

MAYORS MESSAGE 469

The future of the Oysterfest Event.

During the last council meeting our elected members had a detailed discussion about the costs associated with the Oysterfest weekend. Some were rightly concerned about the level of costs involved and possible ways to lower these costs were considered.

It was quite correctly pointed out that this weekend event generates about \$1.5 million in economic activity. Some of this would happen in any event however it is a huge gain for our community. It was also mentioned that the total cost to council represents only about \$25.00 per assessment and that we do not spend much too otherwise promote tourism. We additionally receive a lot of positive publicity all over Australia which we could never afford to buy.

Two of the factors causing costs to increase are a fall off in the numbers of volunteers helping with Oysterfest and decreases in the level of support being received through sponsorships. Ways to improve these issues were discussed at length and letters seeking more support will follow at a later time.

We have always received a very high level of support through the oyster industry and particularly from the Zippel family who go out of their way to keep sufficient oysters available despite a general shortage of oyster stocks at this time. We very much appreciate this valuable assistance.

From the tone of the discussion it seems that elected members value the Oysterfest weekend very highly but would like to see the cost to council reduced. Some businesses have claimed that they do not receive benefits from this event but I would point out that every person in our community gains from the increased economic activity.

Please consider whether you can help either by volunteering or offering sponsorship to maintain this important event.