

Item 10.11

Notices of Motion

Victoria Park Wetlands Remediation

By Councillor Weldon

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) there has been an alarming number of duck fatalities in Victoria Park's Lake Northam. Sydney Wildlife carers have recorded 25 fatalities over the last fortnight;
- (ii) the observed species, the Pacific black duck and chestnut teal, are native to Australia and play an important role in wetland ecosystems;
- (iii) the City have been working with the Australian Registry of Wildlife Health, Taronga Zoo, the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and the Department of Primary Industries to determine the cause;
- (iv) the City expedited its routine quarterly water testing of the Lake Northam. No risks were identified. The City is conducting further testing for soil borne bacteria;
- (v) post mortems conducted by the Australian Registry of Wildlife Health show no injury, adequate weight and muscle mass, indicating absence of any longer term illness;
- (vi) prior to colonial incursion and industrialisation, Lake Northam formed part of a natural watercourse that extended from marshy headwaters at (what we now call) Glebe towards Redfern and Waterloo to the south;
- (vii) Lake Northam is now a constructed wetland, functioning as both wildlife habitat, a recreational area and a filtration system for stormwater run-off from King Street and the surrounding area;
- (viii) in 2018, City capital works upgrades in Victoria Park included a range of measures to restore and maintain the water quality of Lake Northam;
- (ix) over the last 12 months, there has been a proliferation of duck weed and algae on the surface of the lake; and
- (x) a Honi Soit report in September 2022 noted that the condition of Lake Northam appeared to be in dire need of attention, with decaying plants, increasingly murky water and a slew of semi-submerged rubbish; and

- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
- (i) provide an update to Council regarding the City's investigations of the cause of duck fatalities;
 - (ii) subject to the findings of investigations, implement measures to mitigate the risk of a similar mass-fatality event from reoccurring; and
 - (iii) undertake a condition assessment of Lake Northam and develop an effective and sustainable remediation strategy to improve water quality and promote a healthy wetlands ecosystem.

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