



MEETING MINUTES

- Meeting:** Annual General Meeting
- Convened by:** Captain-Scott Ferguson
- Attendees:** Acting Manager HVFC Ken Hepplewhite, Group Captain Warren Welsh, Members – Tim Spooner, Judy Hobson, Ray & Muriel Roberts, Kenn Mackett, Scott Ferguson, Chris Spooner, Greg Pierce, Craig Loudon, Glen Cuthbert, David Mackison, Rod Coleman, Mark Pigram, Samantha Cook, Guillaume Forret, Jane Robinson, Pam and Geoff King, Ken and Margaret Ferguson, Andy Edwards, Alison Webster. Visitors, Stephanie Forret, Chris Beech, Gus Gilkeson
- Location:** Putty Rural Fire Brigade Station, 426 Putty Valley Road, Putty
- Date/time** 15th May, 2021 at 3.00pm
- Apologies:** Peter Lines, Joanne Ferguson, Helen Payne, Russell Day, Sue Casey, Kathy McKenzie.
- Minutes by:** Margaret Ferguson-Secretary

President opened the meeting at 1507hrs and advised that the meeting was being recorded for minute taking purposes.

Minutes

Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting held 1st June 2019 had been circulated to members prior to the meeting and read in brief at the meeting. The minutes were accepted as true and correct by Andy Edwards, seconded by Scott Ferguson,

Business arising from minutes – NIL

Correspondence

- 1/12/2020 Ken Hepplewhite remains as Acting Manager;
Glen Byres as Community Safety officer; Rob Carrero as Learning and Development
- 21/12/2020 Brigade ACTIV information
- 14/01/2021 Active fireground members to receive helmets, receipt to be validated
- 19/01/2021 Rob Carrero - Training booklet, Document available. 38 pages
- 08/02/2021 Notifiable Incidents
- 03/03/2021 Release of OP SS 1.2.20 – Backburning. 10 page Document available
- 11/03/2021 National Medals - Criteria and submission from sent
- 12/04/2012 Training Calendar
- 28/04/2021 Map of the new Putty road names
- 28/04/2021 Vehicle maintenance, notifying burns by: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/notify
- 10/05/2021 Your health matters- With posters available
- 11/05/2021 Response driving
Various Commissioner's messages – Agenda items

Correspondence accepted by Andy Edwards, 2nd Tim Spooner

Matters arising from correspondence

Road naming in Putty and Yengo.

To enable emergency services to identify where they have to go to within Putty and Yengo, Putty Brigade has been working closely with Singleton Council to have all the roads in our area named along with property identification numbers allotted. A map displaying this information has been provided and will be displayed in the Brigade station for reference to assist our crews.

Messages from Commissioner Rob Rogers

Workplace conduct. In everything you do in our Service, you must behave in a respectful and inclusive way. Every person has a fundamental right to a physically and mentally safe workplace, and our Service is no exception. The commitment to mental health is also a top priority.

Review of grievances and disciplinary action. The NSW RFS is engaging law firm Clayton Utz, to undertake an independent review process relating to previous claims of serious conduct matters limited to the last three years.

REPORTS

Captains Report

I welcome everyone here to the meeting today.

I also welcome seven new members to the Putty Brigade. Mark Pigram, Samantha Cook, Anthony Robinson, Ric Hobby, Trent Norris, Craig Loudon and re-joining, Warren Lee. When they have completed their initial on line training, they will be able to begin their Basic Firefighting course and attend a fire.

Our last AGM was held in June 2019 and since then we have been through some difficult times. In October 2019, the Gaspers Mountain fire started and it all went downhill from then until things settled down at the end of January 2020. During this time, our brigade crews spent countless hours on fireground in an attempt to control the outbreaks. Once again, I thank everyone who gave up their personal time during these months to save the Putty community, including the members of our sister brigade, Howes Valley who had fires everywhere in their own district.

Putty Brigade had a lot of help from other Hunter Valley brigades and brigades from out of area and without them the outcome would have been a lot worse.

