



SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL

14 NOVEMBER 2024



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**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY
COUNCIL HELD 14 NOVEMBER 2024 IN ST KILDA TOWN HALL AND
VIRTUAL VIA TEAMS**

The meeting opened at 6:30pm.

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillors-Elect: Libby Buckingham, Heather Cunsolo, Louise Crawford, Justin Halliday, Rod Hardy, Beti Jay, Alex Makin, Bryan Mears, Serge Thomann.

Chris Carroll, Chief Executive Officer, Brian Tee, General Manager City Growth and Development, Kylie Bennetts, General Manager Community Wellbeing and Inclusion, Lachlan Johnson, General Manager Operations and Infrastructure, Joanne McNeill, Executive Manager, Strategic Projects, Xavier Smerdon, Head of Governance, Rebecca Purvis, Senior Council Business Advisor, Emily Williams, Council Business Advisor.

The City of Port Phillip respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the people of the Kulin Nations. We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

1 COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING WELCOME

Chris Carroll, Chief Executive Officer formally opened the meeting.

2. SWEARING IN OF COUNCILLORS

The Chief Executive Officer invited each Councillor-elect to take the Oaths/Affirmations of office and make a declaration that they will abide by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

Councillors-elect Libby Buckingham, Heather Cunsolo, Louise Crawford, Justin Halliday, Rod Hardy, Beti Jay, Alex Makin, Bryan Mears, Serge Thomann took Oaths/Affirmations of Office before the Chief Executive Officer.

Each Councillor addressed the Gallery in the following order:

Councillor Libby Buckingham - Balaclava Ward

"I'd like to thank the people of the Balaclava ward for trusting me with this great responsibility and privilege. It's been an amazing experience to door knock on every street of our neighbourhood and to meet so many people. My neighbours shared with me their hopes and vision about the future of our community, and I've learnt so much through this process.

I'd also like to thank the volunteers and friends that supported me along the way to help me to get to this position and I'd like to especially thank my family for their love support and

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generosity. I'd also like to thank the staff of the City of Port Phillip for the wonderful welcome and induction that we are in the throws of at the moment.

The conversations with the people of Balaclava ward have really strengthened my resolve to put the people of the City of Port Phillip at heart of every decision I make as a Councillor. To help build a community that thrives and where all of our wellbeing is the priority. And where we also care and nurture the planet and our environment so that we can all live in a clean and healthy way.

I am determined for the next four years to be characterised by collaboration and co-operation with my fellow Councillors and with our communities. I am determined to make thoughtful, intelligent decisions and to pass on a better neighbourhood and community to those that come after us.

Thank you”

Councillor Louise Crawford - Elwood Ward

“Like Councillor Buckingham started with, thank you Elwoodians. I'd also like to thank the Canal Ward residents which I didn't get a chance to do at the end of the last Council term. So thank you to Elwood and the many people that I have met along the way. I feel very grateful to be heading into my third term on this wonderful Council.

When I first met my beautiful fiancée Matt, on one of our very early, I don't know if I'd call it a date, he agreed to come and help me letterbox, really sexy huh. But he was there and was willing to step up and help me out with something he knew was really important to me. And you've been really supportive over the last four years and through throughout this campaign I just want to say thank you. Thank you to Collette and John who are here, my in-laws, thank you for being here and for being so supportive along the way. I don't know where the camera is, but to my parents online in Queensland, Hello!

It is a real honour to represent this community. You are a very engaged community, you let us know what you want, and it was again an absolute pleasure to door knock Elwood because in 2020 that was not possible. In 2016 I got to do it, and again in 2024. I've listened, I've taken notes of all the things that you've told me and there is a lot to get on with.

I want to say congratulations to my other fellow Councillors and thank you to the wonderful people that I campaigned closely with; it was an absolute pleasure to be part of that group as we campaigned

I want to say to the community, Elwood obviously specifically, but the broader Port Phillip community that I'm looking forward to serving you, to listening to you, to collaborating with you and to working together to achieve the many things that we want. Particularly in Elwood, more dog off leash parks, less flooding and continuing to make this city the beautiful and connected city that it is.

