



MINUTES

MEETING OF KNOX INTER-FAITH NETWORK

Held Monday 2 June 2008 at Knox Civic Centre

PRESENT:

Representatives of Faith Communities Present:

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| (Chairperson) | Our Lady of Lourdes Bayswater, Catholic Church |
| (Vice-chairperson) | Egyptian Coptic Church |
| (Secretary) | St Simons Rowville, Catholic Church |
| | St Thomas More's Catholic Church, Belgrave |
| | Islamic Society of Melbourne, Eastern Region (ISOMER) |
| | Knox Presbyterian Church, Wantirna |
| | Uniting Church, Ferntree Gully |
| | Temple Society, Bayswater |
| | Boronia Church of Christ |
| Cr David Cooper | Knox Council, Scott Ward |
| Lisette Pine | Knox Council, Access and Inclusion Officer |

Guests:

| | |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| Dr Shan | Hindu Temple, The Basin |
| | Janssen Spirituality Centre |

APOLOGIES:

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| (Treasurer) | Temple Society, Bayswater |
| | ISOMER |
| | St Josephs Boronia, Catholic Church |
| | Sikh Faith |

OPENING and APOLOGIES:

The meeting was opened at 7:30pm by Gwenda who welcomed everyone and acknowledged the traditional owners of the land on which Knox City Council stands.

3. Review and Confirmation of Agenda

The following items were added to the agenda distributed prior to the meeting:

- Ø 5.2 - Report on the meeting at the Eastern Health Sacred Space (Rod)
- Ø 6.3 - Parliament of World Religions, Melbourne, 2009 (Lisette)
- Ø 7.5 – Contact with the media (Gwenda)
- Ø 7.6 – Update on the Janssen Spirituality Centre (Gwenda)

4. Opening Prayer and Presentation on Hinduism

Dr Shan opened with a Hindu prayer and made an interesting presentation on the key beliefs of the Hindu faith. He then answered questions during an animated discussion that followed. Gwenda thanked Dr Shan for his excellent presentation and reminded members to think of further questions in anticipation of a future visit to the Hindu Temple in The Basin.

5. Minutes from the Last Meeting (7 April 2008) and Actions Arising

MOTION: Moved: Riad, Seconded: Mark – Minutes agreed as an accurate record - PASSED

1. Actions arising

1. *Brochure* – Rowland spoke about the excellent document prepared with input from Members and funding from Knox City Council.

Members present thanked Rowland, Gurdashan and all who contributed by acclamation. Members also thanked the Council for its contribution.

Peter noted that the documents of reconciliation have been delivered to Knox City Council (on the day of this meeting), and the Network has about \$301 left to apply to other purposes promoting the Network.

2. *Multicultural Advisory Board Meeting* – Cr Cooper spoke about the successful meeting on 15 April, attended by about 20 groups. It was notable that discussion was robust and encouraged some people to form new opinions. Council has passed the Terms of Reference to establish this group formally. A formal call for representatives will be advertised soon for 2-year terms.

3. *Web-site* – Peter noted that he is happy to put any Member event on the web-site to advertise it more broadly, should the Member Community so wish. Peter reported on why the Knox Inter-faith Network web-site was not appearing in search engines. In essence:

- it had not been listed for addition onto web-sites; this has been fixed for Google, but may take some time to filter through their system

- we need other web-sites which do or could refer to Knox Inter-faith Network to insert a link to the web-site: www.knoxinterfaith.org.au. The KIN site is willing to reciprocate such listings.

ACTION: All members to provide the secretary with sites to list on the KIN site (by email to secretary.kin@knoxinterfaith.org.au)

MOTION: That Peter Evans be delegated authority to spend, if necessary and at his discretion, the \$114 once-off annual amount to use the enhanced listing tool available from the hosting provider used for our web-site. Moved: Peter; Seconded: Rowland. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. *Tecoma Buddhist Community* – The community was apologetic for not being able to attend the April meeting due to personal illness, and is available to present at a future meeting.

5. *Bus Tours* – Gwenda reminded people of the activity involving the Dandenong Asylum-seekers Centre and City of Dandenong, which provide tours around centres of worship. **ACTION:** Pat will investigate this further.

6. *Approach to involving local schools* – **Deferred for discussion** at the August 2008 meeting.

