

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS BRIDGE CLUB INC

PO Box 1061 Bowral NSW 2576

To: govenance@wsc.nsw.gov.au

12/12/2023

Subject: AGENDA OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2023

Item No 9.16 Southern Highlands Bridge Club Lease of Land Forming Part of David Woods Playing Fields, Boardman Road, Bowral – Update

Submission from Southern Highlands Bridge Club

With reference to the officer's report

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION THAT:

- 1. Council rescind previous resolution of Council dated 15 March 2023 being MN 2022/348.*
- 2. Council reimburse the Southern Highlands Bridge Club the sum of \$25,032.00 being the actual out-of-pocket expenses (as provided by the Bridge Club), such payment being contingent upon the Southern Highlands Bridge Club providing confirmation in writing of their Surrender of Lease and Lease Agreement for the area of Council owned land at David Wood Playing Fields, Boardman Road, Bowral.*

In May 2022 the leadership group of Southern Highlands Bridge Club met with the Administrator to discuss the project to build a dedicated bridge clubhouse in the Southern Highlands after it had been decided at the December 2021 meeting not to honour the loan agreement offered to SHBC.

The time and effort that had gone into this project over the previous four years was acknowledged. The disappointment with council rescinding the offer to provide a 20 year loan of \$470,000.00 was appreciated. It was agreed that council would compensate the bridge club through provision of a one off payment of \$150,000.00 to be used towards the upgrade of a suitable building, which at the time was indicated to be the Moss Vale Golf Club clubhouse.

Unfortunately the additional costs of repairs to this building are uneconomical and the golf club is not prepared to pursue this further.

The current report and recommendations seem to have forgotten the time and effort that has gone towards the aim of building a dedicated bridge club to help maintain the residents social and mental well-being. All this work was carried out with the support and encouragement of the previous council and hundreds of man hours went into it. To be told that the council had no right to offer financial support for the project and summarily removing it was devastating for our members.

It appears that the current proposal is to pay out of pocket expenses to Southern Highlands Bridge Club and walk away. There is no statement of a commitment by council to continue support or assistance. That is not within the spirit of our first meeting with the Administrator and is rejected. We see our club as being in the same position as in May 2022 and request further consultation with council to develop a solution.

The bridge club remains in the unsatisfactory position of using three locations six times per week. Each of these facilities requires setting up and packing away each time we play bridge. The majority of the membership is past retirement age and moving furniture is not the easiest task for them.

The bridge club has ambitions to operate six days a week to provide benefits to members of the community who wish to remain socially and mentally active with a challenging game. We cannot all

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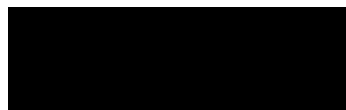
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continue to play ball sports for ever. If one just looks at the numerous, excellent tennis facilities in the area, it seems totally out of balance as there are probably more bridge players participating weekly than tennis players, yet bridge players have no dedicated facilities. There are around 240 registered bridge players in the Highlands, many of whom play at least twice weekly.

There have been 581 sporting facilities identified within the Southern Highlands (ref: 2023 WSC winter sports forum), but there is no facility for Mind Sports such as bridge, chess, mahjong etc.

The Southern Highlands is an expanding country region. We would like to suggest that council set an example to other communities by building a suitable facility for Mind Sports as a matter of urgency.

Regards



Steve Brabyn

President, Southern Highlands Bridge Club