

Collier, Peter

From: Barry Court <bmcourt@bigpond.net.au>
Sent: Thursday, 15 October 2020 11:59 AM
To: Collier, Peter
Subject: Summary of our communications between MCCO and Lotterywest
Attachments: REPORT -MCCO Grant Application to Lottery West.doc;
McGowanLtrReLotteriesWest-7.5.20.pdf;
McGowanResponseToLetterReLotteriesWest2.6.20.pdf

Dear Peter

After many years of operating without Government assistance, MCCO operations supply food to the needy in Perth, Kwinana & Forrestfield, our resources are fully utilised to the extent we contacted Lotterywest for assistance.

After many communications, we were advised to meet Jenna Leslie and Susan Hunt from Lotterywest. This meeting we presumed was to convey some positive news.

This was not the case and we were advised that no funding would be given to Margaret Court Community Outreach (MCCO) or any other organisation that Margaret Court was associated with. This was specifically because of Margaret Court's stand on her opposition to same sex marriage.

Susan Hunt advised of the diversity of Lotterywest including the sponsorship of WA's Pride Festival.

This decision will see the cost of receiving and distributing food to our outlets being borne by Victory Life Church. This would take a toll on all our other services e.g. counselling and overseas aid.

To be bluntly information that Lotterywest would not support such an urgent demand for food, spiked by COVID-19 was devastating and expressed by myself at the meeting.

The meeting concluded that there was no way that Lotterywest was going to change its ruling. It appears no investigation of the workings of MCCO had not been undertaken to reveal how much Perth relies on MCCO for food, clothing and counselling.

I previously contacted the Premier direct and received a reply. A copy of my correspondence and his response is attached for your information.

The details of the Lotterywest meeting with MCCO have now become public knowledge. This will not be a benefit to either party as it is a blatant discrimination case. MCCO will have to take the necessary action to change this ruling.

I have also attached a summary of the history of our Grant application prepared by our Operations Manager, Bryam Robayo.

Kind regards
Barry Court, AM

MCCO Grant Application to Lottery West

MCCO's History of Grant Applications

MCCO has made two applications to Lottery West, first was in 2018 to purchase a small truck to improve the logistics of transporting and delivering donated food from donors to its warehouse. It took nearly two years to get a response from Lotterywest, but this application was unsuccessful, please see the attached letter from Lotterywest.

The second time MCCO made an application was during the peak of the Covid-19 crisis on 25/06/2020. The WA government allotted emergency relief funds via Lotterywest to go towards charities who were alleviating the impacts of COVID -19 on families and individuals who were doing it tough and had lost their jobs. MCCO met all the criteria and applied for this emergency relief grant. The purpose of the grant was to change and implement new processes as per government rules and regulations in response to the pandemic.

With the pandemic destroying the social fabric, shutting businesses and changing the normal operations, MCCO remained open, but it entailed that the food assistance processes changed and required financial resources.

Day by day the number of clients we serve grew from 1000 families to 4000 families fortnightly, 800 students from universities, colleges and other learning institutions were added to the emergency food assistance program, and we helped 22 agencies who referred their clients to us or picked the food items to distribute to their clients. In total 75 tonnes of food were distributed instead of the 42 tonnes that MCCO was giving to clients before COVID a week.

With the great demand for Food relief, big charity organisations collaborated and coordinated the movement of food items to ensure that the people in need do not miss out. To put into operation the outcome of this group effort, MCCO applied for financial assistance along with other charities. As managers from this working group interacted about the relief efforts across WA, it came to my attention that my colleagues' applications were approved but not MCCO. With this in mind, on the 20/08/2020 I contacted Lotterywest to enquire why the application's outcome has not been issued given that the emergency funds were meant to be dispensed quickly to better respond to the unprecedented crisis. I was put through to different consultants who advise me to wait for their supervisor's response. On the 26/08/2020, I received a call from one of the supervisors informing me that a meeting will be scheduled for MCCO to attend.

On the 2nd October 2020, Mr Barry Court and I attended a meeting at Lotterywest head office and in attendance was Jenna Leslie- Management Support Officer and Susan Hunt, the CEO.

Minutes of the meeting

Date: 2nd October 2020

Time 11:00 -12:00pm

Susan opened the meeting with a warm welcome and with acknowledgement of the work that MCCO does on behalf of the people in need.

Several socio-economic issues affecting WA were discussed with Mr Court, and it was a pleasant discussion.

Then Susan proceeded to reveal the outcome of the grant application, by stating that the Board of directors of Lotterywest has unanimously agreed not to approve the grant due to Ps Margaret views on same-sex marriage and what she has said in the past.

Accordingly, I asked if she could clarify based on that decision given what MCCO does in terms of coordinating and helping 4000 families, 800 students and 22 agencies who are experiencing financial and emotional hardships. And the fact that MCCO remained opened to provide emergency food assistance while most charities shut down because of COVID . I asked if these factors were considered during the decision making process, as well as Lotterywest core mandate of improving the quality of life and wellbeing of WA.

Susan underscored the importance of MCCO in the community but stated that Lotterywest does not want to have any association with Ps Margaret. I requested if that outcome could be emailed to MCCO with a clear statement as to why the application was unsuccessful. In addition, if this is a position that Lottery West is going to hold in view of all other applications that MCCO would make in the future.

Susan says as long as Ps Margaret is still the chairperson, Lotterywest will have no association with MCCO but if a new chairperson takes over and apologies and change the viewpoints toward same sex marriage then the outcome might be different. Also she say that Lotterywest was the major sponsor of WA's Pride Festival and it would not be well seen that they help us I expressed that this is discrimination against Margaret Court Community Outreach as the work we have been doing for the last 20 years is not being seen, especially during Covid.

I mentioned to Susan that MCCO is helping more than 4000 families fortnightly, 800 students from universities, colleges and other learning institutions. We added to the emergency food assistance program, we helped 22 agencies who referred their clients to us or picked the food items to distribute to their clients and we are giving 75 tonnes of food a week to people in need in Western Australia and that the Lotterywest board of directors are politically discriminated MCCO.

We closed the meeting by thanking Susan and Jenna graciously for their time and hospitality and assured them that MCCO would carry on the mission of giving hope, life and love to the community.

Meeting ended at 11:45

Bryam Robayo

During the pandemic Margaret Court Community Outreach:

- Has helped more than 42,000 families with food.
- Distributed over 2,100 tons of food to people in need in Western Australia.
- Working closely with the majors charity organizations in Western Australia to help people in need