



Annual General Meeting Minutes

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

Opening 10.30am

Attendees:

NEWTRAVEL MEMBER

Shire of Westonia

Koorda CRC

Mukinbudin CRC

Shire of Mukinbudin

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

Stacey Geier (NEWTRAVEL Chair)

Cr. Bill Huxtable

Kim Storer

Sandie Ventris

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. Declarations of Interest

Nil

2. Membership Applications

Nil

3. 2. Previous Minutes

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

RESOLUTION:

That the Minutes of the NEWTRAVEL Annual General Meeting held in Wyalkatchem on 26th October 2023 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

Moved: Jessica McCartney Seconded: Cr. Kerry Dayman CARRIED

1.2 Business arising from previous minutes

Nil

4. Chairperson's Report

Stacey Geier verbally presented the following report:

Another year is nearly over and Newtravel has been very active in our communities in 2024. Since Newtravel's inception and the destination marketing of the wheatbelt way and self-drive trail, we have seen a significant increase in domestic, interstate, international visitor numbers and duration of stay, due to the region's promotion of rural tourism. Our Wheatbelt Way Self Drive trail meets the demand, by promoting our regional assets, natural attractions and boosting awareness of our unique features within our towns and regions. The economic and social benefits to this initiative are seen overall, the visible pride and ownership our communities have towards preserving our culture, heritage and promoting our rural lifestyle is reflected in our visitors daily. The general understanding of the importance of tourism in our region is growing, largely because of organisations such as Newtravel. The momentum generated by this group is compelling and its ability to adjust to change and work within the scope of the region's abundant opportunities and its limitations should be commended.

The Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR) - Community Impact Program supports the growth of Newtravel, by earlier in the year granting \$31,777.00, enabling Newtravel to create a new position in the Event Project Support Officer. Newtravel were able to appoint this role to Lily Hausler who has been working on strategies to assist in event planning and management support, assistance with governance and compliance requirements for events, event management, funding and marketing support. As part of this initiative, the Newtravel group were invited to attend a Q & A with Dowerin Events Management – Danielle Green brought us some insight into running a successful event and gave us invaluable ideas into fundraising and sponsorship v application for grant funding. The value in creating staged spaces for event photo ops and creating like for like hubs bringing businesses and consumers together in one space. I hope to see this project continue.

Our Tourism Officer continues to work tirelessly for our cause in the areas of Newtravel Administration, Marketing - developing 2023-24 marketing plan, campaigns, brochure distribution/reorders and securing sponsorship from Mukinbudin Community Bank of \$25,000.00 towards Marketing of the Wheatbelt Way. Website & social media with the support of Alyce Smith (Facebook and Instagram marketing) & Jess McCartney (Tik Tok reels and management), continued stakeholder communications, Maintenance and Monitoring and various supporting roles such as engaging and onboarding the Events Project Officer, engagement and consultation to deliver the bushwalking masterplan, attending various forums and meetings.

This year has brought noticeable changes to tourism in our towns, highlighting our resilience in the face of challenges posed by new concepts and shifts in the market. The closures of key

establishments such as the Trayning and Nungarin Hotels, Carrabin Roadhouse, and Mukinbudin Café initially raised significant concerns within the community. However, these venues have since been sold and reopened, and new enterprises like the Muka Hotel have emerged, diversifying their offerings to continue providing essential services to both locals and visitors.

This diversification, along with ongoing support from prominent tourism organisations in the area, is vital for stimulating our economy and ensuring that local businesses and communities not only survive but thrive. As we adapt to the evolving tourism landscape, initiatives like the introduction of EV charging stations across the region are crucial. These stations are steadily increasing in number to accommodate the growing demand for sustainable travel options, attracting a new demographic of eco-conscious visitors eager to explore what our areas have to offer. Together, these efforts position us to enhance our tourism potential and foster long-term growth.

While the strength of our natural attractions, heritage areas, museums, affinity with the rural arts, culture to draw visitors to our region is only as strong as our local communities drive to promote it. That is why it is so important for groups such as Newtravel, NEWROC, CWVC, WEROC, RoeTourism, WDC and the AGO to collaborate and be the driving force behind it all.

My sincere thanks go out to Linda, the Shires, CRC's, Information centres, businesses and volunteers who have contributed to another successful year. Your hard work and commitment have made a significant impact on our communities. I am genuinely excited about the prospect of collaborating on even more opportunities in the future. Together, we can continue to build on our successes and explore new avenues for growth and improvement. Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership!

Stacey Geier
Chair

Linda noted the passing of Wally Knott from Trayning, who was past Chairperson of NEWTRAVEL and long-time supporter of NEWTRAVEL and Wheatbelt Tourism.

