

Meeting on reports

The Cassowary Coast Regional Council will hold a special meeting this month to consider the Mission Beach 4852 and Tully 4854 Reports.

The move has been welcomed by Tully and District Chamber of Commerce President John Hughes who said there had been a worrying lack of progress on high priority work.

That included a decision and work on the closed circuit television security cameras in Tully.

JJ 3/09/09

TJ 3/09/09

Council support for Mission Beach film festival

The Cassowary Coast Regional Council has unanimously agreed to provide financial and in-kind support for the proposed Mission Beach Film Festival.

The festival, to be held from November 8 to 10, had already attracted more than \$40,000 in government support and sponsorship prior to a report being tabled at last Thursday's Council meeting.

Queensland Events has pledged \$20,000 (\$10,000 each towards marketing and a festival co-ordinator), Mission Beach Business and Tourism \$6,000, Bendigo Bank and Mission Beach Community Bank \$5,000 each, Terrain and Bill and Sue Shannon \$1,000 each, and Castaways will be a Gold sponsor.

The organising committee has set a budget of \$159,966, made up of cash costs of \$71,226 and in-kind contributions of \$88,740.

The report was prepared for Council by Director Community Services Julie Murphy.

She was not present at the Council meeting, with Chief Executive Officer Terry Brennan speaking on her behalf.

The officer's report recommended Council contribute \$5,000 and a further \$10,000 in in-kind support.

She also recommended the contributions be limited to the inaugural 2009 festival and any future funding be subject "to negotiating a formal agreement that sets out conditions of funding and clearly defines the mutual obligations of and reciprocal benefits for both parties".

The festival organisers had requested a financial contribution of \$15,000 plus in-kind support.

"In summary the festival's theme is one of sustainability," Ms Murphy noted in her report.

"(It will be) a feast of films that will promote creative storytelling using the overarching theme of 'sustainability' as it applies to the environment."

Mr Brennan said the report needed a "fair bit of thought" in relation to Council's cultural policy.

"This request is fairly significant," he said. "There was no time from its submission to have a formal agreement."

"The report is pretty comprehensive and there is provision in this Budget for smaller donations than requested."

'TOO GREEN'

Although all Councillors would agree to the recommendation a couple did have questions to ask.

Cr Ross Sorbello was concerned that a film festival, which usually contain a range of film types to stimulate audiences, would in this case be "all environmental stuff".

"This isn't a film festival, it's an envi-

ronmental festival," he said.

"Mission Beach based Cr Jennifer Downs leapt to the defence of the festival saying one film would be a world premier and there would be "some really outstanding films".

"I haven't been told the list of films," she continued.

"I believe the festival should have been called the Cassowary Coast Film Festival.

"This is the start of an annual event.

"I use the Gympie Film Festival as an example of how this could grow - it started in a garage.

"We continually undersell ourselves.

"This is just the start; I totally support it and it will be great for the whole region."

Undaunted Cr Sorbello said the festival's focus was "too narrow".

"People in the wider community won't go; it's too green," he said.

Cr Bill Horsford's concern was the amount of financial support and the fact the report did not detail where the funding would come from.

He added that other events within the region were limited to \$2,000 in Council financial support (usually with more in-kind support) and he had "an issue" about giving more to the film festival than other festivals.

Argument went around in circles for some time before Cr Horsford moved an amendment to the recommendations limiting Council's financial support to \$3,000 plus \$10,000 in in-kind support.

Cr Horsford and Ian Rule voted in favour of the amendment, while Mayor Bill Shannon and Crs Downs, Sorbello and Mark Nolan voted against (Cr Carmel Silvestro being absent from the meeting).

The vote then went back to the original recommendations, with the added clarification that \$2,000 was to come from festival funds and \$3,000 from seed funding.

Cr Horsford wanted to argue about where the funds came from but Cr Nolan said it was time to cut to the chase and "let's vote on it".

"We need culture; we've got to have arts," he said.

"This will be a very big event for the region - potentially there will be a huge groundswell of support," Cr Downs said.

"We don't know what the in-kind costs will be; have any of our people worked those costs out," Cr Sorbello asked.

"We sat here for weeks and weeks bringing down our Budget," Cr Rule said.

"We stung a lot of small clubs and we should be careful how we deal with this.

"We are opening ourselves up for fire from everywhere."

The motion was then put forward and carried unanimously.