilet block got its first official flush just before the Ngukurr Festival and then used extensively both over the Festival period and since then.

In addition to the Ngukurr project a new public toilet and ablution facility were also built to service Mulgga Camp at Mataranka. This will alleviate impacts on residents in overcrowded houses at the camp as well as providing this essential service to visitors.

The Mulgga Camp facility was funded by the Department of Community Services Outstations Municipal and Essential services funding.

Mayor Jack added, "There still is a shortage of public toilets and communal facilities in some of our towns but these are an important addition to existing facilities and provide an important part of public hygiene and visitor services in our growing towns."

He thanked the NT Government for the funding for both these projects.

Jilkminggan Girls Hit Out for Home Runs

Softball is taking off again at Jilkminggan.

Five women from the small town took the long trek to Darwin over the Picnic Day long week end to compete in the big Softball competition. They didn't have enough players to form their own team but joined with the Daly River mob who welcomed them in.

They didn't win this time but it

was a great opportunity for these women to participate in a big competition, form new friendships and have a great time.

All women came back excited and ready to work on their game and encourage others to compete as a Jilkminggan team next year.

Well done Evelyn, Dorothy, Metallica, Elma and Debera.

Softball is a popular sport played in many of our towns and people of all ages who would like to play are encouraged to speak with the Sport and Recreation worker in your town.

Story originally submitted by Holly Gosden: Sport & Recreation Jilkminggan

Jilkmिंगgan's 'Jamboree Mob' gets 'Heywire' funding

On Wednesday 13 August the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) announced that the Jilkmिंगgan Youth Activities group was successful in getting funding under the ABC's FRRR Heywire program. This funding will enable the Jilkmिंगgan Youth Group, known as the Jamboree Mob, to run a program of locally devised and produced community performances to raise awareness of issues that affect their community.

The Heywire Youth Innovation Grant is an annual national grants program supported by FRRR and the ABC that supports original and locally focused projects of importance to younger people. This year 12 grants were awarded across regional and rural Australia including the Jilkmिंगgan project. "We want to use fun and humour to highlight some of the damaging effects of alcohol and gaming on our community. We think that a mobile locally devised show would be accessible and non-threatening but still able to get

a message across." said Holly Gosden, Jilkmिंगgan Sport and Recreation worker who is working with the core group of 15 young people ranging from 13 to 16 years old. "We also think working together on this will also build our group and individual strengths." "We have a pretty solid community that is supportive of each other but we do have problems with drinking and gambling. Some of our mob are passing away too young due to bad life choices. Depression and suicide is too common in our community."

As it is young community members devising the scripts and performing the show and building props and costume we think that it may have more effect on the community than if an outsider was to come in with the message. The community will be confronted with these issues by their own community members. We know our community better than an outsider", Ms Gosden said.

She added "I think the process of getting it together may

also be as important as the performance itself. The youth group is pretty dynamic already and real keen so it should be a lot of fun and learning for us all.

We will also get help from our school, the Sunrise Health Service and the Roper Gulf Regional Council." Ms Gosden said.

It is planned that the community shows will be presented towards the end of the year and will travel to other communities in the region after that.

Roper Gulf Regional Council Mayor Tony Jack congratulated the Jamboree Mob and said, "The Council support our youth taking an initiative as they are our leaders of the future and already have a very good sense of the needs and issues in their communities. There is such a pool of natural talent and performers in our communities and I am pleased that this project may give some of these kids a real opportunity in a way which will also aid their community."



Ngukurr Pool Chemical Shed Construction has started

An urgent request to build a Chemical storage shed for the Town swimming pool at Ngukurr has been answered by the RJCP Certificate 2 in Construction team.

Storage of Pool chemicals was identified as an urgent Work health and Safety issue and for the last few weeks the local fellas doing the Cert 2 in construction have been hard at it laying foundations for the shed under the supervision of Zac Phillipot and Dan Romeyn.

Zac Phillipot who is the RJCP Employment Coordinator at Ngukurr is impressed with the quality of the work being done. He said of the fellas, "The team work has been great stuff... and the job has been done well"

This project supports the local community in two ways, the Pool area is made much safer

and the work skills of the RJCP team are extended with valuable on the job training. This is one of a number of on the job training projects being undertaken in local towns and communities by RJCP job seekers.

The Chemical storage shed is due for completion in September.



