1. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES:

PRESENT:
- Mayor Damien Ryan
- Councillor Steve Brown – ASTC (Chair)
- Kathleen Nitschke – U3A
- Enid Harland – Probus
- Geoff Sloan – General Member
- Lowell Wood – General Member (Alzheimer’s Australia NT)
- Leigh Grant – General Member (Alzheimer’s Australia NT)
- Jill Deer - Alice Springs Senior Citizens Association
- Jenny Mostran – Council on the Ageing
- Rex Mooney – ASTC, Chief Executive Officer (arrived at 4:30pm)
- Leon Tripp – ASTC, Community & Cultural Development Manager
- Mitch Cameron – ASTC, Community Development Officer
- Telly Ociones – ASTC (minutes)

APOLOGIES:
- Councillor Dave Douglas – ASTC
- Jan Dowson – National Seniors of Central Australia
- Jayne Stinton – Catholic Care NT Aged Care Advocacy
- Shauna Hartig - Country Women's Association, Alice Springs
- Pauline Wardle – Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS)
- Bronwyn Arnold – Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS)
- Craig Catchlove – ASTC, Director Corporate and Community Services

The meeting commenced at 4:05 pm.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:
That it be a recommendation to Council:
That the minutes of meeting held 15 July 2015 be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Moved: Enid Harland
Seconded: Geoff Sloan

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

3.1 Housing for Self-funded Retirees / Seniors Accommodation

Still awaiting on the extinguishment of native title on the land.

A letter has been sent to Scott Lovett asking for the current status on Stephens Road Seniors Village.
3.2 NT Pensioner and Carers Scheme Changes / Elder Abuse Info Line

Geoff Sloan overviewed the last meeting in March of the Seniors Advisory Committee in relation to the Treasury presentation on concession scheme. A lot of people supported going back to a universal scheme but a group agreed looking at how the budget was distributed as 90% of the total budget is going to utilities.

Geoff Sloan would like to get some feedback from the Seniors Coordinating Committee as he will be writing a submission to Treasury on what can be done with the scheme. Do seniors wish a scheme to be returned to a universal scheme (i.e. no means test entry to get into concession scheme)?

Discussion ensued on the issue of seniors concession scheme.

3.3 Eye Testing for Over 70s Driver Licence Renewal

Geoff Sloan is in constant communication with the Motor Vehicle Registry (MVR) and Department of Transport and advised that to some extent the original problem has been solved in relation to driver licence renewal associated with the eye testing for over 70s.

MVR has clearly stated that people (even though the Regulation does not say this) can renew their license more than six weeks before the renewal date if they want to. The only downfall of this process is the licence expiry date slides forward to the date of renewal.

Geoff Sloan provided the following Draft Q&As -Information for Senior Drivers from MVR:

What is the current requirement for eyesight testing in the Northern Territory?
Eyesight tests must be completed at initial application and then at aged 70 and annually thereafter.

Why do seniors have to get an annual eyesight test after they turn 70?
Changes to the eyesight testing requirements for NT drivers came into effect in July 2013. Research obtained at that time identified a consistent approach across jurisdictions with regular aged eyesight testing occurring. The policy change was also supported by a prior recommendation by the Northern Territory Coroner to implement regular eyesight testing of senior drivers.

What is happening in other state jurisdictions?
A shift towards self-assessment has occurred in some jurisdictions in recent months and as a result the Department has initiated a review. The Department is consulting broadly with licensing regulators, medical practitioners, seniors’ bodies, human rights and equal opportunity groups nationally to understand the contributors for change including customer concerns. The Department is conducting an evidence-based review to assess the benefits of compulsory testing. Factors such as increased life expectancy, importance of independence and mobility, population projections and median age shift, the misconceptions associated with older people and their capacity to continue driving safely later in life all need to be better understood.

What does this mean for seniors?
In the NT drivers aged 70 and over are still required to get an annual eyesight test. The Motor Vehicle Registry (MVR) through collaborating with client, have implemented and streamlined procedures to enable registered optometrists to fax or email reports from anywhere. Client records are then updated and a new licence and receipt is issued. The receipt is sufficient legal evidence of a current driver licence.
Although it isn’t common practice there isn’t anything preventing customers whose licence expires whilst they are out of the country to approach the MVR to renew their licence prior to travel allowing them to have current photo ID with them while they are away.

**Where can I get more information about driver licencing for seniors?**
The Department is currently developing a designated webpage to provide clear information for senior drivers. The page is under construction and is expected to be live by the end of July 2015. In the meantime, telephone 1300 654 628 or email mvr@nt.gov.au for more information or visit your local MVR Office.

If you are worried about your fitness to drive, contact your GP immediately to discuss your concerns and options.

**Will I be reminded to get an eye-sight test before my licence renewal is due?**
Yes, courtesy reminder renewal notices are sent 6 weeks prior to the licence expiry date which will remind you to get an eye-sight test. Driver licences can be renewed prior to this if necessary.

