



Minutes – GENERAL MEETING

General Meeting to be held on Thursday 31st October 2024, in Westonia at the Old School Building

Opening 11.15am

Sandie Ventris thanked Stacey Geier for her time as Chairperson of NEWTRAVEL for the last twelve months.

Attendees:

NEWTRAVEL MEMBER

Shire of Mukinbudin
Shire of Westonia

Koorda CRC
Mukinbudin CRC

Shire of Dowerin
Dowerin CRC
Shire of Mt Marshall
Shire of Nungarin
Nungarin CRC
Shire of Wyalkatchem
Bencubbin CRC
Shire of Koorda

**online attendance*

Apologies:

Shire of Trayning
Nungarin CRC
Shire of Wyalkatchem
Shire of Mt Marshall

MEMBER VOTING DELEGATE

Sandie Ventris (NEWTRAVEL Chair)
Stacey Geier
Cr. Bill Huxtable
Kim Storer

Manisha Barthakur

Cr Megan Beagley*
Cr Kerry Dayman

Cr Christy Petchell*
Sharon Kett
Lana Foote*

Leanne Parola (CEO)

Sabine Taylor
Georgina McKay

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS & OTHERS

Linda Vernon (NEWTRAVEL TO)

Lani Hale

Jessica McCartney
Karla Spark

Shelley Mathews
Phoebe Sachse

Robyn Lee

Tanya Stobie

1. Previous Minutes

1.1 Confirmation (Previous Meeting Minutes click [Here](#))

RESOLUTION:

That the Minutes of the NEWTRAVEL Meeting held in Nungarin on 27th July 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

Moved: Stacey Geier

Seconded: Jessica McCartney

CARRIED

1.2 Business arising from previous minutes - Nil

2. Correspondence

2.1 Correspondence In

- 2.1.1 Various General Emails inward.
- 2.1.2 Stacey Geier Letter of Resignation as Chairperson

2.2 Correspondence Out

- 2.2.1 Various General Emails outward.

RESOLUTION:

That the NEWTRAVEL inward correspondence is accepted, and the outward correspondence be endorsed.

Moved: Kim Storer

Seconded: Cr. Megan Beagley

CARRIED

2.3 Business arising from Correspondence

3. Financial Report

Cheque Acc Opening Balance 1 July 2024		\$117,044.72
INCOME		
Other Income	Grant Payment – HRCPD (Events Officer Project)	\$31,777.00
	Total Income	
EXPENSES		
		\$31,777.00
Marketing	Vanguard Print	\$1,765.50
	Cubic Promote	\$1,512.50
	Shire of Mukinbudin – Poster Printing	\$8.50
	Australia’s Golden Outback – 2024/25 Cooperative Marketing	\$3,300.00
	Dixie Battersby	\$240.00
Website & App	Alex Smith- App repairs	\$1,045.00
	Domain Central	\$25.95
Tourism Officer & Support	Alyce Smith – Apr/May/Jun 2024	\$825.00
	Vernon Contracting – June 2024	\$4,301.34
	Vernon Contracting – July 2024	\$4,213.09
	Vernon Contracting – August 2024	\$4,858.45
Event Project Officer	Lily Haeusler – June 2024	\$3,168.00
	Lily Haeusler – July 2024	\$4,609.88
	Lily Haeusler – August 2024	\$6,534.00
Postage	Muka Mail & Merchandise – July 2024	\$5.20
	Muka Mail & Merchandise -August 2024	\$65.83
	Total Expenditure	\$36,478.24
Cheque Acc Closing Balance 30 September 2024		\$112,343.48
Outstanding Payments	Shire of Mukinbudin – TikTok Content, August 2024	\$400.00
	Shire of Mukinbudin – TikTok Content, September 2024	\$400.00
	Vernon Contracting – September 2024	\$4,047.24
	Muka Mail & Merchandise	\$30.50
	Shire of Mukinbudin – Printing	\$12.00
	Lily Haeusler – September 2024	\$5,104.00
	Mukinbudin Hotel Motel	\$220.00
Ending Financial Position on 24 October 2024		\$102,129.74

Signage Funds Remaining

Total Signage Funds Remaining	\$1,113.10

RESOLUTION:

That the NEWTRAVEL financial report is accepted as presented.

