

## monash under pressure

The embarrassing public spat at Monash Council's mayoral swearing-in on December 5 has readers. This week, the Leader asks councillors if they are united for the good of their commu

# Council asserts united

OAKLEIGH MONASH LEADER 19 DEC 2006

### CR GEOFF LAKE

"I'm confident all councillors will continue to observe the high standard of governance which I believe we have achieved in the past year."



### CR DANE MANZIE

"Yes, the community must be placed first, with council actions to reflect this in a professional, cohesive manner."



### CR JOY BANERJI

"We have all been elected for the same purpose, which is to make responsible decisions that will ultimately benefit the community."



### CR RYAN BROWN

"The six councillors who voted for the elected Mayor and Deputy Mayor voted for independent people who are free of political pressures."



### CR CHARLOTTE BAINES

"Monash councillors and staff members will always work hard to achieve the best outcomes for the Monash community."



MONASH councillors say they will work together for the next 12 months, despite a violent brawl during the new mayor's swearing-in ceremony just two weeks ago.

All 11 councillors criticised the behaviour of a public gallery minority involved in the December 5 fight (*Leader*, December 12).

Cr Manzie was twice hit in the face, abused and threatened by a backer of fellow councillor Paul Klisaris during the fracas.

A *Leader* survey of ward representatives revealed complete support for the new team of Mayor Tom Morrissey and Deputy Dane Manzie, despite Cr Geoff Lake's outburst at the time that council harmony would never be achieved with the duo at the helm.

Cr Lake denied the split 6-5 votes highlighted a fracture of the council and he refuted suggestions that politics were involved.

He said the Labor bloc of five – himself and councillors Joy Banerji, Stephen Dimopoulos, Charlotte Baines and Klisaris – had not tried to lock in the mayoral votes of refused Labor Party applicant Gerry Kottek and independent Dane Manzie.

"It should be expected that councillors will discuss important votes prior to a formal vote being taken," Cr Lake said.

"If there was any deal done, then I clearly was not part of it."

Cr Klisaris also denied any backroom deal had been done and then reneged upon. Councillors Kottek and Manzie voted against him in the mayoral vote.

Monash Council has had a turbulent history of recent times. The current 11 representatives were elected only last year, although many had served on the council in the past.

It has come under attack with community anger over funding for prostitute counselling ahead of children's occasional childcare and Christmas hampers, continuing Oakleigh pool shenanigans and a backflip over a sporting grounds smoking ban.

During the previous council term there were also very public incidences of alleged councillor harassment, ratepayer-funded legal spats and excessive expenses and junket claims.

Cr Manzie said there would be no council infighting, as he expected "nothing less than a professional, business-like approach from all councillors that reflects the residents' will, not personal agendas".

### MAYOR TOM MORRISSEY



"I want every individual to make their own decision based on their own assessment and their own conscience."

## Three with uneasy relationship

COUNCILLORS Morrissey, Lake and Klisaris have a volatile history, with Cr Morrissey requesting police involvement in stalking allegations during the 2003 council elections, which Cr Morrissey lost.

He took the matter to court, asking for intervention orders against councillors Lake and Klisaris, which were subsequently denied.

Cr Morrissey regained his council seat at the 2005 poll.

Both men were moved on by police from outside Cr Morrissey's business during the March 2003 incident, which involved placards, letters and phone calls. Councillors Lake and Klisaris have both denied claims of harassment.

# Pool plan makes waves in council

OAKLEIGH MONASH LEADER

Steve Drill

19 DECEMBER 2006

HAVE YOUR SAY

OAKLEIGH pool supporters have been given a choice between teenagers and toddlers after Monash Council released redevelopment plans.

The council has given people four options for the pool's redevelopment but none of them include a total redevelopment.

The council has only budgeted \$3.5 million for the pool, with the extra money to come from land sales or State Government support.

More than 50 pool supporters packed the gallery when council voted on the pool proposals last Tuesday night.

Pool lovers can choose between:

- a water park without a pool costing \$4.1 million;
- a heated 50m pool costing \$4.6 million;
- a heated 50m pool and heated diving pool costing \$5.4 million; or,
- a 25m pool with a toddlers' pool costing \$5.6 million.

Councillor Stephen Dimopoulos moved a last-minute change to the proposal to include a fifth option for a total redevelopment of the pool to the sound of applause.

But after fierce and lengthy debate, newly elected Mayor Tom Morrissey used his casting vote to defeat the change to jeers from the crowd and shouts of "Judas Iscariot" and "liars".



Julie Clearwater

IF YOU want to help decide the Oakleigh pool's future grab a pen and head to a Monash library to pick up a feedback sheet.

The council has given people four options to fix the pool: a water park, a 50m heated pool, a 25m pool with a toddlers area, or fixing the 50m pool and diving pool.

But if you want the existing facilities fixed, write it down under question two on the sheet. Forms must be returned to Monash library staff or sent in a reply-paid envelope to Monash Council before February 26.

For details phone Ian Swan on 9518 3561.

Pool campaigner Julie Clearwater said there was hope because people could demand a total redevelopment during the public consultation period in February.

"We have to let everyone know they must ask for a learners' pool," Ms Clearwater said.

Cr Dimopoulos, who was chair of the committee which spent more than three months coming up with the options, said he had a change of heart.

"There's been 15 years of councils neglecting that site," Cr Dimopoulos said.

But Councillor Denise McGill, who was also on the committee, questioned Cr Dimopoulos' backflip and argued the change would delay a pool decision.

The council will have public meetings in February to discuss the pool's future but written feedback forms will be available in the city's libraries from this week.

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