



Merri-bek
City Council

Minutes of the Council Meeting - Election of the Mayor

Held at the Council Chamber, Merri-bek Civic Centre,
90 Bell Street, Coburg
on Tuesday 29 November 2022

Cr Mark Riley opened the meeting at 7.05 pm and stated the Council meeting is being held on the traditional country of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and acknowledged them as Traditional Owners. Cr Riley paid respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today.

Present	Time In	Time Out
Cr Mark Riley	7.05 pm	7.41 pm
Cr Lambros Tapinos	7.05 pm	7.41 pm
Cr Adam Pulford	7.05 pm	7.41 pm
Cr Angelica Panopoulos	7.05 pm	7.41 pm
Cr Annalivia Carli Hannan	7.05 pm	7.41 pm
Cr Helen Davidson	7.05 pm	7.41 pm
Cr Helen Pavlidis	7.05 pm	7.41 pm
Cr James Conlan	7.05 pm	7.41 pm
Cr Monica Harte	7.05 pm	7.41 pm
Cr Oscar Yildiz JP	Apology	
Cr Sue Bolton	7.05 pm	7.41 pm

Officers

Chief Executive Officer – Cathy Henderson
Manager Governance and Strategy – Yvonne Callanan
Unit Manager Governance – Troy Delia

Apologies

Cr Yildiz was an apology to the meeting.

Declaration of Interests and/or Conflict of Interests

Nil.

Term of Mayor

To fulfil the statutory obligations of section 26(3) of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act), before the election of the Mayor, a Council must determine by resolution whether the Mayor is to be elected for a 1 year or a 2 year term.

Historically, Merri-bek has elected a Mayor for a 1 year term only. The recommendation is that Council continues this precedent and sets a 1 year term for the 2022/23 Mayoral year. However, it is open to the Council to determine a 2 year term instead.

In accordance with Council's Governance Rules, the Mayoral term determined by Council will also apply to a Deputy Mayor

In accordance with section 26(4) the Act, the next election of the Mayor and any Deputy Mayor will be held as close as possible to the end of the 1 year term as possible.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Elects a Mayor for a one year term.
2. Notes the term of any Deputy Mayor is identical to the term of the Mayor.

Resolution

Cr Davidson moved, Cr Pavlidis seconded -

That Council:

1. Elects the Mayor for a one year term.
2. Establishes the role of Deputy Mayor and notes the term of any Deputy Mayor is identical to the term of the Mayor.

Carried unanimously

Election of Mayor

The Chief Executive Officer, Cathy Henderson, in accordance with section 25 of the Local Government Act 2020 and Merri-bek's Governance Rules, invited nominations for the office of the Mayor for the 2022-2023 Mayoral year.

Cr Pulford nominated and Cr Conlan seconded Cr Panopoulos as Mayor of Merri-bek City Council for the 2022-2023 Mayoral year.

Cr Panopoulos accepted the nomination.

Cr Carli Hannan nominated and Cr Pavlidis seconded Cr Tapinos as Mayor of Merri-bek City Council for the 2022-2023 Mayoral year.

Cr Tapinos accepted the nomination.

Motion

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Harte seconded –

That each Mayoral nominee address the meeting as to why they wish to be Mayor of Merri-bek City Council.

Carried

Cr Panopoulos addressed the meeting.

Cr Tapinos addressed the meeting.

As there were two nominations for the office of Mayor, the Chief Executive Officer put it to the vote in the order the nominations were received.

With more than the required absolute majority of six votes, the Chief Executive Officer declared Cr Panopoulos elected as Mayor of Merri-bek City Council for the 2022-2023 Mayoral year.

Newly Elected Mayor – Mayoral Chains and Assuming of the Chair

The newly elected Mayor, Cr Panopoulos received the Mayoral Chains and assumed the Chair.

7.19 pm Cr Panopoulos assumed the Chair.