Thank you.”

Councillor Heather Cunsolo - Port Melbourne Ward

“Thank you, Port Melbourne voters, it wasn't an easy election and I feel very honoured and fortunate to be returned. We weren't able to give outgoing speeches as candidates, so I also want to thank the Gateway Ward, as a larger ward it was such a nice way to join Council,

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earn my stripes and learn the area in a much larger format than we have now in single wards. I also want to recognise my previous Councillors. You imparted a lot of knowledge, and it was a great four years so thank you for that. And especially for allowing me to be Mayor for the last two years, it was a big challenge and an incredible opportunity.

Also, to Council staff, there have been many that have helped: Chris you have been an amazing CEO, the Mayor and Councillors staff, the media team, the Executive Leadership team, the Governance team and all the friendly faces here at the City of Port Phillip that implement our decisions and do well for our great community.

Thank you to my family, I have three kids, my husband Joe, my family overseas and my in-laws as well in Port Melbourne. Thank you to Bernadene Voss and all of the previous Councillors who have served before us, thank you for what you have set up for us to take on and keep going with.

Best wishes to us as a group. Congratulations to you all, it has been great getting to know you all and I look forward to the next four years together.

Thank you.”

Councillor Justin Halliday - Alma Ward

“I’m normally on the other side of the room here, so it feels very weird to be here.

I would I like to start by paying my respects to the traditional owners of the land and the Country that we’re on and acknowledge our obligation to tread lightly on this land. For me, it’s an honour and a privilege to represent the people of Alma ward and to serve our entire community here on Council.

I wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for the example set by Helen and Jack Halliday who time and time again have shown through their tireless work for our community what it is to be someone that contributes to the community, and they’ve shown me how to live that as you see here. I’d also like to acknowledge the support of my family Clarissa, Violet and Dash, who have been tirelessly and patiently with me throughout the campaign and people like Colin and Alex who have also been supporting the campaigns along the way.

I look forward to working with this new group of Councillors here, with our community and with our fantastic Council officers and staff here who actually make the place run.

As your Councillor I will work hard to serve the community of the City of Port Phillip.

Thank you.”

Councillor Rodney Hardy - Albert Park Ward

“My sincere thanks go for the overwhelming support of the residents of the Albert Park ward. I will work diligently in their interests as well as the interests of all people in the City of Port Phillip.

I certainly thank the executive committee of the Residents of Port Phillip for their endorsement and their support. And also, the volunteers for their hard work and words of encouragement during my campaign.

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Finally, my partner Alya for her patience, support and input during a very intense campaign and her tolerance over the next four years when our lives get taken over by my hard work as a Councillor of the City of Port Phillip.

Thank you.”

Councillor Beti Jay - South Melbourne Ward

“I’m very excited, thank you. I just wanted to say that I am so honoured to have been elected as Councillor of Port Phillip selected by the greater South Melbourne community to be your voice for the next four years. I’ve spent a lot of time on the other side of the table and I’m really looking forward to representing my community from this side of the table. It takes an entire team to get elected as we all know it’s no easy feat working your way up here so I would like to thank my team: Campbell, Christina, Rhonda, Debbie and Liz as a start, there is a lot more but they are the top ones that are here today. I want to thank you all for your hard work, support and guidance, it really does take a team.

A special thank you to all of my letter-boxers, you are the real heroes. A big mention to all of the people I have met along the way who are in the audience today too. I met great people in the streets, in the pubs and knocking on your doors. Thank you for sharing your problems, visions, hopes and dreams for our community.

A big special to my family and friends: My Mother who can’t be here today as she is in Brisbane, Hi Mum. My father who passed away a few years back but I know he would be really proud today and a big special thanks to my old friend Di Lopez, gone but not forgotten. Thank you for believing in me all those years ago, and we did it!”

