

NSW Wildlife Council, Inc.

**Meeting Number 7: Seminar sessions
Sunday 10 June 2007 at 9.00am**

Minutes

Present: Audrey Koosmen (Chair), NATF; Stan Wood, (Vice Chair) WIRES; Lorraine Vass (Secretary) FOK; Joan Hills (Treasurer) WCN-Central West ; Sandra Stewart, (Media Officer) IGL; Steve Amesbury, Native Animal Network; Ilona Roberts, Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers; Chris Neville, Wildlife Aid; John Gorham, FAWNA; Julia McConnell (IGL alternate); Coralie Tarlinton, Wildcare; Greg Tarlinton (Wildcare alternate); Gwen Seznec, NRWC; Gwen Parry-Jones, Wildlife ARC; and Shirley Lack, observing for Native Animal Rescue Group.

1. Shared database and standardized record keeping

Patrick Connor, principal of Curious Developments Ltd. provided a synopsis of refinements introduced to the wildlife database since November. He is now talking to groups in Western Australia and North Queensland. There is also interest from the United States.

There has been some delay to the road show which WIRES was planning for mid-year.

Discussion included data ownership (who enters the data is the owner), security (option of running a system parallel to WIRES: individual groups equating to WIRES' branches); retrospective migration (possible if compatibility problems can be overcome); and costs.

Stan Wood reiterated on behalf of WIRES the offer for NSW Wildlife Council members to access the database for demonstration purposes.

The Chair thanked Patrick for his presentation.

It was agreed to carry over discussion on the shared database until after lunch.

2. Presentation on the University of Sydney's *Wildlife Health and Conservation Centre and Teaching Facility and the NSW Wildlife Rehabilitation Community* by Dr David Phalen, Director, Wildlife Health Unit, University of Sydney, Faculty of Veterinary Science, Camden.

The Chair welcomed David and Anne Fowler, the Centre's Chief Veterinarian

David introduced the recently opened Centre which is located on the Camden Campus. Its missions are to provide

- state of the art medical care to client owned exotic pets and injured and diseased native wildlife;
- education to undergraduate veterinary students, post graduate veterinary students, veterinarians and staff and the general public
- guidance in policy decisions regarding wildlife health and conservation
- high impact research in wildlife health and conservation

The development of the facility was funded jointly by the Department of Transport and Regional Services' Sustainable Regions Program and the University of Sydney. Operational costs will be met in part by fee-paying clients. The Centre's capacity to treat wildlife will depend on its success in accessing other funding sources. Collaborative grant applications will underpin the Centre's funding strategy. David proposed that the Centre could assist the wildlife rehabilitation community in the following areas:

- *veterinary care provision*: by serving as a regional wildlife hospital for groups operating within a 400kms radius of Sydney; becoming the special needs referral wildlife hospital for the State; developing an emergency response team capacity, carrying out disease investigation and consultation.
- *education*: by developing local and distant training courses for wildlife rehabilitators, writing training manuals, providing on-site training from the Centre which could also serve as a conference venue.
- *research*: by improving wildlife medical and surgical care and rehabilitation techniques; assisting wildlife rehabilitators with documentation and contributing to the mainstream scientific literature
- *policy decisions input*: by influencing public opinion and lobbying on behalf of wildlife health and conservation

Questions were asked on continuing education opportunities in Australian wildlife for veterinarians, mange in wombats, research topics and facilitation, and dietary studies.

There was general agreement that a partnership between the Council and the Centre was strategic and potentially beneficial for both parties. A grant proposal to the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) will be developed by the Centre with the support of the Council. David will seek confirmation of the process with IFAW.

The Chair thanked David and Anne and invited them to join the Council for lunch.

Sandra Stewart and John Gorham left the meeting during lunch.

3. Total payments (see also item 6.1 Saturday 9 June)

Joan Hills MOVED and Steve Amesbury SECONDED that twelve accounts totaling \$3,778.16 presented for re-imburement (and including the cheque re-issued to Sandra Stewart), be passed for payment.

Motion Carried.

1. Shared database and standardized record keeping (continued)

The following issues were discussed

- training: who will do it?
- poor data: incomplete and/or missing records
- administration: back-up - professional secondary back-up very cheap; hosting
- security of information including personal information
- fixed descriptors: might have to develop sub-sets

It was suggested that the \$5,000 grant could be used for records importation, tailoring, etc.

Actions: The Secretary will re-circulate the application for funding assistance made in June 2006 to the Minister's Conservation Fund Grant to develop a wildlife rehabilitation database for New South Wales

Members should declare their intentions regarding take-up of the database being developed by Curious Developments Ltd. as soon as practicable.

4. Minimum standards for wildlife care

There was general agreement that the Council needs to start addressing the issue of developing minimum standards. A reasonable starting place would be by way of developing statements of policy along the lines of the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council and National Wildlife Rehabilitation Association's *Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation*.

Action: The Webmaster to post the URL from which to download the US Minimum Standards.

5. Close of Meeting: 2.35pm