

## Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**Time:** 10:00am – 1:00pm

**Location:** Maryborough Canegrowers, 106 Bazaar Street, Maryborough

**Attendees:** Geoff Wormwell, Independent Chair  
Allan Birt; Norm Muller; Scott Maxwell; Scott Allcott; representing customers  
Trevor Dean, Fraser Coast Regional Council

**Guests:** Darren Large, SunWater, General Manager, Burnett & Lower Mary  
Cameron Milliner, SunWater, Executive General Manager Customer & Stakeholder Relations  
Tony Reynolds, SunWater, Senior Administrator, Burnett & Lower Mary  
Andrew Maughan, SunWater, Operations Coordinator - Storages, Burnett & Lower Mary

**Apologies:** Elyse Riethmuller, Tristan Cartamel (*did not attend -no apology received by Chair*)

**Chair:** Geoff Wormwell

**Minutes:** Tony Reynolds

Agenda Items		
Item No.	Agenda Item	Presenter
1.	<b>WELCOME</b> 1.1 Declaration of interests 1.2 Minutes 08 October 2019 1.3 Actions	Chair
2.	<b>SUNWATER UPDATE</b> 2.1 Introduction to Cameron Milliner 2.2 SunWater changes and commitment to CAB 2.3 QCA Update 2.4 Operations Update	Cameron Milliner Cameron Milliner Cameron Milliner Darren Large
3.	<b>BOARD STRATEGIC DISCUSSION</b> 3.1 CAB Operation and direction 3.2 Revisiting the Board scope and purpose 3.3 Workshop brainstorming a) Potential projects b) Milestone and development c) Project budget development	Chair Chair / All Chair
4.	<b>NEXT STEPS</b> 4.1 Agenda items for next meeting 4.2 Confirmation of date of next meeting	Chair Chair
	<b>MEETING CLOSE</b>	

## 1. Welcome

**1.1** Chair opened the meeting at 10:06. Apologies accepted. Chair then asked attendees to declare any perceived or real conflicts of interests. There were none.

**1.2** Minutes of 08<sup>th</sup> October 2019 meeting reviewed and accepted as correct with minor change made to include the notation at meeting closure that CAB members then attended the QCA update price path workshop.

**1.3** Refer to document “*Action list for Lower Mary CAB*” [SunWater document #2406539]. Tabulated to contain all action items requiring attention. Document updated with action items from this meeting.

## 2. SunWater Update

**2.1** Chair then welcomed Cameron Milliner who would be taking over the SunWater role in the CAB previously held by Lisa Welsh. Lisa has moved to another GOC and left Sunwater on amicable terms. Cameron thanked Lisa for her contribution to and support of the CAB during her tenure. Cameron’s position in SunWater is the “Executive General Manager, Customer and Stakeholder Relations” reporting directly to the CEO. Cameron explained his role in SunWater and the purpose of his team which is to provide a supportive environment for stakeholders and to ensure SunWater remains commercially focussed. He also gave the CAB members an understanding of his previous roles in public relations in the Asia Pacific region in private enterprise as well as within government managing change and policy issues. He also held consultancy roles and worked in the public relations area for both Australian State and Federal governments.

**2.2** Cameron explained that today was the last day that Nicole Hollows would be CEO of SunWater. On her appointment to the CEO role Nicole had advised the SunWater Board her outline for the advancement of SunWater towards a more customer focussed organisation that was agile and commercially focussed. With SunWater having progressed towards these goals and her contract having passed its term, together with the business moving forwards to major projects (e.g. Rookwood Weir, dam improvement program, Paradise Dam), Nicole advised the board she would be stepping down from the CEO role.

An interim CEO (Lisa Dalton) will fill the role until the Board appoints a new CEO after a rigorous recruitment process. Lisa was Sunwater company secretary and has also held acting senior management roles within SunWater.

The CAB Board was also advised of the resignation of Peter MacTaggart who had an opportunity to move into a consultant role within private enterprise. Cameron also thanked Peter for his involvement and support of the CAB.

Regardless of these changes, the SunWater Board assures the CAB Board it is committed to the strategic direction of the CAB.