Ceremonial Mayoral Speech

In accordance with sub-rule 3.5.4 of the Governance Rules, upon being elected, the Mayor may make a ceremonial speech, outlining the priorities of the year ahead based on the previously adopted Council Plan.

Mayor, Cr Panopoulos

I also would like to begin by acknowledging that this meeting is being held on the lands of the Wurundjeri woi wurrung people. It was taken from them without a treaty process, consent, or compensation, and sovereignty was never ceded. I wish to acknowledge them as the Traditional Custodians of these lands and waterways and would also like to pay our respect to their Elders past, present, and emerging, as well as to all First Nations communities, who significantly contribute to the life of this area. I acknowledge their cultural heritage, relationship with Country and the contribution they make to the life of our city.

I would like to acknowledge members of parliament, former mayors and councillors, and other community leaders who have joined us or may be watching tonight.

To my fellow Councillors, residents of Merri-bek, friends and family.

I am honoured to be elected as the next Mayor of Merri-bek, a city enriched by its diverse, engaged and caring residents.

I am proud to lead this Council over the next 12 months with the support of my passionate fellow councillors.

I will serve the people of Merri-bek with integrity, keeping their best interests at the heart of everything we do.

I commit to leading Council in building on the great strides we have made during the first year of our Community Vision and Council Plan.

To the outgoing Mayor, Cr Mark Riley; I recognise and appreciate the courage, care and passion with which you served.

You led us respectfully through the incredibly important task of renaming our city council. This was not an easy task and I thank you for your leadership – I am so proud that I can say I am the second Mayor of Merri-bek City Council.

During this past year we have delivered on so many key Council projects, including opening the wonderful new Glenroy Community Hub, 6 new playgrounds, as well as new park in Glenroy as part of our A Park Close to Home program. We provided subsidies to almost 100 residents for installing solar or energy saving home upgrades, advanced the Fawkner Leisure Centre project and the Saxon Street community and creative hub, and delivered new infrastructure to make it easier for residents to move around Merri-bek.

Thank you, Mark, and congratulations on your Mayoral year.

Thank you also to Cr Lambros Tapinos for your work as Deputy Mayor over the past year.

Thank you to my fellow Councillors for electing me to be the Mayor for the upcoming year, I am really excited by this and I am feeling really lucky to have been given this opportunity.

You electing me as the Mayor for this coming year sends a clear message to our community that young people and young women have the right to be in leadership positions in all parts of our society, and that the democratic process no matter the level of Government belongs to all of us. My recent run at the state election has shown me that not all people think that way and that people will attempt to use your age, your gender or your financial position, or whether or not you have children against you for political gain.

I just want to thank all of my fellow Councillors here for always treating me with respect when we have vehemently disagreed on policies. I think the respect that we have for each other has come through quite consistently over the past two years.

To me it is clear that young people are going to be the biggest winners or biggest losers of the decisions that we make today. I am really proud of the fact that I have been elected Mayor and that we have a strong track record of sticking up for everyone in our community. I would like to take this moment to say a huge thank-you to all of you here for everything over the past two years.

We are the closest level of government to our community – they see and interact with our staff maintaining our roads, parks and playgrounds, in our libraries, in our maternal and child health centres and visiting older residents.

We have a responsibility to address issues on behalf of our residents, and act on opportunities to improve their lives through our service delivery or infrastructure upgrades.

Over the next few years, Merri-bek will see major transport infrastructure constructed as part of the Level Crossing Removals Project throughout Brunswick. We are not the decisionmakers on this project, but we will be consulting with our community to develop a vision for the outcomes of this project. We are committed to advocating on behalf of our community to ensure the best possible outcomes.

We will continue our advocacy to request more investment from the State and Federal Government in Merri-bek, including improvements to our bus network to see fairer and more sustainable transport options throughout Merri-bek, calling for safer access over the Bell Street Bridge in Coburg, making tram lines more accessible for residents of all abilities, and investment in our local economy to increase jobs and support local businesses so that they thrive.

Climate change will continue to be front-of-mind in council decision making as we work to mitigate its impacts on our community.

