

Minutes no. 93

Friday 10 February 2023

Portfolio Committee No. 7 – Planning and Environment

Via Webex at 1.01 pm

1. Members present

Ms Higginson, *Chair*

Mr Graham (participating)

Ms Jackson

Mrs MacDonald

Mr Rath

Ms Sharpe

2. Apologies

Mr Barrett

Mr Pearson

3. Inquiry into allegations of impropriety against agents of The Hills Shire Council and property developers in the region

3.1 Witnesses for public hearings on 15 and 16 February

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Jackson: That:

- the committee no longer, for the time being, proceed with summoning Mr Nassif to attend and give evidence before the committee on 15 or 16 February given he is out of jurisdiction
- the Chair invite Mr Nassif to appear at the hearings on 15 or 16 February via Webex; and
- the correspondence from Mr Nassif dated 9 February 2023 be published on the committee website, with sensitive personal information redacted.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Jackson: That:

- the Chair re-issue an invitation to Mr Merhi to attend the public hearings on 15 or 16 February, noting that the committee has the power to issue him with a summons if he declines, and
- that if Mr Merhi does not respond to or declines this invitation, under the authority of s 4(2) of the *Parliamentary Evidence Act 1901*, the committee issue him a summons to attend and give evidence before the committee on 15 or 16 February 2023, at a time determined by the Chair.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Jackson: That the committee authorise the secretariat to continue attempts to personally serve summons to attend and give evidence before the committee on 15 or 16 February 2023 on:

- Mr Christian Ellis
- Cr Virginia Ellis
- Mr Charles Perrottet
- Mr Jean-Claude Perrottet.

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4. Other business

The committee noted ongoing efforts that have been made to contact and serve summonses on Mr Christian Ellis, Cr Virginia Ellis, Mr Charles Perrottet and Mr Jean-Claude Perrottet.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Jackson: That the Chair publish a media release noting that:

- the hearings for the inquiry into allegations of impropriety against agents of The Hills Shire Council and property developers in the region are going ahead on 15 and 16 February
- the committee thanks witnesses who have agreed to give evidence at the hearings
- the committee has resolved to summon Mr Christian Ellis, Cr Virginia Ellis, Mr Charles Perrottet and Mr Jean-Claude Perrottet to attend and give evidence before the committee, but, despite ongoing efforts to contact them, attempts to serve the summons on the individuals has so far been unsuccessful.

5. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 1.21 pm until Wednesday 15 February 2023 (public hearing).

Peta Leemen
Committee Clerk