**2.3** The final QCA report was submitted to the Queensland Government on 31 January 2020 and the report published on the QCA website 10 February. This is the link to the Irrigation price investigation 2020-2024 web-site and associated reports, workshop information, stakeholder consultations & charges - <https://www.qca.org.au/project/rural-water/irrigation-price-investigations/>



Cameron advised that Sunwater has questions on the QCA findings regarding our regulated asset base; pass-through costs of electricity; dam safety regulatory compliance and exclusion of some internal SunWater programs aimed at increasing productivity to benefit customers.

It was proposed the CAB could make submissions to the Treasurer and Minister however the CAB terms of reference exclude this form of lobbying. Individual CAB members are able to directly contact the Treasurer and Minister regarding any recommendations to improve the Lower Mary Scheme viability.

**2.4** Darren presented an overview of the operations activities since the last meeting. Due to no inflows for some time during December/January there was a Medium Priority cut-off for 3-4 weeks. There were some communication problems between SunWater customer support and the scheme irrigators however this was rectified quickly once identified. Darren discussed project works, operational issues and financial data up to the end of January 2020. There was also discussion on the major contributor to expense for this scheme which is cost of electricity. SunWater has taken advantage of the Whole-of-Government electricity contract and realised some \$2Million in cost savings. This was possible using the contestable market and moving to a new energy provider (i.e. directly from the generator). Darren suggested this may be an opportunity to investigate options for Owanyilla Pump Station.

Action item: Darren to circulate details of the findings of the SunWater energy advisor and provide a “snapshot” view of the benefits for the Lower Mary scheme.

Tony to circulate the Lower Mary System – CAB background information - #2513799

There was further discussion on storages and distribution issues, infrastructure development, government policies on cost recovery and cropping/land use/land availability.

### **3. Board Strategic Direction**

#### **3.1 CAB Operations and direction**

Chair advanced the idea that CAB can act as a catalyst with SunWater in principle to ensure projects that support water security and scheme viability “get traction”.

It was agreed the CAB should be supportive of actions taken by others within the scheme that encourage investment and development of water security. It was noted that MSF Sugar and SunWater had already invested time and resources into the hydrology of off-stream water storage options.

This issue requires urgent action, within this calendar year, from the CAB and supported by SunWater to attract investment and encourage development of crops and agriculture within the Maryborough area.

The question was asked whether SunWater supported aggressive action to progress options for water security projects. It was suggested the CAB could identify project concepts and how funding specifics could be incorporated. It was important to have project plans in place but also to tap into Council and State Development for support and information to “flesh out” project proposals. To further support projects it was considered prudent to include consultation with businesses, financiers, and government bodies and agencies.

**Motion** – *“CAB is committed to developing projects that are supportive of scheme growth and “diverge” from broader strategic issues to become project focussed”.* All agreed.

### 3.2 Revisiting the Board scope and purpose

Members discussed the underlying issues within the scheme which seemed to be a combination of water storage and scheme limitations. It was felt the board could focus on “shovel ready” projects.

Action item: Cameron Milliner to seek Sunwater “in principle” support to develop projects and seek details from the SunWater board on how SunWater can support the CAB with financial and other resources.

### 3.3 Workplan brainstorming

a) Chair asked members to consider the merits of potential projects for further discussion at the teleconference on 2<sup>nd</sup> April. Suggested topics for project ideas might include:

Off stream storages (i.e. locations, size etc) and associated distribution improvement ideas

Changes to ROP rules to allow more beneficial options for water harvesting/water sharing

Compile one-page summary of talking points and issues regarding ROP.

Action item: Darren to contact DNRME and seek details on status of ROP revision time-line.

b) Milestones would be developed at the next CAB meeting.

c) Project budget funding and development will be informed by Cameron’s discussions with the SunWater Board.

Action item: Chair to contact MSF and seek background information on potential water storage sites that may have been investigated by MSF.

## 4. Next Steps

### 4.1 Agenda items to be updated prior to the next meeting.

Cameron and Geoff will work towards an agenda listing for the teleconference meeting on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April at 08:00 hours.

Action items:

Tony to organise and distribute a meeting invitation using Skype or Microsoft TEAMS technology teleconference 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

**4.2** Next meeting will be approximately six weeks from today but the actual date will be finalised during the phone-in meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020.

Chair thanked all for attending.

Meeting closed at 1:30pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoff Wormwell', with a stylized, cursive script.

Geoff Wormwell  
**Chair**

Date 6 / 04 / 2020

