

Local News

'Overwhelming support' for sportsfield plan

A public meeting to discuss sporting facilities in Byron Bay attracted around 120 local residents last Wednesday.

A concept plan for new sporting fields along Ewingsdale Road was on display and 'received overwhelming support from those at the meeting', according to the Byron Sports Association who produced the plan.

'One of the major concerns was that people had heard of plans for sporting fields before and that they were all pie in the sky, but Council has already purchased the land and we've agreed that a reasonable process time for a development application is 12 months,' said spokesperson for the Association, Paul Irwin, who hopes to be playing on the new fields within three years.

Council will be asking for nominations for a working group in the near future and Irwin says there will be a strong emphasis on using expertise from within the local community and Council.

At the meeting Mayor Jan Barham announced that \$1.9 million had been allocated in the 2004/5 budget

for sporting facilities at Byron Bay and Suffolk Park and *The Echo* understands that Council currently holds close to \$800,000 for improvements to sporting facilities in the area.

'The balance will come from state and federal government grants and community donations,' said Irwin, 'it looks like we already have the money to construct the fields and the amenity building.'

'The set up of these fields will take a lot of pressure off the Byron Bay rec grounds where the usage could drop by 50%. I am proud of the way the people of Byron Bay reacted to the plan and confident the new process of community working groups can come to a quick resolution,' said Mr Irwin.

Jan Barham was positive about the outcome of the meeting.

'I think it is great that the community are developing their concept plan, but everyone is aware we need further clarification of the environmental constraints and suitability of the site for reuse of effluent by the West Byron sewage treatment plant,' said Cr Barham.

IQ SCENE grows work opportunities

The IQ SCENE (Sustainable Community Employment Network Enterprise) is growing rapidly with a great crew of volunteers involved in a range of exciting activities at Island Quarry. IQ SCENE aims to link IQ volunteers with community, arts and ecologically sustainable organisations and businesses to provide flexible training, hands on experience and work opportunities from bush regeneration to web design.

This community employment pilot, supported by the federal government's Stronger Families and Communities Strategy, provides a community-grounded program of participation choices that supports social and self-employment entrepreneurship and fosters working partnerships with local employers and community organisations. 'Potential partners are welcome to register with the SCENE to help make our community work for us all,' says an IQ press release.

'The IQ SCENE is a great opportunity for participants in Work for the Dole and other "mutual contribution" programs to make the most of their voluntary work. You can also do your community service hours at IQ.



Henry Perez and Dan Hamilton at work in the IQ vegetable patch.

'Huge thanks to our current crew, the IQ Community Organic Garden is established with all involved gaining experience in weed control, seed/seedling/tree propagation, composting, organic fertilising, irrigation and pumping systems, harvesting and maintenance; and socialising. This was part of a six month sponsored project with BETC (Ballina Employment and Training Centre) funded through DEWR (Dept Employment

and Workplace Relations).

'In the next few months we will be offering workshops in composting toilet construction and flowform installation as well as a range of building and recycling projects to improve IQ's community facilities.

'IQ Community Organic Garden is open to all community and volunteers. We also need green material (lawn clippings, leaves, green waste, manure etc.) for composting for our coming sea-

sons planting. Please contact 6685 9999 (restaurant and lawn maintenance businesses welcome).

'There's so much happening that we need more help to make the Island Quarry Arts and Eco Park an excellent community resource and venue for everyone.'

For more information on the IQ SCENE, contact Shane Rennie on 6685 9999, visit Island Quarry on Tuesdays and Wednesdays or visit www.IQ.org.au.

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