Except from losing several sheds, old cars and caravans on unattended properties, I am proud to say that all brigade crews fought a good fight.

We were all organised to have a function to say thank you to the fireries when Covid hit in early March and life for everyone was put on hold.

Today I say thank you again to our community members who made some amazing donations to support our crews for their hard work during the fires and I also thank. Craig Loudon who set up a fund raiser and was able to supply a large number of necessary items to make life easier for our volunteers. From all the donations we have been able to install air-conditioning to our office and kitchen area and also install a large generator which powers all of the station. This turned out to be just the best thing during the fires as we were able to keep the station operating when Putty Valley was without power.

With grants received from Bush Fire Recovery via Singleton Council and from the State Government, we were able to have the concrete apron in front of the station put in. Our Treasurers report will show the figures for all the donations and grants.

The training calendar for 2021 has been issued and there will be a Tree Felling Intermediate course held at Putty on 10-12 September with closing date 10th August. Application forms are available here today.

Captain's report accepted, Andy Edwards, 2nd Kenn Mackett

Treasurer

Treasurer thanked Jodie Drayton for auditing our books

Opening balance at bank 1/04/2019 was \$17707.38 Closing balance as at 31/03/2020 was \$7718.67. Opening balance at bank 1/04/2020 was \$7718.67. Closing balance as at 31/03/2021 was \$6767.95.

Income for the year up to 31st March 2020 was \$8875.00 being donations of \$6615.00, Fund raising \$1770.00 and membership \$490.

Expenditure was \$18,863.71 which included buying the air conditioning and generator.

Income for the year up to 31st March, 2021 was \$16,870.00 being grants of \$10,000 from NSW RFS Brigade Donations Fund and \$6,250 from Singleton Council Bush Fire relief. Membership fees, \$40.00

Expenditure was \$18100.47. The concrete slab at the front of the station was \$17578.00 with sundry maintenance expenses being the balance.

Members financial as at 31st March, 2021 was 41

Report accepted by Scott Ferguson, 2nd Kenn Mackett

Auditor' report: Auditor Jodie Drayton tendered her apologies. Secretary Margaret Ferguson read the report. Report accepted Kenn Mackett, 2nd Andy Edwards

The Auditor and Treasurer's reports were taken to Fire Control by Ken Hepplewhite

MEMBERSHIP STATUS

Ken Hepplewhite explained the situation regarding letters sent to members asking if they wanted to continue their membership. Brigade members who attend fires are to be issued the new design NSW RFS BR9 Wildland Firefighting Helmets and a list of these members was sent to Fire Control. This prompted a question about Putty's other members as to what their membership status was. Did they support our active members during fires, were they involved in community safety, were they social members or had they left Putty and had no further interest in the brigade? Some feedback from these members has prompted that the process be reviewed and addressed at a later date after further consultation.

PROBATIONARY MEMBERS

New members are to complete the New Member Induction and BF Modules on FUEL prior to undertaking any further training. Mark Pigram, Samantha Cook and Craig Loudon will be attending the BF course in Bulga in June.

ELECTIONS:

FIELD OFFICERS:

Field officer positions are now for a **one-year period** in accordance with the 2018 NSW RFS constitution adopted by the Putty Brigade.

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|---------------------|--|
| CAPTAIN: | Scott Ferguson, Nominated by Kenn Mackett, 2 nd Andy Edwards |
| SNR DEPUTY CAPTAIN: | Kenn Mackett, Nominated by Ken Ferguson, 2 nd David Mackisson |
| DEPUTY CAPTAIN 1: | Ken Ferguson, Nominated by Kenn Mackett, 2 nd Andy Edwards |
| DEPUTY CAPTAIN 2: | Rod Coleman, Nominated by Kenn Mackett, 2 nd Scott Ferguson |
| DEPUTY CAPTAIN 3: | Andy Edwards, Nominated by Ken Ferguson, 2 nd Kenn Mackett |

