



MINUTES of the Central Hunter Business Chamber AGM 2021

24th November 2021, at Branxton RSL Hall, Maitland Street, Branxton
(23 persons present)

CHBC Members Present: Michael Robinson (President, Hungerford meat Co.); Kate Walsh (Public officer); Tony Gates (Saddleback Nominees), Alan Beckley (Secretary, Branxton Lions), Brian Furner (Branxton RSL), Mike Lowing (Treasurer, The Branxton Greta Grapevine News), Helen Lowing (Branxton & Vineyards Real Estate), Tony Munce (Topaz Dynamics); Mark Stanford, Sue Howarth, Frances Finch, Peter Finch (Tidy Towns North Rothbury), Noel Lambert (Clean Protech), Andrew Williams (Medich Corporation).

Apologies: Noel Kirby & Belynda Davies (Huntlee Academy), Kath Taylor & Andrew Thomas (Taylor & Thomas); Len O'Malley (Tattersall Hotel, Greta); Jay Suvall (Cessnock City Councillor); Lyn and John Unicomb (IGA Branxton); Andrew Hughes (A-Plus Contracting).

VIP guests:

- Cllr Bob Pynsent, Mayor of Cessnock City Council – soon to retire at LGA elections
- Ms Lotta Jackson, General Manager of Cessnock City Council
- Mr. Allan Davies, President of the Cessnock Business Chamber
- Councillors: Anne Sander, John Fagg, Karen Jackson; Rod Doherty, Carol Doherty.
- Tony Chadwick, Cessnock City Council.

Time	Item
6.00 – 6.30	Registration & Acknowledgment of Guests
6.30 – 7.00	Keynote Speaker, Ms. Lotta Jackson, General Manager, Cessnock City Council
7.00 – 7.30	Invited guests to address the meeting
7.30	AGM Commences: Minutes of 2020 AGM Presentation of Annual Report from President, Michael Robinson Summary – Financial Position – Treasurer, Mike Lowing. New Constitution and proposed adoption Update on CHBC renovated website & revised Logo AGM & Election of new Management Board 2021-2022. Mix and mingle – light refreshments.

Keynote Speaker: Ms. Lotta Jackson acknowledged the traditional landowners. She said she had been in post at Cessnock City Council for two years as the General Manager. Lotta explained that the Cessnock City Council website is full of business information and listed all the



facilities they manage. There is 60,000 population in the LGA she said and the Council had a record number of Development Approvals in the last year and she went through a number of the statistics for delivery of service from the Annual Report. Lotta then talked about several documents that have been produced by the Council: The LGA Local strategic plan will assist with the growth for the area; the Urban Growth Management Plan which deals with the infrastructure; the Environmental Development Plan also contains a suite of documents; the Jobs Strategy contains a great deal of information and there are 3,000 businesses (over 50% small businesses) in Cessnock LGA. On the Investment Prospectus, Lotta showed some of the information which can be used to champion and promote the Economic Growth Agenda – which is particularly of interest to local business owners. The Agenda covers the whole infrastructure including transport, agriculture, conference facilities, air travel, etc. Lotta then answered questions about the development of Huntlee – particularly schools – and the Branxton / Greta Cycleway.

The President invited VIP Guest, Cllr Bob Pynsent, Mayor of Cessnock City Council to speak.

Bob Pynsent – Mentioned the greatest change in the local area, the Expressway. It was said: ‘Unless Branxton changes it will die’ and it has changed and shown many local developments such as Huntlee, and Greta. He said he was conscious of grant funding which is right across the LGA – not just in Cessnock City itself. He spoke about the need for more and bigger businesses in the area ‘living and working in the Cessnock LGA area’. Bob said he had loved being Mayor and interacting with the broader community. He has been on Cessnock City Council for 22 years and this current Council has been the best Council by far because of consensus within the Council and it had been an absolute honour to serve as the Mayor.

AGM Commences:

Minutes of 2020 AGM have been circulated – attendees were asked to read the Minutes and then a person who was present at that AGM to move that they are an accurate record of the 2020 AGM. **Motion:** That the Minutes of the CHBC AGM of 2020 are an accurate record of the meeting.

Mover: Noel Lambert. **Seconder:** Tony Munce. **Vote:** Motion passed

President’s Report: Presentation of Annual Report from President, Michael Robinson

Good Evening,

Well it’s time to reflect on the year we’ve had, a year that has been faced with so many different challenges for many businesses and people alike. 2021 was a year that left none of us untouched by the effects of Covid19. Whether it was on a personal or business level, we’ve all been forced to adapt to survive the new way of life. Long lockdowns, business closures, we’ve all been forced to adapt. Fortunately for some it’s been too much to get through, whilst others have thrived. Unfortunately, Covid



for the CHBC meant lockdowns, and cancellations of meetings. Despite this, we’ve still managed to achieve some very positive results for the CHBC and its members.

- Grant - \$6000 to update our website from Cessnock City Council bringing it in line with the modern chamber
- New logo for the CHBC
- Proposed new constitution – Kate our Public officer will elaborate on this
- Networking Breakfast series which were cut short due to covid
- Advance city Cessnock alliance with other local chambers.
- Alliance Business NSW

For 2022 we plan to continue this and build our membership base further, and strengthen our business community.

2022 Cessnock city council grant for 10000 community-based dinner with other local chambers

Treasurer’s Report: Summary – Financial Position

Mike Lowing, the CHBC Treasurer gave a financial summary report.