As a Council we have an important role to play in managing risks from the warming climate, I am proud to say that Merri-bek is a leader in this space.

We continue to deliver actions under our Zero Carbon Merri-bek 2040 Framework, which sets the vision and pathway for zero carbon emissions across our community by 2040.

We have recently adopted our Climate Risk Strategy, which will help us assess how climate change will affect different parts of our community, and what we can do to reduce these impacts.

Under our Urban Forest Strategy, we're increasing the number of public trees in Merri-bek and supporting residents to plant trees that will thrive in our environment on private land.

Next year we'll introduce a new 4-bin kerbside waste collection system, which will reduce waste sent to landfill and improve the quality of recyclables.

We are now in Year 2 of our Council Plan and we are making great progress towards the goals and actions set out on the plan.

Our Council Plan has 5 themes:

- An environmentally proactive Merri-bek
- Moving and living safely in Merri-bek
- A healthy and caring Merri-bek
- Vibrant spaces and places in Merri-bek
- An empowered and collaborative Merri-bek

Some of the other actions we are taking towards achieving an environmentally proactive Merri-bek include:

- Delivering Ride & Stride trials at schools across Merri-bek, where we open up our streets to families walking and riding to school.
- Commencing development of our Open Space Strategy, which will help us identify priorities for new open space and how we use our open space.
- Building a new wetland and frog habitat at Moomba Park, Fawkner.

To help our community to move and live safely in Merri-bek, we are:

- Improving cycling and pedestrian transport options
- Continuing to advocate to improve public transport capacity and equitable access across Merri-bek, including duplication of the Upfield line and improved bus services in the North.

To achieve a healthy and caring Merri-bek, we will:

- Invest \$14.6 million over 5 years into upgrading and expanding our several kindergartens, to deliver a place for every Merri-bek child in three-year-old kinder.

- Complete construction of the \$11.3 million Fleming Park redevelopment
- Commence construction of the \$27.8 million Fawkner Leisure Centre redevelopment,
- Continue to support the planning and advocacy for the Ballerrt Mooroop project
- Foster social, economic and physical inclusion for all people in our community.

To create vibrant spaces and places in Merri-bek, we will:

- Commence construction of the \$22.6 million Saxon Street Community Hub in Brunswick, which will provide open space, room for our community and creatives
- Continue renewing shopping strips with new footpaths, lighting, art and trees, such as Wheatsheaf Road in Glenroy
- Deliver new parks for the community at Service Street Coburg and Frith Street Brunswick under our Parks Close to Home Program
- Deliver festivals including the return of the Sydney Road Street Party, Brunswick Music Festival, Coburg Night Markets, Glenroy Festival and Fawkner Festa.

And to foster an empowered and collaborative Merri-bek, some of our activities will include:

- Supporting the Merri-bek Connectors program, to improve access to information and services for our culturally and linguistically diverse residents
- Implementing our Community Engagement Policy and Implementation Plan and continue delivering our Accessible and Inclusive Communications Policy.

Our wonderful community make Merri-bek the great place it is to live, work and play. Of course, I know there is always more work to be done.

I'm honoured to serve the community and I look forward to engaging with our community on important matters over the course of my term.

I look forward to working with Councillors, Council staff and the community to achieve the best outcomes for the great city of Merri-bek.

Thank you.

Presentation to Outgoing Mayor

A presentation was made to the outgoing Mayor, Cr Mark Riley. Cr Riley made a brief statement.

Election of Deputy Mayor

The Chief Executive Officer, Cathy Henderson, in accordance with section 27 of the Local Government Act 2020 and the Governance Rules, invited nominations for the office of the Deputy Mayor for the 2022-2023 Mayoral year.

Cr Pavlidis nominated and Cr Riley seconded Cr Davidson as Deputy Mayor of Merri-bek City Council for the 2022-2023. Cr Davidson accepted the nomination.

Cr Bolton nominated and Cr Harte seconded Cr Tapinos as Deputy Mayor of Merri-bek City Council for the 2022-2023. Cr Tapinos accepted the nomination.