EQUIPMENT OFFICER: Rodney Coleman, Nominated by Kenn Mackett, 2nd Ken Ferguson
EQUIPMENT OFFICER: Kenn Mackett, Nominated by Andy Edwards, 2nd Scott Ferguson
EQUIPMENT OFFICER: Ken Ferguson, Nominated by Kenn Mackett, 2nd Rodney Coleman

PERMIT OFFICER: Ken Ferguson Accepted by members present
PERMIT OFFICER: Greg Pierce that they remain the same as previously
PERMIT OFFICER: Tim Spooner appointed
PERMIT OFFICER: Kenn Mackett
TRAINING OFFICERS: Ken Ferguson and Rodney Coleman.
Nominated by Scott Ferguson and 2nd by Andy Edwards

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE – for one year period

PRESIDENT: Andy Edwards, Nominated by Kenn Mackett, 2nd Margaret Ferguson
SECRETARY: Margaret Ferguson, Scott Ferguson 2nd Andy Edwards
TREASURER: Sue Casey, Nominated by Andy Edwards, 2nd Tim Spooner
AUDITOR : Jodie Drayton was nominated by Margaret Ferguson, 2nd Scott Ferguson

GENERAL BUSINESS

Response Driving.

Captain Scott Ferguson spoke of the recent accident involving a Cat 1 when it was responding to a call out. He advised that when proceeding to a fire or a MVA, a vehicle is only to be driven at a speed which matches the driver's ability and the road conditions at the time. It is better to arrive a few minutes late than not at all.

Back Burning

As a result of the Royal Commission, Recommendation #47, a new operational Service Standard for back burning has been developed and released. Within it is several types of back burning have been addressed. Ken Hepplewhite explained the difference between tactical and strategic burns. Tactical would take in around 300 metres, while strategic could be over 20 kilometres and be planned over two to three days.

Taken from #47 of the recommendation:

Tactical Backburning is used to protect specific assets or for other small-scale purposes. It is conducted at a small scale, often within limits of the visibility of Officer in Charge. It is conducted at the discretion of field commanders and/or Brigade and Group officers.

Strategic Backburning is used as one of the primary means to halt the main fire or to secure the spread of parts of a fire. It is proactive, generally conducted over a larger area than Tactical Backburning, and may involve implementing burns of hundreds of metres up to kilometres in length and depth. Strategic Backburning is planned and informed by a range of personnel including fireground commanders, members with local knowledge, and Fire Behaviour Analysts, and is usually part of the plan in the IAP. It is carefully co-ordinated, suitably resourced and must only be conducted with approval from the Incident Controller.

If a landowner wished to carry out a Hazard Reductions, a certificate can be obtained with the application form available at Fire Control.

Tim Spooner asked why the dam on his property was not utilised during the 2019/2020 fires. It had been in previous fires and was a good source of water with very open access for helicopters with buckets. If it is to be used in the future, he will keep the access maintained.

Group Captain Warren Welsh responded to the reports by our firefighters that out of area crews did not know and were not informed about the specifics of fighting fires in the Putty and Yengo area. Incident Management Teams and Group Captains not associated with our district misinterpreted our situation during the fires and it was difficult to get local advice circulated. The Gaspers Mountain fire was directed by Hawkesbury FC, the Kerry Ridge fire by Mudgee FC and the Wollembi area by Lower Hunter FC leaving the little triangle of Putty and Yengo alone in the middle.

CLOSE MEETING at 1620 hrs

Table 1: Action items - Nil

| Discussion | Details of Motions Including Mover and Seconder | Result of Vote | Task Assigned to? | Due Date |
|------------|---|----------------|-------------------|----------|
| | | | | |

Table 2: Documents referred to in the meeting

| Document title | Author | Version | Date |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|------------|
| Captains Report | Captain | 1 | 15/05/2021 |
| Treasurers Report | Treasurer | 1 | 15/05/2021 |
| Auditors Report | Auditor | 1 | 15/05/2021 |

Table 3: Next meeting

| Date | Start time | Finish time | Location |
|----------|------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| TBA 2022 | | | Putty Fire Brigade Station |