

FRIENDS OF MAYLANDS LAKES NEWSLETTER - FEBRUARY 2017

I am pleased to advise that there has been considerable progress since our last newsletter, albeit a great deal is still to be done.

As you may be aware, the 12 month water quality study undertaken by Essential Environmental on behalf of the City of Bayswater (CoB) was completed in September 2016 and was presented at a well-attended public forum in October 2016. In short, Nitrogen concentrations and immediate post-winter spikes in Phosphorous concentrations have been identified as the root cause of the problem. This is attributed mainly to the inflow of nutrients from the drains feeding into the lakes and the poorly functioning physical and vegetation systems within the wetland

The estimated cost of all the recommendations by Essential Environmental for the short term remediation and long term management of the lakes is \$3m. However, the adoption of certain combinations of options negates the need for some of the others. This pragmatic approach focuses on the critical elements of the report resulting in a remediation cost that will more likely be in the vicinity of \$1.8m. Consequently, having worked closely with the CoB officers, the Friends of Maylands Lakes (FOML) group favours implementing the following suite of recommendations in order of priority:

1. Detailed design, survey and costing
2. Mechanical filters on all drains flowing into the lakes and further investigation of the drains emanating from the Police Complex
3. Community education program
4. Revegetation program
5. Dredging of the lakes, including detailed bathymetric survey
6. Large-scale application of phosphorous inactivation agent
7. Piloting of floating wetlands
8. Installation of solar submersible water circulation pumps in 'dead' corners of lakes

As some of these measures need to be implemented in close succession, the priority may change slightly depending on the seasonal factors and whether the funding is available at the outset or on a drip-feed basis over a number of years.

The next and most critical phase for us is to source money to commence/complete the remediation work as soon as possible. Some action has already commenced in this regard but it is imperative that we now campaign urgently to secure the necessary funds. To date:

- The CoB has allocated \$50k to the lakes in the 2016/17 budget. Logically, this will be applied to the detailed design, survey and costing of the program. I understand the CoB's '*Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan*' (4 years) is to be considered over April/May and that the CoB officers have included the remediation works for consideration by Council for full funding over the next two financial years, albeit alongside numerous other items, which if all approved would far exceed the Council's budget.
- In November, the CoB Mayor wrote to the following ministers, seeking financial assistance for the remediation program:
 - Minister for Environment and Energy – Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP
 - Minister for Urban Infrastructure – Hon. Paul Fletcher

- Minister for Environment; Heritage – Hon. Albert Jacob MLA
- Minister for Planning; Disability – Hon Donna Faragher MLC

Unfortunately, no funds have been forthcoming to date and as the State Government is now in caretaker mode none are expected from that tier of government until after the upcoming election. Nevertheless, I recently met with:

- Councillor Catherine Ehrhardt, who undertook to push for an allocation (at the budget meeting in April) of \$400k in 2017/18 and a further \$1,255,000 in 2018/19.
 - Lisa Baker MLA, who is a strong proponent of the Rehabilitation of Carter’s wetlands and rebuilding of John Forrest High School, and was influential in the Labor Party’s pledge of \$1.5m and \$50m respectively, for these projects, should it form government following the upcoming election. Lisa undertook to champion our drive for a \$1.8m State Government grant for the remediation of the Brearley and Bungana lakes. She also offered the use of her electorate office for committee meetings, photocopying and of her staff to provide advice/assistance if needed. It was agreed that FOML will petition public support for the funding and that Lisa will present the (separate) petitions to both houses of parliament.
 - Amanda Madden, the Liberal Party candidate for Maylands. Amanda has conferred with the Minister for Environment; Heritage – Hon. Albert Jacob MLA and advised that he is prepared to provide the resources to install mechanical filters on the drains flowing into the lakes and, via the Swan River Trust, undertake the extensive revegetation program
- I have requested a meeting with Tim Hammond MP on his return to WA following the current sittings of Parliament.
 - In response to enquiries by FOML, the Lotteries Commission has advised it would be receptive to an application for funding from the FOML for the Community Education aspect of the program.
 - Appropriate funding sources for environmental care projects have been identified and proposals will be submitted when applications are invited. However, these are in the main for small amounts (tens of thousands dollars at most), so will have relatively minor impact on the total amount required.

Our sincere thanks to the forty-five Maylands residents have joined FOML as volunteers. Your willingness to commit to this cause is greatly appreciated. To date it has been premature to seek your active support. However, we would now welcome the assistance of volunteers, specifically to:

- Conduct regular audits of the FOML accounts (qualified accountant)
- Set-up and manage FOML social media (Facebook and Twitter)
- Undertake a secretarial role for FOML (prepare agenda, take and distribute meeting minutes, maintain membership records, respond to routine enquiries etc)

- Distribute petitions to businesses (e.g. coffee shops, cafes etc) and door knock with petitions.
- Prepare submissions for grants

We would also appreciate your support in lobbying any relevant government heads, politicians/candidates, City of Bayswater councillors and management for funding of the remediation. In this regard you may wish (for simplicity sake) to use or modify the wording in the attached letter, which in its present form is pitched at local candidates in the upcoming State election (it can be easily amended for sending to federal politicians/candidates, councillors etc).

Finally we are grateful for your participation and patience, and we look forward to a united community effort towards the remediation of our lakes and their environs sooner rather than later.

Geoff Trott

Chairman

Friends of Maylands Lakes