5. Financial Report

North Eastern Wheatbelt Travel Association General Cheque Account

Financial Report 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2024

Bendigo Bank Cheque Account Opening Balance 1 October 2023 **\$48,670.63**

Income

Memberships	\$62,750.00
Australia's Golden Outback – Fee for Service	\$12,000.00
Grant Funding – Events Officer Project	\$31,777.00
Grant Funding – DLGSC Bushwalking Plan	\$25,000.00
Other Income – Events Officer Project	\$3,760.00
Sponsorship – Bendigo Bank	\$25,000.00
Other Income	\$1,000.00
Total Income	\$161,287.00

Expenses

App	\$1,045.00
Brochure and Guidebook Reprints	1,765.50
Consumer Shows	\$1,347.50
Content - Images	\$1,000.00
Events Officer Project	\$19,041.88
Insurance	\$593.07
Internet Marketing	\$11,440.00
Postage	\$252.88
Press Advertising	\$7,564.00
Promotional Material	\$1,512.50
Signs	\$264.00
Tourism Association Memberships	\$555.00
Tourism Officer & Support Services	\$50,724.63
Website	508.19
Total Expenses	\$97,614.15

Bendigo Bank Cheque Account Closing Balance 30 September 2024 **\$112,343.48**

Outstanding Payments **\$10,213.74**

Ending Financial Position on 30 September 2024 **\$102,129.74**

RESOLUTION:

That the Annual Financial Report as presented from 1 October 2023 – 30 September 2024 be accepted.

Moved: Cr. Sandie Ventris

Seconded: Kim Storer CARRIED

Discussion was held on:

- the need for NEWTRAVEL in 2024/25 to look registering for GST due to significant increase in income. All in agreement for this to occur.
- Registering as an ACNC for the purposes of Income Tax exemption. Linda to look into.

- NEWTRAVEL to review the Tourism Officer position over the next 12 months in regards to key responsibilities, tasks and activities and remuneration.

6. Election of Office Bearers

Stacey notified the meeting of her intent to step down as Chairperson of NEWTRAVEL. She had sent Linda a resignation letter yesterday, unfortunately due to a combination of work commitments and health she is no longer in a position to be the Chairperson.

- **Chairperson**
Jessica McCartney nominated Cr. Sandie Ventris, seconded Cr. Kerry Dayman. Accepted and elected unopposed.
- **Deputy Chairman**
Sharon Kett nominated Cr. Christy Petchell, seconded Kim Storer. Accepted and elected unopposed.
- **Administrator/Treasurer**
NEWTRAVEL appointed Linda Vernon in her role as Tourism Officer as the Administrator/Treasurer.

Cr Sandie Ventris to be added as a signatory to the NEWTRAVEL bank accounts.

7. General Business

a. Review Membership Fees for 2024-2025

Ordinary Membership – Council	\$2,000.00
Ordinary Membership – Business	\$500.00
Associate Membership – Business	\$100.00
Associate Membership – Not-For-Profit	\$50.00

b. 2024-2025 Additional Council Support

Request for additional financial support for the 2024-2025 financial year from Local Government members of:

\$3,900.00 towards the Tourism Officer & Support Services

\$500.00 towards specific Wheatbelt Way marketing activities

\$1,500.00 towards the Regional Marketing Initiatives with WEROC and RoeTourism

The above is no change from the 2023-2024 additional Council Support request.

Discussion was held around the membership fees including:

- That the Associate Membership – Business be increase \$250 and be a marketing package membership (Linda to develop).
- That Ordinary Membership – Council be increased in 2025/26 to \$2,500.
- That a 3-5 year MOU be developed with NEWTRAVEL Member Councils outlining the relationship and Council Contributions, with Ordinary Membership and Additional Council Support to increase yearly within the MOU at annual CPI rate.
- Around the Events Support Officer Project, beyond 30 June 2025.
- WDC Tourism Project proposal.

RESOLUTION:

That the 2024-2025 Membership fees be:

Ordinary Membership – Council	\$2,000.00
Ordinary Membership – Business	\$500.00
Associate Membership – Business	\$250.00

Associate Membership – Not-For-Profit \$50.00

Request for additional financial support for the 2024-2025 financial year from Local Government members of:

\$3,900.00 towards the Tourism Officer & Support Services

\$500.00 towards specific Wheatbelt Way marketing activities

\$1,500.00 towards the Regional Marketing Initiatives with WEROC and RoeTourism

\$705.00 towards the Event Support Project Officer

And that a MOU commencing 1 July 2025 be developed with NEWTRAVEL member Councils.

Moved: Jessica McCartney

Seconded: Cr. Sandie Ventris CARRIED

8. Other Business – Nil

9. Next Annual General Meeting: 30th October 2025 in Koorda.

10. AGM Close: 11.14am