

Minutes for Buddies meeting, Sunday 24th June, 2018 at St Mary's, Buderim

Scott Grimmett chaired the meeting, Margaret Norris was note-taker.

Scott opened the meeting at 11.10, welcoming all and drew attention to the recent suicide on Manus Is.

He also highlighted the success of the ASRC telethon, which highlighted the need for wide dissemination of activities like this as some members had not known about it.

New-comers were welcomed.

Apologies were received from Robin Keen, Kayla Szumer, Mitra Khakbaz, Shaye Yull, Margaret Landbeck, Margaret Norman.

Reports:

Finance – given by Dee Williams. Income \$2108.90, and after several outstanding commitments we have approximately \$11,000.00. Full Finance report available on the website.

Refugee Welcome Zone – given by Angela Mercuri. Angela told the meeting about the efforts to reactivate this project. It is proposed calling the group "Sunshine Coast Refugee Network" as it is a joint project with Amnesty International and "Welcome to Maleny". Others are welcome to join.

Meredith Walker suggested that the group approaches both local governments in the district and Angela will take this back to the group.

Specific activity is the signing a petition for presentation to Council to go with application

Angela also encouraged people to sign the **petition** asking for the widening of the community sponsorship programme which it is felt is too restrictive now.

Refugee Week Activities – given by Gillian Duffy. During the week there were 4 different activities. 2 screenings of [The Staging Post](#), Amnesty showed [Human Flow](#), and Buddies sponsored a dinner at Noosa. Gillian reported that it was encouraging to see many non-Buddies members at these events. All of the activities were well attended ; a donation was sent to the makers of the *Staging Post* and a profit was made from the raffle.

Buddies will purchase *The Staging Post* on DVD to assist with further community education programmes.

After a question about timing of events, Gillian said we'd tried not to clash with groups (Amnesty and Maleny) who held their events on the weekend, hence we had ours during the week.

Strategic Conversations Training – reported on by Agnieszka Swiatlowska. Agnieszka attended this three-day workshop sponsored by the Anti-Discrimination Commission of Qld and the local council. There were over 80 participants and Agnieszka was impressed by the care and love expressed over many different groups for the disadvantaged of our community. Participants were introduced to tools for inter-acting, particularly "check-in" and "check out", working with common ideas and the power of personal stories. We need to find courage in the face of chaos, and a final thought "It is kind to ask for help and if you can't ask for help you cannot be trusted".....

Vigil, July 19th at St Mark's – Margaret Norris brought members up to date on this, noting that it will be before the next meeting.

Sausage Sizzles – both Kawana (July 14th) and Noosa (July 15th) need more helpers.

Successful visa application reported on by Dee Williams.

The meeting closed at 12.00

... and we then heard our speaker, Tim Draper from MDA, who spoke about the new Community Support Programme instituted by the Federal Government.

Many members raised questions about both the operation and efficacy of the programme and having Tim to answer them was most valuable.