**What if I am interstate when my licence is due to expire?** The MVR have implemented and streamlined procedures which enables registered optometrists to fax or email reports from anywhere in Australia. Provided an eye-sight test report has been received by a MVR Office and your photograph is less than 10 years old, licence renewals can be processed over the phone on 1300 654 628.

**Do senior discounts apply for licence/registration renewal?**
Yes, senior discounts apply but only when the card has been sighted by an MVR Officer and recorded on the database. The card only needs to be sighted once on initial application. This can be done by visiting your local MVR Office.

Other eligible card holders receive free driver licence renewals, however, these cannot be processed over the internet at this time so please contact MVR on telephone 1300 654 628 or visit your local MVR Office.

**What does it mean if I am required to undertake a medical assessment of my fitness to drive?**
Being assessed or being requested to undertake an assessment does not mean that you necessarily lose your licence. Many drivers found to have medical conditions find that they are permitted to continue to hold a licence to drive – with conditions applied. For example, quite commonly spectacles must be worn when driving, or the driver may be restricted to vehicles fitted with an automatic transmission or a medical assessment may be required.

### 3.4 Disabled Parking at the Post Office

Mitch Cameron had a meeting with Steve Baloban and advised that appropriate parking will be determined and what other services are required in the surrounding area once the Supreme Court building is finished.

Discussion ensued.

CEO Rex Mooney advised that Council is looking at some options in the long term with the Supreme Court, the Police and Hartley Street.

The Access Advisory Committee is investigating time limits on disabled parking in Hartley Street.
3.5 **Vacant Public Housing in Alice Springs**

A letter has been sent to the Minister and awaiting for a response.

3.6 **Seniors Month**

Nine entries were received to date to perform for the ‘Still Got Talent’ Seniors Talent Quest on Wednesday, 26 August from 11am to 2pm at the Civic Centre Function room.

Two more judges are needed to be part of the panel.

3.7 **National Seniors Central Australia Expo – 13 August**

Mitch Cameron would like to pass his thanks to Jan Dowson for putting in a good event.

Jan Dowson to report at the next meeting.

3.8 **‘Adopt a Grandparent Program’**

Discussion ensued that the program can be supported through schools rather than through an organization if people are worried about over commitment.

3.9 **Alice Springs Buses**

Mitch Cameron is in the process of drafting a letter to Department of Transport who operates the Buslink contract about requesting bus drivers to observe due care and diligence at all times to ensure the safety of passengers.

3.10 **Men’s Talking Groups**

Mitch Cameron received a lot of information about the different men’s groups after the last meeting and this was forwarded to Kay Eade.

This was an enquiry from Kay Eade if anyone knows of any specific men’s talking group that meet at a pub for elderly males who want some social interaction.

**ACTION:**

Mitch Cameron to send contact details of different men’s talking groups to SCC members for information.

4. **OTHER BUSINESS**

4.1 **‘Avoid a Funeral Rip-Off’ Campaign**

Geoff Sloan sent this information to SCC members so people know that there is an organization and a process that look after people.

The campaign is a joint initiative of Australia’s Commonwealth, State and Territory consumer protection agencies, through the National Indigenous Consumer Strategy Reference Group which aims to provide Indigenous consumers about the different funeral products that are available and to help prevent them signing up for funeral plans that are expensive, complex and not suitable for their needs.
Australian Securities and Investments Commission’s (ASIC) MoneySmart website gives people tips and tools to manage their money. Visit [www.moneysmart.gov.au](http://www.moneysmart.gov.au)

4.2 **Stuart Caravan Park**

Lowell Wood raised concern about tourists parking their cars and caravans across the footpath and it is quite crowded at times.

**ACTION:**
Council to put up a sign to keep footpath clear.

4.3 **Todd Mall Pedestrian Crossing**

Lowell Wood raised a safety issue regarding the shared zone in the Mall that vehicles do not give way to pedestrians and the 10 kph speed limit is not being followed. There is also no ‘shared zone’ sign in the southern end of the Mall.

**ACTION:**
Council will look at putting the ‘smiley face’ speed indication display in this area.

4.4 **Disabled Access Picnic Tables**

Lowell Wood works with clients with mobility problems. She enquired whether there are other places in Alice Springs aside from Olive Pink and the Gap that allows people with mobility conditions easy access to public picnic areas.

4.5 **Dementia Friendly Areas**

Lowell Wood advised that Robyn Lambley’s office is now a dementia friendly space. The office is open for anyone who is caring for people with dementia. Alzheimer’s Australia is also working with The Residency to be a dementia friendly space.

4.6 **Dementia Awareness Month**

Leigh Grant advised that September is Dementia Awareness month. Staff and volunteers will be out and about at a variety of community events raising awareness about dementia including:
- August 29 – Ernest the Elephant will make an appearance at the Seniors Races
- September 17 – Night Markets
- September 25 – Quiz night fundraising event, 50 Plus Centre

5. **NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday, **16 September 2015**, at 4:00pm Andy McNeill Room

6. **CLOSE**

The meeting closed at 5:10pm.