Councillor Alex Makin - Montague Ward

“Thank you and firstly thank you to the Montague community for your confidence in me and your support. The Montague community know how to make things happen. They knew that to convince me to stand for Council they needed to speak to my wife Natalia. They knew if they could convince Natalia, they could eventually convince me, and they did. And I thank each and every one of you, the many committee members for your dedication to that vision, for your confidence in me. The journey now begins. As a Councillor I am only as good as the community that comes to me, that shares their concerns, that is willing to speak candidly with me about the good and the not so good that comes across in Council. I welcome the candour and I look forward to representing you over the next four years.

I’d like to also acknowledge my former Council, the City of Maroondah they put up with me for seven years. Hopefully I learnt a few things along the way and here we are this evening.

I would also like to thank former Councillor Peter Martin who has been very generous with his time since my election and I would like to acknowledge the time that he has provided with me one on one briefing me on a whole range of issues affecting the Montague community. This is a journey I look forward to.

To my Councillor colleagues who have put up with me for two days so far, and if I’m lucky they may invite me at least for a third. Thank you to the Council staff as well.

Let’s have an exciting four years. Thank you.”

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Councillor Bryan Mears - Lakeside Ward

"I could tell you a little story and it goes back a few months when I was sitting in my room where I do a bit of painting and stuff that Men do when they try and get away from the normal things that are happening in the house. The phone rang and the person on the phone said to me Bryan would you like to have a run at the Council, it's going to be easy, not a problem, you just have to do a couple of things and it will all work out in the end. It'll be fun.

So here I am today. Like my fellow Councillors here, I feel terribly honoured and overwhelmed with the support that I've had to get to where I am today.

I would like to acknowledge the main driver in my life, my wife, who has supported me in this decision. I am also doubly blessed with my daughter and son here and my grandchildren so I want to thank them all for putting up with me over the last few months and it won't go on for the next four years. I want to acknowledge the Lakeside voters and people who supported me into this position I am very thankful for them to do that.

Largely I spent a lot of time meeting with people to get to understand better the issues that they are dealing with. It's certainly a very quick way that perhaps you have been in a comfort zone and need to better understand better the needs of your community and I certainly believe I am well down that path and I want to thank those that supported me there. The many supporters who helped me letterbox, we discovered the secret code of how to get into the towers and that help immeasurably. And those people have been wonderful, I think I can speak for all of my fellow Councillors and say that without those levels of support, we'd still be thinking about doing other things.

I would also like to acknowledge all of the candidates that put themselves forward for election, it's a very hard task and it can be very thankless. Can I say many candidates would wish they are sitting here, we can be very blessed and fortunate that it is us.

I've been able to sit with my fellow Councillors over the last couple of days and a few of them I knew prior to that. If you are going to be elected to Council, the first thing that you'd like to happen to you is that you get elected with fellow Councillors who are smart, skilful, capable and committed to this role. That's a big help

I am blessed that we are in this team together. So with that, thank you very much for this evening."

Councillor Serge Thomann - St Kilda Ward

"Good evening everyone, and thank you to Bryan for describing the team so well.

First let me pay my respect to the traditional custodian of the land on which we stand today.

I'm thrilled to be back here, there has been other comebacks, hopefully this one is more exciting. I am proud to be returning here and to serve on the Council of the beautiful City of Port Phillip. To be representing what I believe is Melbourne's most vibrant and iconic area, St Kilda, is an honour. During this election I spoke to my community about my vision for a greener, more engaged, safer, fairer, cleaner, more creative and better managed City. I am committed to working with all of you over the next four years to make that vision a reality.

