

# Council NEWS



At their last meeting at Utopia delegates spent much more time than usual in regional group discussions before making decisions as a council. This way everyone got a chance to have a say on important issues.



NT opposition leader Michael Gunner: "We must earn your trust back".

## No mining in Watarrka under Labor

Labor will not allow mining in Watarrka if it wins the Northern Territory election next August.

It will bring back the banned drinkers register and scrap alcohol protection orders, the alcohol mandatory treatment policy and the "paperless arrests".

These are some of the promises NT opposition leader Michael Gunner made during his first appearance at council.

Traditional owners of Watarrka were among the delegates who grilled Mr Gunner and NT Labor candidates Chansey Paech and Scott McConnell for almost two hours.

The delegates' questions and comments showed that they remembered well how Labor took the bush for granted when the party was last in power.

Mr Gunner admitted that his party needed to "earn back" the trust of people in remote communities.



"You're playing around with us!" Harold Nelson lets fly at government policy.

## Members vent their anger at top-down government policy

"You're playing around with us!"

These words of Utopia elder Harold Nelson summed up the feelings of some delegates about about current government policies.

Federal public servants spoke about work for the dole (now confusingly called community development program or CDP) and the effect of sports days and CLC meetings on school attendance.

They had no answers for many of the questions delegates had prepared for

the absent Indigenous Affairs Minister, who had earlier promised to attend. Minister Scullion never responded to the council's invite.

Delegates criticised government spending decisions, distant work for the dole service providers and unresponsive government organisations. They asked for real jobs, Aboriginal teachers and bilingual education.

Some made it clear that their cultural obligations come first.

## Community lease money decisions

The CLC's legal section updated delegates about the decisions communities on Aboriginal land made about their lease income.

Most communities decided to distribute money to individuals. Eleven communities will use it for community development projects, including funeral funds.



Alekareng community leader Graham Beasley presents to council.

## Community development achievements in the east

Alekareng community leader Graham Beasley and CLC community development staff drew applause when they presented about the projects Alekareng and other communities in the eastern regions are doing with their community lease money.

Graham showed a music video the young people have produced as part of a successful media project in his community.

Council also debated how to deal with organisations that fail to implement community development projects in the way a community has decided.

Council resolved that organisations that breach their funding agreement with the CLC will not be able to get further funding under the CLC's community development program for two years.

# Council meeting and rule changes

Delegates broke into nine regional groups to review the recommendations from the CLC's council meeting survey.

Regional groups also discussed proposed changes to council rules and the CLC's code of conduct.

Some changes had come out of the council meetings survey but others had become necessary because the law that governs how land councils and other Commonwealth corporate entities must be run has changed.

Council decided to develop and implement recommended changes and had additional ideas.

Regional groups also discussed how to develop the next generations of CLC leaders. Delegates came up with some exciting ideas.

Council also agreed not to request any new positions for the CLC 90 members council.

This work was important to ensure the CLC is ready for council elections early next year.



Jacob Spencer and April Martin report back to council from the discussion in Region 4.

# Become a CLC member!



ABA Advisory Committee member Sandra Morrison

Early in 2016, meetings in communities and outstations will elect the delegates (members) for the next term of the Central Land Council.

The next term will run until early 2019.

All Aboriginal people living in Central Australia who want to play a leadership role should think about becoming a CLC delegate.

**That means women and young people, too!**

You can nominate yourself or someone else. You can do this before or during the meeting in your community.

For more information please contact your nearest CLC office or call 8951 6211 and keep an eye out for community meeting notices.

A big thank you to all delegates of the current council for working hard to keep land rights strong and keep the CLC on track.

Enjoy a safe Christmas and a happy New Year!



# Council demands more ABA transparency

The CLC's digital archive, ranger groups, community development and many other projects depend on Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) grant funding to grow or keep going.

ABA Advisory Committee members were not able to report back on how the last ABA meeting dealt with funding applications.

Delegates, including members of the advisory committee, were not happy about this. They criticised the ABA decision making process and the current chair of the committee.

Council resolved to demand a more transparent

process.

This includes prompt and regular reporting to applicants and land councils about decisions made and monitoring reports on the application process.

Council invited the Indigenous Affairs Minister to attend the next council meeting together with the new chair of the ABA Advisory Committee.

With both federal and NT elections due next year, council said that ABA funds should not be used for political purposes. It also worried about ABA funeral and ceremony funds stopping.



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