

Meetings and decisions (model) policy

(insert name of VOLUNTARY COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT OF CROWN LAND RESERVE INCORPORATED)

Purpose and scope

This policy summarises our committee’s meeting and decision-making procedures, including minutes and record keeping regarding financial matters and other decisions.

The policy is consistent with our committee’s commitment to the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities, including requirements of the Code and related committee policies regarding (1) Conflict of interest (2) Gifts, benefits and hospitality and (3) Dispute resolution.

Key definitions

Quorum is the number of committee members required for a meeting to be “official”. It is defined as more than half the elected members, for example, quorum for a committee with five members would be three and for seven members it would be four.

“In-person” and “virtual” attendance by phone and/or Internet

Our committee recognises that sometimes it is not feasible for meetings to be had “in-person” with all members in the same location. Sometimes meetings will be held “virtually” involving one or more members participating by phone and/or the Internet. For the purpose of quorum, all members participating virtually or in-person will be counted as attendees.

Committee role and accountability

The role of our committees of management is defined in legislation, the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*: to “manage, improve, maintain and control” the reserve for the purposes for which it is reserved.

Our committee is legally accountable to the “responsible Minister” of the Victorian Government for all our decisions and actions, and we are also accountable to reserve users and the general community for ensuring that the reserve is managed in the public interest.

Due consideration

As part of each member’s duty to exercise due care, diligence and skill, prior to making a decision the committee ascertains all relevant information.

Each member balances respect for the expertise of others with their own duty to speak up, ask questions, and ensure that the correct decision is made.

Prior to a decision being made, there will be an appropriate opportunity for each member present to ask questions, express ideas, and offer opinions.

Members are required to treat one another with courtesy and respect during this process (and at all other times in their role as a committee member).

Minutes

The committee completes a record of each meeting in the form of “meeting minutes.” The minutes include:

- Committee members attending and apologies (and any non-committee members attending).
- A record of all decisions, including sufficient noting of financial decisions to enable any audit of financial transactions to include a clear record of committee decision-making regarding financial management matters.

Note: Minutes will indicate if a member is not present at any time during the meeting (for example, due to a conflict of interest).

The minutes will also include details of any decisions where a vote is required, including a record of any members who wish to have their vote against a decision recorded in the minutes.

The minutes are endorsed by the committee, with any necessary amendments, at the next committee meeting. The endorsed minutes are retained as an enduring record of the committee’s decisions, consistent with the *Public Records Act 1973*.

Agenda

The Committee Chairperson and Secretary, in consultation with other committee members, take responsibility for communicating and managing the agenda for meetings.

Conflicts of interest

In line with our committee’s policy on conflict of interest, our meetings are structured to provide an opportunity for all members to (1) update details of the committee’s Register of Interests (2) declare any conflict of interest, or potential conflict of interest, regarding any items on the meeting agenda.

Register of gifts, benefits and hospitality

In line with our committee’s policy on Gifts, benefits and hospitality, our meetings are structured to provide an opportunity for all members to (1) consider any current issues relating to gifts, benefits or hospitality that require a committee decision, and (2) update details of the committee’s Register of gifts, benefits and hospitality.

Dispute resolution

In line with our committee’s Dispute resolution policy, through normal meeting processes, our committee will seek to prevent disputes from occurring. We will work together to resolve disputes on an informal basis wherever possible.

Appendices

Appendices to this policy provides further information that is considered by the committee in the conduct of meetings and decision-making.

Policy agreement date

This policy was agreed to by the Committee of Management on / /

Appendix A: Roles of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer

Chairperson

- Provide guidance and leadership, ensuring the committee functions effectively as a team.
- Ensure all committee members have access to the information they need to undertake their role effectively. This includes information required by new committee members.
- Preside at committee meetings.
- Monitor whether the tasks arising from committee meetings are being carried out.
- Represent the committee publicly. The committee can also designate a committee member or employee to act as spokesperson on specified issues.
- Notify the Minister/DELWP of major risks to the effective management of the reserve. This action is taken by the chair on behalf of the committee.
- Actively manage any disputes that arise between committee members.

Secretary

- Nominate with DELWP as the “Primary Contact” for information exchange with DELWP about committee matters (committees can choose for another committee member to be the Primary DELWP Contact). Ideally all Primary Contacts have an active email address for correspondence with DELWP.
- Record the minutes of committee meetings.
- Manage incoming and outgoing correspondence, including any committee notification and approvals required.
- In partnership with the Chairperson, issue meeting agendas, notices of upcoming meetings and any required copies of correspondence and reports. Liaise with the Chairperson between meetings to ensure that the committee attends to its business.
- Maintain and securely store committee records in accordance with the *Public Records Act 1973*.

Treasurer

- Co-ordinate the implementation of a suitable day-to-day financial system to ensure that expected standards of “auditable financial records” are met, including: record of all invoices, receipts, bank statements; segregations of duties; regular bank reconciliations; all key financial decisions recorded in meeting minutes; a register of assets; implementation of financial policies and procedures, including gifts, benefits and hospitality.
- Oversee a bank account (or accounts) in the name of the committee, with appropriate “two to sign” signatories to the account for all transactions, including electronic transactions. Usually, the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer will be signatories, with any two out of three people to authorise payments.
- Prepare regular financial reports on the committee’s financial position for presentation to committee meetings. This includes an Annual Financial Report for the financial year (1 July–30 June) to be used as the basis for the committee’s submission to DELWP of the Annual Financial Return.