Community Vet Visits

Is it time for your pet to have a check-up? The vets will be in your community on:

Date & Time	Location
8 - 13 September	Ngukurr & Urapunga
16 - 17 September	Jilkminggan
9.00 - 12.30pm 18 Sep	Mulggan Camp
1.00 - 4.30pm 18 Sep	Mataranka
9.00 - 12.30pm 23 Sep	Manyallaluk
9.00am - 12.00 23 Sep	Werenbun
1.00 - 4.00pm 24 Sep	Jodetluk
29 September - 3 October	Numbulwar
20 - 23 October	Beswick
27 - 29 October	Barunga
17 - 24 November	Borrooloola
8 - 11 December	Bulman & Weemol

Hodgson Downs our tenth Local Authority

The first meeting of the Hodgson Downs Local Authority on the 20th August has marked the completion of the establishment of 10 Local Authorities in the Roper Gulf Regional Council.

The Northern Territory Government's Regional Governance Review in 2013 directed Local Government to establish Local Authorities in their regions to represent local communities in planning and local issues.

Roper Gulf has been a leader in establishing Local Authorities and first meeting of the Hodgson Downs Local Authority (known also as Minyerri) completes the list of Roper Gulf Regional Council's Local Authorities to be established.

At the start of the meeting Manager of Governance, Jyoti Pudasaini, gave an overview of Local Authorities and welcomed the members, Samuel Swanson, Johnathon Walla, Susan Sammy, Maryanne Vincent and Ken Mugeridge on behalf of the Roper Gulf Council.

Mayor Tony Jack congratulated all involved for getting the Hodgson Downs Local Authority established and for completing the process of establishing all 10 Local Authorities. *"Establishing ten Local Authorities and making them sustainable is a huge task but our Council and communities have achieved this when*



many others are still just getting started.

Roper Gulf Regional Council can now boast 10 Local Authorities that give communities a direct voice to council. Local Authorities give local communities an important opportunity to be involved and influence local decision making.

I encourage people to develop a strong voice for their community by being involved in their local Authorities both as members or by talking regularly with their local members," he said.

Hodgson Downs located approximately 250km south west of Katherine is in the Never Never Ward. The town of about 450 people is serviced jointly by Roper Gulf Regional Council and the Alawa Aboriginal Corporation.

Safety Improvement at Crawford Street Office



Roper Gulf Regional Council's Crawford Street Office has recently received a safety upgrade. The installation of safety mirrors and upgraded signage will assist towards a safer working space for all RGRC employees.

With safety high on RGRC's priority list, the recent Ordinary Meeting of Council passed a resolution to have further improvements made to the car park at Crawford Street. We look forward to watching these upgrades progress.

Upcoming Meetings of Council and Local Authorities

Date	Time	Meeting	Location
02 Sep 2014	10:00am	Jilkminggan Local Authority	Jilkminggan SDC
02 Sep 2014	5:30pm	Mataranka Local Authority	Mataranka Community Hall
04 Sep 2014	10:00am	Borrooloola Local Authority	Borrooloola SDC
08 Sep 2014	10:00am	Manyallaluk Local Authority	Manyallaluk SDC
09 Sep 2014	10:00am	Numbulwar Local Authority	Numbulwar SDC
10 Sep 2014	10:30am	Ngukurr Local Authority	Ngukurr SDC
15 Sep 2014	10:00am	Beswick Local Authority	Beswick SDC
16 Sep 2014	10:00am	Barunga Local Authority	Barunga SDC
17 Sep 2014	2:00pm	Bulman Local Authority	Bulman SDC
24 Sep 2014	8:30am	Finance Committee Meeting	RGRC Office - Crawford St.
24 Sep 2014	1.00pm	Hodgson Downs Local Authority	Alawa Board Room - Minyerri

Please Note: Local Authority Meetings are subject to change

Job Opportunities

For current jobs go to www.ropergulf.nt.gov.au or email recruitment@ropergulf.nt.gov.au

Contact Us

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Roper Gulf Regional Council Reception

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Do you have a story to tell or a photograph to share?

Roper Gulf Regional Council would like to showcase your stories and photographs from our Region. Residents and RGRC staff are invited to submit their articles and original photos to be considered for an upcoming edition of the RGRC Newsletter, RGRC Facebook Page and/or RGRC Website. Please submit your material to roper.governance@ropergulf.nt.gov.au or **08 8972 9000**