Moved: Stacey Geier

Seconded: Cr Kerry Dayman

CARRIED

4.0 NEWTRAVEL Tourism Officer (0.4FTE) October 2024 Report

Main Activities	Description	Progress/Update
1. NewTravel Administration		
a. Organise, attend and minute NEWTRAVEL meetings. Attending to any correspondence or motions at these meetings.	Organise and attend NEWTRAVEL Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended July NEWTRAVEL meeting
b. Undertake governance and financial reporting activities.	Prepare Agendas and Minutes; attend to correspondence and motions as directed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July Meeting Minutes prepared and circulated.
	Undertake financial responsibility for NEWTRAVEL including invoicing, paying accounts, preparing and presenting financial reports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly financials completed and accounts paid.
2. Marketing		
a. Implement the Wheatbelt Way Marketing Plan	Develop, adopt and implement annual marketing plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of 2023-24 Marketing Plan
b. Support NEWTravel to undertake tourism marketing activities to the benefit of the members.	Promote the Wheatbelt Way through press advertising and any other opportunities as they arise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented Wildflower Marketing Campaign Reviewed and planned 2024-25 AGO Cooperative Marketing Plan with Tiffany from AGO
	Update and distribute Wheatbelt Way Brochures and Booklets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributed as required.
	Arrange for the preparation of promotional packages for individuals, groups, companies and arrange appropriate distribution	As required.
3. Website and Social Media		
a. Develop and maintain a presence for the Wheatbelt Way on internet and social media.	Maintain the Wheatbelt Way website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated weekly as required.
	Answer all Wheatbelt Way enquiries via the website and respond to requests for merchandise as required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wheatbelt Way enquiries (website, email, socials, chat and phone).
	Create a Wheatbelt Way Facebook Page and maintain it regularly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of Wheatbelt Way social media. New team approach going forward: Alyce Smith – Facebook and Instagram monthly content Jess McCartney – TikTok reels and management Linda – Facebook & Instagram Stories and Reels and responding to comments.
4. Stakeholder Communications		
a. Maintain relationships with Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre and Australia's Golden Outback	Attend Regional Working Group Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wheatbelt Tourism Group meeting 5th September 2024. 19th July AGO Agritourism Working Group Meeting 15 August AGO Member Online Meeting

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 September AGO Member Online Meeting
b. <i>Communicate with members.</i>	Quarterly Newsletter to Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bi-Monthly E-news to NEWTRAVEL stakeholders sent. Quarterly newsletter subscribers sent.
	Provide information and updates as identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended NEWROC Branding Workshop in Wyalkatchem – 24th September. Attended Mukinbudin Council Workshop on 17th September. Attended Shire of Dowerin Council meeting on 15th October and presented on NEWTRAVEL and Tourism.
5. Maintenance and Monitoring		
a. <i>Assist in the maintenance of the Wheatbelt Way Infrastructure and monitoring of Tourism across NEWROC</i>	Coordinate and collate tourism data for the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compiled the Visitor Statistics to June 2024. Quarterly Marketing Report produced
	Coordinate annual auditing of Wheatbelt Way sites with individual shires and reporting of recommendations back to shires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
6. Supporting additional activities		
a. <i>Any other duties within the Contractors range of abilities as directed by the Director of Economic Services if time and resources allow.</i>	Assist with planning and conducting tourism initiatives as required (incl. local famils and trade shows).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended Dowerin Field Days on 27-29 August including set up and pack up. Met with Emma Draper from DLGSC re progress with Bushwalking planning grant update on 25 September.
	Carry out research and manage projects as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
	Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued NEWTRAVEL Events Support project management and support to Lily Haeusler as Events Project Officer. 18 October presented to WDC Board and Staff in Mukinbudin on Tourism in the Wheatbelt.

- Discussion held on how to further develop Agritourism as a Destination Development activity across the Wheatbelt Way. Barriers were discussed as well as how to engage with landholders. Points included:
 - That not every landholder needed to do Agritourism – only one per Shire would be a good start.
 - That the Mukinbudin Animal Farm had closed and sold their animals and will no longer operate. This was a great asset to the Wheatbelt Way whilst in operation over the last three years and helped to attract different market segments, such as families.
 - A perceived barrier is insurance, Linda gave assurance that this was no longer the barrier it once was with many brokers having suitable products to meet the needs.
- Sharon advised that a new Sandalwood Business was looking to be established in Bencubbin and that there may be opportunities for tourism products from it.
- Discussion held on EV charging points across the Wheatbelt Way and this being a barrier to new market segments considering the region as a place to visit.

5.1 Wheatbelt Way Visitor Statistics

A reminder that the reporting periods are:

- 1. July – October*
- 2. November – February*
- 3. March – June*

If Shires could please submit their complete Excel spreadsheets for the period July 2024 – October 2024 and email them in by the 14th November it would be greatly appreciated.

