

LIPS General Meeting

Port Douglas Community Centre. 2/12/08

Meeting Opened: 18.45pm.

Present

Qamar Schuyler, Meredith Walsh, Loftus Overend, Rick Kilpatrick, Colin Horton, Mark Colbridge, Peter Moss, Alex Mateer, Freida Von Allen, Michael Rees, Heidi Taylor, Jill Booth, Lee Walters, Steve Edmondson, Robert Hanan, Kath Anich, Beth Hughes, Patrick Lighthart, Joanne Cameron

Apologies

Caroline Unwin, Alex Conde, David Carey, Shirley Overend, Steve Sharpe, Jill and Bix Bickford, Louise Collier, Louise Bernstein, Grant Moulain, Ed Green, Sophie Dyball Gale Shaw, Roison Allen, Linda and John Rumney

Introducing the of the New LIPS Committee.

Newly elected LIPS president Qamar Shuyler introduced herself and the new executive.

The new LIPS committee:

Qamar Schuyler (President)

Alex Mateer (Vice President)

Michael Rees (Treasurer)

Meredith Walsh (Secretary)

Qamar thanked the LIPS community for their overwhelming support, and those that attended the meeting. She then outlined the new look LIPS to be one ready to hear what LIPS members have to say. She then outlined the team's ideas for the new year, including social events where we can share thoughts and ideas, and feedback to members about any interests or concerns, as well as continuing with ideas for the Light House and Sugar Wharf, supporting volunteers, organising T-shirtis and when appropriate, applying for grants.

As there are number of pressing concerns, particularly given the caretakers have resigned, the meeting quickly moved on to addressing these.

Items Discussed.

1. Rostering of Volunteer caretakers until the new caretakers are appointed.
2. Indigenous Turtle Hunting.
3. Ocean debris data collection by LIPS for Tangaroa Blue.

1. **Rostering of Volunteer Caretakers until new caretakers are appointed.**

As no new caretakers have yet been appointed, it was agreed that it is vital that a roster of volunteers be organised to care for the island in the meantime.

Alex Mateer will co-ordinate the roster. Patrick Lighthart (LIPS volunteer) kindly offered to act as a back-up co-ordinator for Alex.

The pigeon count scheduled for the weekend of the 6th of December has had to be cancelled. Due to a number of cruise ships being in town, no tour operators are able to take volunteers back from the island. As there are still gaps in the three weeks volunteers care for the island during December as the caretakers are leaving early, Alex suggested that LIPS try to organise a date for the count at one of these times, which she will follow up on.

2. Indigenous Turtle Hunting

There was much concern from the LIPS body about Indigenous hunting of turtle in the lagoon out at Low Isles. Steve Edmonson (Sailaway/LIPS member) in particular felt that definitive action must be taken. While various conversations have taken place in the last year between GBRMPA and LIPS, there was frustration both from the previous committee and from LIPS members and tour operators that the hunting continues. It was felt by the LIPS committee and body that turtle hunting is not sustainable at Low Isles. While it was understood that turtle hunting is a traditional practice that has importance in Indigenous lives, as a shared space, and a sensitive area it is inappropriate to hunt in this locality. To this end, constructive negotiations with Indigenous people urgently need to take place. In response, LIPS will write a letter to GBRMPA expressing our common view that turtle hunting not take place in the sensitive location of Low Isles.

3. Ocean Debris Collection for Tangaroa Blue.

Heidi Taylor from Tangaroa Blue an organisation directed at ocean education and marine research (www.tangaroablue.com) asked if LIPS would like to participate in collecting ocean debris out at Low Isles. Her organisation works with local communities to collect rubbish that washes onto beaches, and collate what type of debris is appearing. As we all know, the pollution of the ocean, particularly with plastics, is a threat to the sea-life and the ocean environment generally. By collecting debris and collating its type, her organisation is able to feedback to government and industry the sorts of measures needed to reduce ocean pollution.

There was enthusiasm for working with Tangaroa and Heidi. As volunteers regularly clean-up the Low Isles it was considered possible that noting what appears could be part of the duty.

To be Actioned

Alex: co-ordinate the roster

Including attempting a rescheduled pigeon count for the gaps in the December schedule Steve has organised.

Qamar: A letter to GBRMPA expressing the need to act quickly to negotiate with Indigenous people to not hunt with the sensitive zone of Low Isles to be drafted by Friday 5th December.

Meeting Closed: 19.15pm.