2. Event Reports and Matters of General Interest

- i. *JCMA Paths to Peace Seminar* – Riad reported on this, which was the first of two events this year. The next event – *Paths to Peace: The Reality* – will be run on Sunday, 26 October. Details will follow.
- ii. *JCMA Conference* – Reports suggest this went very well, with 40 attending.
- iii. *Oxfam Close the Gap Solidarity Night* – Pat reported on this event – which included a speaker from the Mullum Mullum house. About 70 attended.
- iv. *Hindu Community Procession* – Gwenda reported on this, attended by a few hundred people.
- v. *Palestinian Nakba Commemoration Ceremonies* – Riad explained this.
- vi. *National Sorry Day Raising Ceremony* – Lisette reported on this, which was run successfully on a fine weather day. About 50-60 attended. Media coverage after the event was very positive.

- vii. *Eastern Health Sacred Space* – Rod attended but the meeting was cancelled because there were no attendees other than the co-ordinator, Pamela Hughes, and him. Future meetings are uncertain due to lack of certainty about funding the role and lack of confirmed attendees at meetings. The group running this is having difficulty identifying suitable indigenous representatives. Rowland will make contact with her. Peter suggested checking whether Pamela (or someone similar) could make a presentation on the opportunity and challenges of providing multi-faith care in such an environment.

3. *Treasurer's Report*

Discussion deferred due to absence of Treasurer.

6. Future Items of Interest from Members of the Network

a. The Victorian Interfaith Networks Conference

The conference is on Sunday, 20 July, 1:30-3:30pm, Melbourne Town Hall. This will be followed by a one hour session on *What is Truth?* This will be followed after a break by a concert at 6-7pm. Gwenda and Maher (to be confirmed) will attend. Members authorised them to agree to liaise with other Networks as appropriate.

ACTION: Peter to prepare a one-page updated "history" statement for use by Gwenda and Maher at the event.

b. The Parliament of World Religions, Melbourne 2009

Lisette noted that information is coming shortly (to be distributed by email) about the involvement of inter-faith networks throughout Melbourne.

7. Concrete Plans for the Remainder of 2008

- Ø 6 October – Gwenda to check whether the Buddhist Community can present.
- Ø Visit to the Hindu Temple – can be done on any Monday night – some time in November.
- Ø 1 December – AGM + other topic to be determined in August.

Lisette noted that involvement in Carols by Candlelight is being planned now – so the Network will need to communicate with Malcolm at Knox City Council soon.

ACTION: Gwenda will contact Malcolm regarding Carols by Candlelight.

The Network will consider meeting frequency during 2009 at the October meeting. There was general support for either scheduling meetings in odd-numbered months as required, or using the odd-numbered months for visitation to various sites of interest, or both.

The Janssen Spirituality Centre is inviting Network members to its official opening on Sunday, 3 August. **ACTION:** Gwenda will circulate the information on the launch.

Gwenda noted that the person with whom she had been in contact regarding getting meetings advertised in the local paper had left that paper. **ACTION:** Cr Cooper noted he would take up the topic of publicising the launch of the brochure through Council Media.

8. Any Other Matters of Common Interest

Security checks are not needed when visiting schools as long as the teacher is present in the classroom, unless the school demands otherwise. Should the check be needed, the form for volunteers is available for the post office and can be completed for free, excluding the cost of the photograph necessary.

Gwenda reported on a call from Boda of the Bayswater Hindu Community. They are keen to have a discussion workshop with Knox Inter-faith Network on a suitable topic, such as violence. The sense of the meeting was that this would be worth exploring for 2009.

Peter used the Nakba celebrations and the Palestinian / Israeli conflict as an example of issues which he believes the Knox Inter-faith Network needs to examine regarding whether it has public statements. Cr Cooper noted this was at one end of the spectrum of difficulty, compared with other issues. Sr Moya noted the Network, even when it did not have a formal position, allows for Network members to be educated and so have better-informed positions. Rowland outlined a view of principles that he believes could apply in the specific situation.

MOTION: Foreshadowed Agenda Item for Next Meeting: That the proposal whether the Knox Inter-faith Network should make a public statement about the Palestinian/Israeli situation be considered at the next meeting. Moved: Rowland; Seconded: Tina. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. Next Meeting

4 August 2008 – Network Dinner at 7:30 p.m. – No formal agenda, but Peter to speak briefly on the history of the Knox Inter-faith Network.

ACTION: Network members to email Gwenda regarding what food they will bring – noting it needs to be vegetarian.
(Gwenda will provide paper plates and plastic cutlery.)

ACTION: All Network members MUST advise Gwenda or Peter of plans to attend by 25 July 2008 at the latest (Emails to be sent to chairperson.kin@knoxinterfaith.org.au or secretary.kin@knoxinterfaith.org.au).

The meeting ended at 9:55 p.m.