The June 2024 Snapsnot Report can be viewed [here](#).

5.2 Social Media and Marketing Report

NEWTRAVEL's primary purpose is to market and promote the Wheatbelt Way self-drive route and the tourism assets in the NEWTRAVEL area. We also engage with visitors and tourists through our promotional activities.

Linda presented a full report on NEWTRAVEL's Social Media analytics and marketing activities which can be viewed [here](#).

View the 2024 – 2025 NEWTRAVEL Marketing Plan Budget [here](#).

Members present were asked to assist in deciding the final winners to of the 2024 Mukinbudin Community Bank Wheatbelt Way Photo Competition. Voting was held and the Winner was Photo 4 (*Renee Heir – Baladjie Sunrise*) and the two Highly Commended prizes awarded to Photo 1 (*Celia Du Plessis, Dance of the rainbow during seeding, captured in the Shire of Westonia*) and Photo 2 (*Matthew Harben, Photos of Seeding 2023, captured in the Shire of Trayning*)

6.0 General Business

6.1 NEWTRAVEL/NEWROC Events Support Project

BACKGROUND:

Lily Haeusler has commenced as the NEWTRAVEL Events Project Officer. This project concludes at 30 June 2024 and will have five key outcome areas:

1. Support Governance and Compliance of Wheatbelt Way Events
2. Build Event Organiser Skills
3. Event Management Support
4. Funding Support
5. Marketing Support

It has a project budget of \$90,000.00, made up of \$63,554 in grant funding, \$14,446.00 NEWTRAVEL and \$16,000 Council contribution over the 16 months of the project.

COMMENT:

- Lily Haeusler is now working at CBH until the end of December and will commence back in late January with NEWTRAVEL.
- She will spend 1 day a week with the Shire of Westonia assisting and being mentored in event management alongside Shire staff. She will work 2-3 days a week from Mukinbudin completing project outputs.
- Good progress has been made with the development of the online portal to address governance and compliance of Wheatbelt Way events – this will be presented to NEWTRAVEL in February.
- The February NEWTRAVEL Meeting will be held in Mukinbudin and will also incorporate a workshop with Volunteering WA.
- There will be further work on funding and marketing support opportunities for events in early 2025.
- What do members wish to see as an outcome of this project at 30th June and beyond?

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Discussion was held with members on:

- Future of events across the Wheatbelt Way
- Support required
- Do NEWTRAVEL wish to continue extending this project?
- Do we wish to approach member Councils and NEWROC

Direction was given to:

- Follow up with offers for Lily to work out of many of the Wheatbelt Way CRCs in 2025 at 1 day per week.
- Lily to make it a priority to attend local event meetings in person in 2025.
- Linda to look for any suitable grant funding options to continue the project beyond 30 June 2025.

6.2 2023-2024 Community Trail Planning Grants

BACKGROUND:

DLGSC Community Trails Planning Grant – The Wheatbelt Way Walks, a bush walking masterplan for the Wheatbelt Way was successful. Rebecca Watson from ARHJ Consulting has been appointed to deliver a majority of the outcomes for this project. The application and can be viewed [here](#). Rebecca commenced her initial [July consultations](#) and has provided a [communication plan](#).

COMMENT:

We are needing to establish a Wheatbelt Way Bushwalking Stakeholder Reference Group that includes:

- NEWTRAVEL Members
- DBCA staff
- Traditional Owner/s
- DLGSC Staff
- Others?

The primary purpose of this group is to review the draft plan and provide feedback.

We also need to hold a Bushwalking Forum/Workshop next year (March/April). Current thoughts are to have it as an experiential activity with an actual bushwalk.

RECOMMENDATION:

Discussion was held with members on:

- Forming a Stakeholder Reference Group
- Hosing Bushwalking Forum/Workshop possibly at Mangowine Homestead/CWBA rest rooms with an actual walk to be held out a Billyacatting Hill Nature Reserve where there are examples of 2 existing bushwalking trails.

6.3 Wheatbelt Development Commission

BACKGROUND:

The Wheatbelt Development Commission held its October Board Meeting in Mukinbudin and Linda was invited to present to them on the Wheatbelt Way and Wheatbelt Tourism. In preparation for this they asked that a background briefing paper be provided. Linda developed the Wheatbelt Way Impact Report which can be viewed [here](#).

COMMENT:

Following this meeting Renee Manning has requested a meeting with myself on Monday 28th October with the following request:

Can we please catch up to discuss how WDC can support a potential NEWTRAVEL (potential to include WEROC/ROE) initiative?