I want to say that I am passionate, ready and excited to get to work from day one, in fact we are already in day two and have done quite a bit of work, and I will be your voice. Thank you to everyone who supported me through this campaign, my fellow candidates from People Empowering Port Phillip, the other five candidates who ran in the ward, my parents in Alsace,

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my sister Marie-eve and their family, Murat, my friends and close supporters, a few are here tonight thank you. Thank you to my three God Children Vanotta, Carlotta and Ben. Special thank you my French advisor Jean-Luc Oliver and Jan.

Last, but not least, thank you to the 51.55 % of St Kilda ward residents that casted their votes or preferences for me. I will look forward to the next four years working with all of you.

Thank you.”

3. TERM OF MAYORAL OFFICE

In accordance with Section 26 (3) of the Local Government Act 2020, before a Mayor is elected, the Council must determine by resolution whether the Mayor is to be elected for a 1 year or a 2 year term.

MOVED Crs Cunsolo/Halliday

That Council:

- 1 Determines the Mayor to be elected to serve a one-year term.

A vote was taken and the MOTION was CARRIED unanimously.

4. ELECTION OF MAYOR

The Chief Executive Officer called for nominations for the position of Mayor.

Councillor Hardy nominated Councillor Crawford for the position of Mayor. Councillor Makin seconded the nomination.

As there were no further nominations, the Chief Executive Officer declared Councillor Crawford elected as Mayor and invited the Mayor to address the gallery.

MAYORAL ADDRESS

Mayor Crawford addressed the meeting:

“I’ll just do a quick speech as I’ve already said a few things. Firstly, Councillors thank you for allowing me this opportunity to take on the role of Mayor and serve the community as Mayor.

Fellow Councillors, this is our opportunity to deliver for our community, it’s our chance to serve our community respectfully, kindly, and generously.

Really my job as Mayor is to help facilitate your learning and growing into the roles over the next twelve months, it is a steep learning curve, I like to think its perpendicular. I want to be here to help you understand, help organise things, help guide you down that track. We have got a big Council plan ahead of us and we have a lot of expectations from our community on what they would like us to deliver. I’m here for particularly the next intense 6-8 months with the holiday in between to be supports for you.

I also wanted to do a thank you to some outgoing Councillors who didn’t get an opportunity to be thanked, they made a huge contribution to the community over the years, Councillors Tim

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Baxter, Robbie Nyaguy and Peter Martin. As former Councillor Marcus Pearl would say, Thank you for your service.

Thank you.”

5. ESTABLISHMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR OFFICE

In accordance with section 20A (1) of the Local Government Act 2020, a Council may establish an office of Deputy Mayor.

MOVED Crs Buckingham/Jay

That Council:

- 1 Establish an office of the Deputy Mayor to align with the length of the Mayoral term.

A vote was taken and the MOTION was CARRIED unanimously.

6. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

The Mayor called for nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Buckingham nominated Councillor Mears. Councillor Thomann seconded the nomination.

The Mayor declared Councillor Mears elected as Deputy Mayor and invited the Deputy Mayor to address the gallery.

DEPUTY MAYORAL ADDRESS

Deputy Mayor Mears addressed the meeting:

“I’d like to thank my fellow Councillors in coming forward and supporting me into this role. I see this is an important role in supporting the Mayor but also supporting the team in reaching our objectives. Our mutual objective of course is to serve the community faithfully and well and do our best to understand the needs of the community and to do our very best to deliver to those needs. We won’t always be successful; we will try our best and the important thing is that we will try.”

Councillor Mears paused their address due a disruption in the gallery by a member of the public.

Councillor Mears resumed:

“The thing is about speeches; my particular speech is going to be remembered for reasons other than what I thought.

Thank you everyone for your patience. I would like to close by acknowledging the service of Councillors Christina Sirakoff and Rhonda Clark who served on the previous term of Council.

Thank you very much, and to my fellow Councillors. Thank you for your faith placed in me, I will do my upmost to serve you and my community well.

Thank you.”

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There no being no further business, the meeting closed at 7:11pm.

Confirmed: 27 November 2024

Chairperson _____