

ITEM MAYORAL MINUTE - YARALLA ESTATE

Department Executive Services

Author Initials: AT

REPORT

On 12 November 2013, Council considered a Mayoral Minute on the report handed down by the Parliamentary Select Committee into the Agistment of Horses at Yaralla Estate.

Councillors would be aware that the following resolution was adopted by Council.

That the Mayor writes to the Premier, Minister for Health, the Member for Drummoyne and the opposition leader, urging them to implement the key recommendations of the report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on the agistment of horses at Yaralla Estate.

I have received two (2) responses from the Minister for Health regarding correspondence forwarded following that Council resolution (copies attached).

Council at that time was also concerned that the Sydney Local Health District (SLHD) was moving ahead to establish a Community Advisory Committee that would be planning for the future of the Yaralla Estate, prior to the report from the Parliamentary Select Committee being considered by the NSW Government.

In essence, the letters state:

- A Community Advisory Committee will be established by the SLHD to provide input into the future management of the site.
- City of Canada Bay is invited to nominate a representative to enable Council to provide specialist input on the management of parklands and input as an advocate for the community.
- The Parliamentary Select Committee's findings and recommendations from its inquiry into the agistment of horses at Yaralla Estate will be listed as an item for business at the first meeting.
- The Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry does not require a response to its recommendations until April 2014.
- SLHD will be providing a comprehensive response to all recommendations and this will inform the NSW Government's decision-making process.

The key recommendations of the Parliamentary Select Committee report include:

1. Provide for the continued maintenance of public access to the Yaralla Estate.
2. Engage the local community well in advance in the future planning for the Yaralla Estate and seek to have the Government abandon the current plans and structure as announced by the Minister for Health on 22 August 2013.

3. Have a full and comprehensive Heritage report undertaken of the Yaralla Estate and this report be made public.
4. Provide for a change in management for the Yaralla Estate, ensuring that SLHD still has use of the buildings for health services, however a more appropriate authority (eg Centennial Parklands Trust) be responsible for the heritage preservation of parklands and ideally equestrian services.
5. Re-establish the agistment of horses on the estate at commercial rates.

It would appear from the correspondence received that the Minister for Health has already decided that recommendations numbered 4 and 5 will not be acted upon.

The re-establishment of the agistment of horses on the Yaralla Estate has received significant public support from our community. I am concerned that there is a clear inference that the decision to “discontinue horse agistment on the Estate” has been made by the SLHD, prior to any consideration by the NSW Government.

Whilst I support the opening of the Yaralla Estate as public parkland, and acknowledge that Council has an important role to play in the future planning of the site, I am of the view that until the Parliamentary Select Committee’s recommendations have been responded to and a clear direction has been agreed upon by the NSW Parliament, that Council should maintain its current position as adopted at the meeting held 12 November 2013.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Mayor responds to the correspondence from the Minister for Health and advises that Council strongly urges the Minister for Health to delay the establishment of the Community Advisory Committee until due consideration is given to responses to the recommendations of the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Agistment of Horses at the Yaralla Estate.

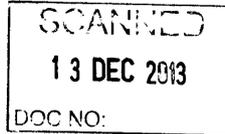
Attachments:

1. Response regarding changes to Yaralla Estate – Minister for Health
2. Response regarding recommendations of the Select Committee Inquiry – Minister for Health



The Hon Jillian Skinner MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Medical Research

Mayor Angelo Tsirekas
City of Canada Bay
Locked Bag 1470
DRUMMOYNE NSW 1470



M13/5845

10 DEC 2013

Dear Mayor

Thank you for your correspondence to me regarding the changes to the Yaralla Estate announced by Sydney Local Health District on 22 August 2013. I also write in response to correspondence received by the Premier from Mr Gary Sawyer, General Manager, City of Canada Bay, to which the Premier has asked that I respond.

As indicated in earlier correspondence by the District's Chief Executive, Dr Teresa Anderson, the District takes its responsibilities for management of the Yaralla Estate seriously, and the decision to open the remainder of the Estate to public parkland was made as a direct result of public lobbying and the persistent misinformed perception that it would be closed to the public. In deciding to discontinue horse agistment on the Estate, the District is acting in keeping with the Walker Trust Act and will be providing an additional 13 hectares of land for use by the residents of Concord and the broader community. This will make the benefits of access to this important site available to many more than a handful of private horse owners.

The District has committed to the establishment of a Community Advisory Committee that will provide input on the future management of the site. As you are aware the District has invited City of Canada Bay to be represented on the Committee to enable Council to provide both specialist input on the management of the parklands, and input as an advocate for the local community. Ensuring expert Council representation will also address the issue raised in the General Manager's correspondence regarding future management plans for the Estate taking into account the integrity of remnant indigenous vegetation including the 'Eastern remnant' of Sydney Turpentine Ironbark forest.

In relation to Council's resolution of 30 September 2013 seeking to defer the establishment of the Community Advisory Committee pending the release of the recommendations of the Parliamentary Inquiry, I am advised by Dr Anderson that the Committee will be considering the Inquiry's recommendations as one of its first items of business. Please note that the Parliamentary inquiry does not require a response to its recommendations until April 2014.

I appreciate Council's interest in this matter and welcome your future input into the management of the Estate in accordance with the Trust's objectives.

Thank you once again for raising these matters with me. Should you require any further information please contact Dr Anderson on 9515 9641.

Yours sincerely

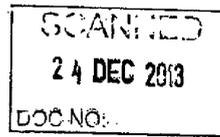
Jillian Skinner MP



The Hon Jillian Skinner MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Medical Research

M13/6665

Mayor Angelo Tsirekas
City of Canada Bay
Locked Bag 1470
DRUMMOYNE NSW 1470



20 DEC 2013

Dear Mayor

Thank you for your correspondence regarding the recommendations of the Select Committee Inquiry into the Agistment of Horses at Yaralla Estate, released by the Legislative Council on 24 October 2013.

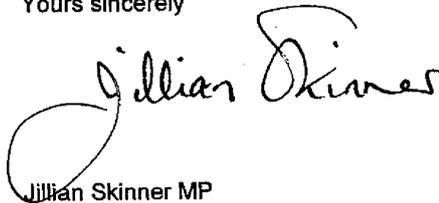
As you may be aware, the NSW Government has six months to give due consideration to the Report and to formally respond.

The Chief Executive of Sydney Local Health District, Dr Teresa Anderson, has also advised me that the District is currently preparing a comprehensive response to the findings and the seven recommendations. The District's response will also inform the Government's deliberations.

I appreciate Council's interest in this matter and welcome your future input into the management of the Estate in accordance with the Trust's objectives.

Thank you once again for raising these matters with me.

Yours sincerely



Jillian Skinner MP