As there were 2 nominations for the office of the Deputy Mayor, the Chief Executive Officer put it to the vote in the order the nominations were received.

With the required absolute majority of six votes, the Chief Executive Officer declared Cr Davidson elected as Deputy Mayor of Merri-bek City Council for the 2022-2023 Mayoral year.

Adoption of Council Meeting Dates for 2023

Council's Governance Rules provide that Council fixes the date, time and place of all Council meetings for the following calendar year, including meetings designated for Planning and Related Matters.

Council by resolution, or the Chief Executive Officer, may change the date, time or place of, or cancel, any Ordinary meeting which has been fixed, or schedule an additional ordinary meeting and must provide notice of the change to the public.

The proposed Council Meeting Schedule (Schedule) for the period January to December 2023 has been drafted to enable Council to effectively carry out its decision-making functions for the year. The Schedule includes the times and dates for Council meetings and Council meetings designated for consideration of Planning and Related Matters.

Meetings are generally held on a Wednesday evening in the Council Chamber at the Merri-bek Civic Centre.

The election of the Mayor must be held on a day that is as close to the end of the one year term as is reasonably practicable. It is proposed that the next meeting to elect the Mayor be held Wednesday 15 November 2023.

Date	Time	Meeting type
25 January 2023	6.30 pm	Council Meeting - Planning and Related Matters
8 February 2023	7 pm	Council Meeting
22 February 2023	6.30 pm	Council Meeting - Planning and Related Matters
8 March 2023	7 pm	Council Meeting
22 March 2023	6.30 pm	Council Meeting - Planning and Related Matters
12 April 2023	7 pm	Council Meeting
26 April 2023	6.30 pm	Council Meeting - Planning and Related Matters
10 May 2023	7 pm	Council Meeting
24 May 2023	6.30 pm	Council Meeting - Planning and Related Matters
14 June 2023	7 pm	Council Meeting
28 June 2023	6.45 pm	Council Meeting - Planning and Related Matters
12 July 2023	7 pm	Council Meeting
26 July 2023	6.30 pm	Council Meeting - Planning and Related Matters
9 August 2023	7 pm	Council Meeting
23 August 2023	6.30 pm	Council Meeting - Planning and Related Matters
13 September 2023	7 pm	Council Meeting
27 September 2023	6.30 pm	Council Meeting - Planning and Related Matters
11 October 2023	7 pm	Council Meeting
25 October 2023	6.30 pm	Council Meeting - Planning and Related Matters
8 November 2023	7 pm	Council Meeting
15 November 2023	7 pm	Council Meeting – Mayoral Election

Date	Time	Meeting type
22 November 2023	6.30 pm	Council Meeting - Planning and Related Matters
6 December 2023	7 pm	Council Meeting
13 December 2023	6.30 pm	Council Meeting - Planning and Related Matters

The adopted schedule of Council meeting dates will be published on Council's website and made available at Council's Customer Service Centres.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Sets the dates and times for Council meetings in 2023 as printed in the agenda and designates those meetings indicated for consideration of Planning and Related Matters in accordance with the Governance Rules.
2. Sets the date and time for the election of the Mayor for 2023-2024 as Wednesday 15 November 2023 at 7 pm.
3. Appends the schedule of Council meetings to the minutes, publishes it on the Council website and makes it available at Customer Service Centres.

Resolution

Cr Pavlidis moved, Cr Davidson seconded -

That Council:

1. Sets the dates and times for Council meetings in 2023 as printed in the agenda and designates those meetings indicated for consideration of Planning and Related Matters in accordance with the Governance Rules.
2. Sets the date and time for the election of the Mayor for 2023-2024 as Wednesday 15 November 2023 at 7 pm.
3. Appends the schedule of Council meetings to the minutes, publishes it on the Council website and makes it available at Customer Service Centres.

Carried unanimously

Meeting Close

The meeting closed at 7.41 pm.