WDC parameters would include delivery by June 2025, and commitment to co-contribution from the organisations involved.

I recall a couple of ideas discussed:

- *Strategic planning to capture higher value markets*
- *Understanding infrastructure requirements across NEWTRAVEL - eg works at key sites, accommodation upgrades*
- *Product development*

RECOMMENDATION:

Linda had circulated to members yesterday via email a [draft project scope](#) for the a Tourism Accommodation and Marketing project. Discussion was held on this and Linda sought feedback. Discussion held and key points were:

- general overall support for draft project scope.
 - reports and associated data a good outcome for the project timeframe.
 - concerns of who would implement the project and suitable consultants. Need for quotes.
 - the need to form a working group for this project.
 - NEWTRAVEL co-contribution could be a maximum of \$10,000.00 – with these funds to come out of the Bendigo Bank sponsorship towards the part 2 – Market Research on Target Segment Expansion.
 - To approach NEWROC for their support and a co-contribution.

7. Reports

7.1 Member Reports

Westonia

- Held three free Wildflower Tours which were well attended.
- The Wessy Markets were successful, but light on visitor numbers and stallholders, food vans let them down again by not committing and following through with attendance.
- 4 Caravan Groups stayed in Westonia this spring.

Koorda – read full report [here](#).

- Koorda Complex building extensions/upgrades are now complete.
- Streetscaping activities are now underway including items like new street signs and rubbish bin covers.
- Koorda Drive In – attendance varies but have engaged staff to run the diner this has allowed for more flexibility and agility to adjust screening dates. Screen has also been re-painted.
- 2024 Koorda Ag Show was well attended.
- Koorda Pool is open and is free entry to everyone.
- Koorda CRC will trial one day a week guided tours of the Koorda Museum during busy periods.

Beacon

- Overall had good attendance for the 2024 Beacon Wildflower Tours.
- Would like to see better coordination of the Wildflowers across the Wheatbelt Way.
- Would be interested in reviewing the pricing of all the tours.
- **ACTION:** Linda to look into this and conduct an audit of the Wildflower Tours across the Wheatbelt Way for review/discussion by members.

Wyalkatchem

- The Wyalkatchem Rodeo was successful with over 4000 people in attendance. Will look to cap numbers in 2025.
- The Wylie Hotel is open 7 days a week serving both lunch and dinner.
- Wyalkatchem Garden Café is open 7 days a week 6am – 2pm.
- The Wylie Pool will be open hopefully in mid-November.
- The Art Show was held and had a good attendance.
- The Melbourne Cup visiting the community in August was successful, shire staff worked really hard to pull together an event, they are now allocated a horse in the Melbourne Cup and if it wins will receive \$50,000 towards a community project.

Bencubbin

- 70 people attended the NEWROC Literary Lunch held in September.
- A stargazing night will be held tomorrow night

- Pre-loved stall event, good stall numbers, but not enough foot-traffic through.
- Community Garden is going well and is open to anyone (including visitors) to pick/use produce.
- Dirt n Dust Rally visited Bencubbin and held a breakfast with the community.
- Project with Town Teams to upgrade/enhance area next to the Café.

Mukinbudin

- Wildflower Tours were well attended.
- Pre-harvest Sundowner and Zapp Circus event saw 200 local people attend.
- CRC painted a road mural with the community on White Street.
- Held the Messy Muka Colour Run
- Tom Curtain event in Mukinbudin on the 14th December
- Mainstreet Gallery is now closed for the season, but had 1,514 people through its doors for the 3 months it was open.
- CRC is investigating working in partnership with Dandanning Brewery about tours in 2025.

Nungarin

- CWA 100 years celebration held in July
- CRC hosted a “Pink” month and Breast Cancer Morning Tea.
- Mangowine Concert and Harvest Festival was well attended.
- Nungarin Museum is hosting \$10 Sunday Breakfasts and will hold a November Campfire dinner.
- The Woolshed Hotel has new owners and is now open.
- The CRC is now helping the Nungarin Wheatbelt Marketing Committee in attracting stallholders and marketing.

Mt Marshall

- Currently event planning for 2025
- Monthly Community Breakfasts are well attended.
- Mt Marshall Show will be held on the 15th March 2025.

7.0 Other Business

None

8.0 Next Meeting

*The 2025 NEWTRAVEL General Meetings will be held on:
Thursday 27th February in Mukinbudin (along with Workshop from Volunteering WA)
Thursday 24th July in Bencubbin
Thursday 30th October in Koorda*

9.0 Meeting Close: 1.30pm