**Central Hunter Business Chamber
Financial Summary
22/11/2020 ~ 24/11/2021**

Balance as at 21/11/2020	\$1049.88 (CR)
as per pass sheet	
Expenses incurred	- \$1708.75 (DR) #
Income	+\$9200.00 (CR) ##
BALANCE AS AT 24/11/2021	\$8541.13 (CR)
as per bank pass sheet	

NOTES

#	Insurance	\$610.42
	Web M & R	\$362.10
	Hall Hire AGM	\$41.25
	Directors Expense	\$39.10
	Web Design GRANT	<u>\$655.88</u>
		\$1708.75
##	Member Subs	\$3200.00
	CCC Grant	<u>\$6000.00</u>
		\$9200.00

AVAILABLE FUNDS

Cash at Bank	\$8541.13
Balance Web Development Grant	<u>\$5344.12</u>
Available Funds	\$3197.01

Motion: That the Financial Summary report for the CHBC is an accurate record of the financial situation.

Mover: Tony Munce. **Seconder:** Tony Gates. **Vote:** Motion passed



New Constitution – The President announced that there will be a postal / email vote in the near future for the Members of the Chamber to adopt the new Constitution. A minimum of 75% of the Members must vote to adopt the new Constitution as it has been raised as a Special Resolution. Public Officer Kate Walsh gave an explanation as to why the new Constitution was needed and some of its finer points.

Update on CHBC renovated website & revised Logo: The President gave an update on the progress of the CHBC new website and the revised logo. There were several comments of support for this project.

Chamber Management Board Elections - the situation of the Register prior to the AGM:

CHBC: Register of Management Board Members 2020 to 2021			
Name	Date of Appointment	Resigned	Position
Michael Robinson	25 November 2020		President
Mike Lowing	25 November 2020		Treasurer
Alan Beckley	25 November 2020		Secretary
Kate Walsh	25 November 2020		Public Officer
Noel Lambert	25 November 2020		
Tony Gates	25 November 2020		
Alix Merrick	25 November 2020	23 July 2021	
Stuart Ramsay	25 November 2020	23 July 2021	

Election for President – The President stood down and Mike Lowing (Treasurer) acted in the capacity of Vice-President. The Secretary stated that no other nominations were received for the position of President and, as Michael Robinson was prepared to stand again, Mike Lowing declared that Michael Robinson was elected un-opposed as President for a further year.

Treasurer: The President asked for nominations for Treasurer. Mike Lowing had agreed to stand again and the Secretary stated that there were no other nominations. The President announced that, in that situation, Mike Lowing had been elected unopposed.

Secretary: The current Secretary had announced that he would standing down. It was stated that Mr. Len O’Malley, of the Tattersall Hotel, Greta had applied to become a member of the Central Hunter Business Chamber and to stand as Secretary.

Motion: That Mr. Len O’Malley be appointed as the Secretary of CHBC.

Mover: Tony Gates. **Seconder:** Helen Lowing. **Vote:** Motion Passed



Public Officer: The President announced that the next position was for Public Officer of CHBC. The current Public Officer, Kate Walsh indicated that she was prepared to stand again in that role. The Secretary stated that no nominations had been received for that position. The President announced that, in that case, Kate Walsh was elected un-opposed to the position of Public Officer.

Other members of the Management Board: The President asked the two members of the management board if they would be prepared to stand again: Tony Gates, and Noel Lambert. The Secretary announced that there were no other nominations for management board positions. Noel Lambert declined, for business reasons, to stand again but his business would remain a Chamber member. Tony Gates said that he was prepared to stand again. Mike Lowing also reminded the meeting that Helen Lowing had been appointed (Management Board meeting 20 October 2021) as the Membership Manager for the CHBC and proposed that she should be appointed to the Management Board.

Motion: That Mr. Tony Gates should remain a member of the Management Board of CHBC and that Ms Helen Lowing as Membership Manager should be appointed to the CHBC Management Board.

Mover: Tony Munce. **Seconder:** Michael Robinson. **Vote:** Motion Passed.

Chamber Management Board Elections - the situation of the Register AFTER the 2021 AGM:

CHBC: Register of Management Board Members 2021 to 2022			
Name	Date of Appointment	Resigned	Position
Michael Robinson	25 November 2020		President
Mike Lowing	25 November 2020		Treasurer
Alan Beckley	25 November 2020	24 November 2021	Secretary
Kate Walsh	25 November 2020		Public Officer
Noel Lambert	25 November 2020	24 November 2021	
Tony Gates	25 November 2020		
Len O'Malley	24 November 2021		Secretary
Helen Lowing	24 November 2021		Membership Manager

ACTION: The Public Officer to inform NSW Fair Trading Department of the new membership of the CHBC Management Board.

Any Other Business: The President invited Mr. Tony Chadwick of Cessnock City Council, to speak.

Tony Chadwick thanked everyone – and gave some updates, particularly on the:



- **Industry Networking event** which the Council is donating \$10k to hold business development workshops and will be available in Branxton in May next year.
 - **Branxton RV Park:** Tony said that the 'Expression of Interest' process has been carried out and was now closed. The result of that process will be taken to Council in the New year.
 - **Accommodation business** – there is a competition for 'staycations' and entrants can win prizes.
 - **Branxton Greta Cycleway:** The Council have funding for the cycle track, but the memorial side is not funded yet. There will be an application submitted for funding for the first memorial of 130k for the first stage. Tony gave the future for joining up the cycleway to surrounding areas.
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AGM concluded at 7.28pm.

SIGNED as a true record of the meeting:

President:

Secretary:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan Beckley". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Date: 24 November 2021