Appendix B: Sample Agenda Template

Agenda – Meeting of (INSERT COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT NAME)	
Date and time [<i>if applicable, also insert meeting no.</i>]	
Location	
No.	Item (for decision, noting, recording, endorsing, etc.)
1.	Opening formalities
1.1	Opening and welcome, including Acknowledgement of Country
1.2	Apologies
1.3	Confirmation of quorum
1.4	Confirmation of agenda (including any proposed additions)
2.	Register of gifts, benefits and hospitality
	Members confirm that their entries in the register are complete and correct or agree to update their details.
3.	Register of interests
	Members confirm that their entries in the register are complete and correct or agree to update their details.
4.	Conflict of interest
4.1	Declarations: Members declare any interest (private interest or duty to another organisation) concerning any item on the agenda.
4.2	Management: Committee determines (i) whether the conflict is ‘material’ and (ii) how it will be managed.
5.	Minutes of previous meeting
5.1	Endorse minutes of previous meeting, noting any amendments. (Only members who were present can endorse)
5.2	Actions arising: Review the progress of actions arising from the previous minutes.
6.	Priority item A – [<i>insert title</i>]
	Description: This description box can be used to provide details and orient members to nature of issue/decision required
7.	Priority item B – [<i>insert title</i>]
	Description: as above
8.	Reports and other operational matters
8.1	[<i>Insert – e.g. Treasurer’s report, including financial report</i>]
8.2	[<i>Insert – e.g. Secretary’s report, including correspondence sent and received</i>]
8.3	[<i>Insert – e.g. Chair’s report; Perhaps also Volunteers report; Special project reports etc.</i>]
9.	Other business
	<i>Items not on the original agenda can be raised for discussion. Ideally these already flagged under 1.4 above</i>
10.	Next meeting
	<i>Decide or confirm the date, time, and location of next meeting.</i>
11.	Meeting close
	The meeting minutes will normally note the time the meeting concluded.

Appendix C: Sample Minutes Template

Minutes –meeting of (INSERT NAME OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT)			
Date and time [if applicable, also insert the meeting no.]			
Location			
Chair (or presiding member)			
Committee members present [List committee members in attendance. If a member is absent for any item(s), or part item(s), record this beside their name. If they attend remotely, note this also.]			
Invited guests present (if any) [List any invited guests in attendance. Record the item(s), or part item(s), they are present for. If they attend remotely, note this]			
Apologies [List names and any relevant titles – e.g. Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer]			
Start time	No.	Item	Actions arising (if any) who is responsible; due date
[Insert]	1.	Opening formalities	
	1.1	The meeting was opened by the chair.	
	1.2	Apologies as listed above.	
	1.3	Confirmation of quorum: [<i>Insert – e.g. ‘There being X committee members present the required quorum of Y is satisfied.’</i>]	
	1.4	The committee confirmed the agenda [<i>Insert if applicable: ‘with the following changes ...’</i>]	
[Insert]	2.	Register of gifts, benefits and hospitality	
		‘All committee members present affirmed that their entries in the <i>Register of gifts, benefits and hospitality</i> are complete and correct [<i>Insert if applicable: except for XXX, who provided the following update The Register of Gifts, benefits and hospitality has been amended to reflect this update.</i>]	
[Insert]	3.	Register of interests	
		‘All committee members present affirmed that their entries in the <i>Register of interests</i> are complete and correct [<i>Insert if applicable: except for XXX, who provided the following update The Register of interests has been amended to reflect this update.</i>]	
[Insert]	4.	Conflicts of interest	
		‘The committee noted that there were no conflicts of interest (real, potential or perceived) concerning any item on the agenda.’ <i>OR, if a conflict of interest is declared, record:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who declared the conflict • a description of the interest and conflict (<i>\$ value does not need to be recorded</i>) • the committee’s decision on whether the conflict is ‘material’ (serious), and • the committee’s decision on what action will be taken to manage the conflict. 	
[Insert]	5.	Minutes of previous meeting	
	5.1	The committee endorsed the minutes of the previous meeting [<i>insert meeting date and/or number</i>] as complete and accurate. [<i>Insert if applicable: ‘subject to the following amendments ...’</i>]	
	5.2	[<i>Insert – e.g. ‘The committee noted the current status of actions arising from the previous meeting’.</i>]	

[Insert]	6.	Priority item A – [insert title]	
		<p>Description [Insert any description as per agenda]</p> <p>Key background [Briefly note key factors in the committee’s decision. Suggest avoiding details of ‘who said what’ but rather summarise key facts.]</p> <p>Decision/outcome Ideally the wording of the decision/outcome is articulated at the meeting and agreed to by everybody. In which case it can be noted as “Agreed unanimously”. If some members voted against the agreed decision, this should be noted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voted in favour: [Insert names of members voting in favour’] • Voted in dissent: [Insert names of members voting in dissent (and, if requested, briefly note key factors material to their decision here or above in ‘key factors’)] • Abstained from vote: [Insert if applicable and note, if requested or otherwise relevant, e.g. conflict of interest, the reasons for abstaining] <p>The members moving/seconding the motion for the decision/outcome can also be recorded if the committee so chooses.</p>	
[Insert]	7.	Priority item B – [insert title]	
		[As above.]	
[Insert]	8.	Reports and operational matters	
	8.1	Provide an appropriate summary referencing any written report provided.	
	8.2	As above	
	8.3	As above	
[Insert]	9.	Other business	
	9.1	Note and summarise as appropriate. If a decision-making item use the template as per 6. Above.	
	9.2	As above	
[Insert]	10.	Next meeting	
		The next meeting is as follows: [insert date, time, and location.]	
[Insert]	11.	Meeting close	
		The meeting was closed at (time)	