



MINUTES

MEETING OF KNOX INTER-FAITH NETWORK

Held Monday 2 February 2009 at Knox Civic Centre

PRESENT:

Representatives of Faith Communities present:

(Chairperson)	Janssen Spirituality Centre, Boronia
(Vice-Chairperson)	Egyptian Coptic Church
	St Thomas More's Catholic Church, Belgrave
Lisette Pine	Knox Council, Access and Inclusion Officer
	Temple Society Australia
	Boronia Church of Christ
(Treasurer)	Temple Society Australia
	Islamic Society of Melbourne, Eastern Region (ISOMER)

APOLOGIES:

(Secretary)	St Simons Catholic Church, Rowville
	ISOMER

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER:

Cr David Cooper as Mayor of the City of Knox introduced new councillors Cr John Mortimore and Cr Joe Cossari (who were given copies of the K-I-N booklet) prior to the meeting. The meeting was then opened with prayer at 7:40 pm by Gwenda, who welcomed everyone to a new year for the Network.

1. MINUTES/ACTIONS FROM LAST NETWORK MEETING

- 1.1 Minutes of meeting of 1 December 2008: Moved for acceptance by Sr Moya, seconded by Rod – passed.
- 1.2 Temple Society Youthfest
Gwenda provided a support letter from the Network for the VMC grant (multi-faith initiatives) applied for by the Temple Society.
- 1.3 Multicultural Advisory Committee
Lisette advised the committee would first meet on Monday 16/03/2009 and that, through the representation of Riad and Gwenda, a strong connection with the Network exists.
- 1.4 Eastern Region Councils
Lisette, as a Knox Council representative, mentioned a meeting for the Eastern Metropolitan Region scheduled for Thursday 05/02/2009. Opportunities to engage across inter-faith networks are being discussed. The various Councils involved will pay for the breakfast/supper proposed for later in the year.

1.5 Parliament of the World's Religions

Gwenda will attend the preparatory event (Melbourne: Making a Difference) for the Parliament to be held at the Melbourne Town Hall on Sunday 08/02/2009 from 4:00 to 8:30 pm. The event proper runs from Thursday 03/12 to Wednesday 09/12/2009. Registration is offered for the entire 7 days (full: \$520 to \$624 depending on time of registration; retiree: \$468 to \$572; student \$260 to \$364), for 3 days (\$312 to \$374.40) and for 1 day (\$145.60 to \$197.60). Given the expense (and this does not include meals), it was noted that volunteers are being sought – see the website <www.parliamentofreligions.org/index.cfm?n=6&sn=7>

Rod mentioned the attendance of Helen Heath at his community's upcoming service on Sunday 01/03/2009.

1.6 Inter-faith sessions

Gwenda advised of open forums conducted by both the Casey and Greater Dandenong Inter-faith Networks.

1.7 Chairperson's report

Gwenda redistributed her report incorporating the minor amendments.

1.8 Treasurer's report

Rolf advised the current Network account balance is \$XXX.XX, including the transferred funds from the Knox Presbyterian Church. A number of 2008 memberships were paid at the meeting, and Rolf asked that those for 2009 (at \$20 per faith community) be paid as soon as possible.

1.9 Knox Carols

The event's program was curtailed due to severe wet weather. Lisette will check with Malcolm Russell (Knox Festivals and Events Coordinator) whether the Network's greeting was read.

1.10 Election of 2009 office bearers

Gwenda offered to remain in the Chairperson role until Peter's return from ill-health.

2. **PLANS FOR 2009**

2.1 Incorporation

Mark distributed and spoke to his summary of the incorporation process – the advantages/disadvantages, the application, fees and obligations, the constitution – as gleaned from the Consumer Affairs Victoria website and tailored to reflect the Network's status and style of operation. Whilst there are a number of considerations, incorporation would provide the Network's members and office bearers with protection against personal liability and greater eligibility for grant applications.

The website indicates incorporated groups should consider taking out public liability and other insurance. Mark has discussed this point with Rowland, trying to establish whether it had ever been raised through Network meetings or in conjunction with Knox Council. Based on broad information about the Network and its activities, Mark obtained a quote of \$500 premium for \$10m public liability cover.

Lisette offered to check the position with respect to insurance of community groups utilising Council facilities, and to enquire of other inter-faith networks at the Eastern Metropolitan Region meeting regarding insurance and incorporation. She intends forwarding any relevant details to Network members before the next scheduled meeting.

It was agreed to wait until the April Network meeting before deciding on whether to pursue incorporation. This will enable the distributed information to be properly digested and the insurance position to be clarified, notwithstanding that the two issues (incorporation and insurance) are not mutually dependent.

Aly indicated he would be overseas at the time of the next meeting. A proxy vote (by e-mail) is allowable and can be arranged prior.

2.2 Schools' program in Knox area

It was agreed to wait until Riad returns (this week or next) before arranging a coming together of the sub-committee. It was noted that the Greater Dandenong Inter-faith Network already runs a schools' program.

2.3 Membership drive

Numerous ideas and concepts – including tapping into the Network's e-mail list/Council's directory for active promotion, providing awareness of other faiths and cultures to the wider community, advertising forums in the local newspaper (attendance at meetings for non-members can presently only be in a spectator role), developing a marketing campaign around a particular 'selling point', discussing atheism (but not from an anti-God perspective), understanding of different religions' events throughout a calendar year, learning about indigenous spirituality, continuing to distribute the Network booklets (to Knox libraries etc), visiting other faith communities, discussing causes of vandalism (of sacred places) – were thrown up for consideration.

2.4 Inter-faith summit

As Chairperson, Gwenda received a complimentary invitation to attend a national inter-faith summit for peace and harmony in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region at the Griffiths University Multi-faith Centre (18/02 to 21/02/2009) in Brisbane. The summit program will include eight concurrent inter-faith plenary panels: peaceful resolution of conflicts; cultural diversity, multiculturalism and social inclusion; economies for common wellbeing and social justice; climate change and other dimensions of the ecological crisis; peaceful and democratic governance; promoting human rights and responsibilities; cultivating inner peace and spirituality; education for a culture of peace.

Lisette offered to contact Cr John Mortimore (in his capacity as editor of the Boronia & The Basin Community News) to arrange an interview and report on the event.

3. NEXT MEETING

Monday 6 April 2009 – Maher will present the opening prayer.
Best wishes for a speedy recovery were extended to Peter.

The meeting was closed at 9:30 pm