



WAIRARAPA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

10 O'CLOCK COOKIE BAKERY CAFÉ, QUEEN STREET, MASTERTON

27 NOVEMBER 2023, 5.30PM

Present: Marie-Claire Andrews (Chair), Rob Thomas (SWDC); Warwick Dean (Designer Court); Jenni Hall (Y2WW); Blair Rooney (Enable Digital); Lisa Pallister (Evolution Accounts); Monique Kloeg (TenCC); Anna Cronin (Cycling Tom); Lisa Portas (Palliser Ridge); Wendy Morrison (Tranzit); Karl Burling (JNL); Teresa McClymont (Wairarapa Waste Water); Julie Millar (Gibson Sheat); Bernard McLeary (Shelter Masterton); Trish Wilkinson (First Health); Kay Leather and Richar Hall (Stonehenge Aotearoa); Mike Butterick (MP for Wairarapa); Gary Caffell (Mayor - MDC); Matt Steele (MDC); Jen Butler (Absolute Gems); Chris Blunden; Yasasi Gunarathne.

Nicola Belsham - GM

Meeting Opened at 5.35 pm

The Chair welcomed all and acknowledged the Life Members in the room - Wendy Morrison and Julie Millar.

1. Apologies

Nicola Morris (Martinborough Business Assoc); Josie Askin (Go Carterton); Anna Nielson (Destination Wairarapa); Simon Fletcher (Spark Business Hub Wairarapa); Donna McQuaid (Blackthorn); Kiri Elworthy (Tora Coastal Walk); Julian Moss (Masterton Self-Storage); Robin Dunlop (Llandaff); Vernetta Roberts (Maori in Business Wairarapa); Pamela Fieretag (Wai Shuttles); Dawie van Graan (Westpac); Tess Mills (Urlar); Bex Johnston (MDC); Christine Brewster (MTLT).

2. Acceptance of Minutes of previous AGM (24 November 2022)

Moved - Angela Moylan

Second - Wendy Morrison

3. Presentation & acceptance of the Chair's Annual Review

Appendix #1 Read by Marie-Claire Andrews

Key points:

- A transformative year - successfully expanded representation - Featherston Business Engine and Tupu Ana Business Masterton coming within the umbrella.
- The power of a collective database was witnessed by the Hood Survey - resulting in a genuine representation of the Wairarapa business community.
- MONOPOLY - Wairarapa Edition - a project not just about sponsorship, but supporting the pride in Wairarapa - the board will look reprinting in 2025, as this is a project that provides resilience.
- 2024 flagship events were resounding successes.
- Special acknowledgement to Spark Business Hub Wairarapa, Mediaworks, WellingtonNZ, Wairarapa Times-Age and the three District Councils.
- The Chair made special acknowledgment to the Business Wairarapa leadership team - for rolling their sleeves up to dive into the tactical.

2025 - Big goals and big ideas include:

- Tangible impact on the business community.
- Elevation of the region's profile.
- Cross-sector representation, capability and profile.
- Leadership - support aligned to Economic Development activity - delivering business services.
- Building on our influence - stronger voice in political discussion.
- Thriving - internal goal as a fully resourced entity with longevity,

Acceptance of Chair's Report:

- Moved - Karl Burling
- Seconded - Kay Leather

4. Presentation of the Annual Financial Statements

Acting Treasurer Lisa Pallister - presented the Draft Financial Report

5. Financial Review Discussion

Lisa advised that since being appointed as Acting Treasurer (April 2024) she has picked up on some accounting discrepancies that explain a loss of \$69,741 for 2024 compared to a profit of \$111,246 for 2023:

- \$100K of Grant funding MPI in 2023 - 30K should have been held as revenue in advance for the 2024 year - bringing loss to 34K
- WaiHost grant of \$10K in 2023 - should have been recognised as revenue in advance for 2024 - bringing loss to under \$25k
- 71K of revenue should have been left in 2022
- Noting the above, the 2023 balance would have been a loss of \$5K and 2024 would be a loss of \$24K

Lisa added that all Monopoly income and expenses are to be recognised in 2024-25 year.

As the 2023 accounts were not reviewed - the question was asked if a review is to be carried out on the 2024 financials at a cost of \$2500 + GST

- Jen Butler - asked if possible to have a five-year high-level history to trend against.
- Chair advised that as Business Wairarapa no longer operates based on member revenue, it will be 2024 that will provide a baseline moving forward.
- Wendy Morrison moved Sellar & Sellar to review the current draft 2024 Financials and to confirm Lisa's findings - perhaps look at bi-annual going forward
- Seconded by Jen Butler.
- Lisa advised Sellar & Sellar are no longer doing reviews and audits, but recommend Adrienne Dempsey (Audit Plus).
- Unanimously agreed.

6. Movement to amend the Business Wairarapa Incorporated Societies Constitution to increase the number of Officers from 6 to a maximum of 15

The Chair advised that when Business Wairarapa Incorporated Societies Constitution was updated, the recommendation was to have a maximum of 6 officers - however, as the organisation has expanded, we need diversity in thought that is not limited to the represented members only.

Amending the Constitution to increase the number of Officers to a maximum of 15, would allow the space to include independent voices and ensure that Business Wairarapa governs appropriately.

- Kay Leather asked how the representatives are chosen.
- The Chair explained that each sub-regional association chose their representative to the Business Wairarapa Board.
- Marie-Claire Andrews (Chair) moved to amend the Constitution to increase the number of Officers to a maximum of 15.
- Seconded - Wendy Morrison.

7. Board Appointments

The resigning Board members were acknowledged:

- Angela Moylan (Deputy Chair) - as driving force to move Tupu Ana forward had been a leader on the Board.
- Monique Kloeg - who had been on the board for many years, and bringing much flavour and connection.

The following Nominations were put forward (**Appendix #2**)

- Brent Gare - community
- Tessa O'Rorke - management expertise, new tourism business
- Brian Ashton - senior management consultant for large corporations

The following current Board members put themselves forward for re-election:

- Marie-Claire Andrews - CHAIR
- Lisa Pallister - Acting Treasurer
- Josie Askin - Representative Go Carterton
- Benn Milne - Representative Featherston Business Engine
- Nicola Morris - Representative Martinborough Business Assoc
- Anna Nielson - Representative Destination Wairarapa
- Vernetta Roberts - Representative Maori in Business Wairarapa
- Karl Burling
- Blair Rooney

All Nominated and re-standing Board Members were unanimously approved.

8. Any Agenda items / Motions so received

No motions were received.

9. General Business

The Draw of \$500 Air New Zealand flight dollars was won by Trish Wilkinson (First Health)

Meeting closed 6.35 pm

Appendix #1 - Chair Report 2024

Chair's Report: Business Wairarapa - Annual Review 2024

2024 has been a transformative year for Business Wairarapa.

We successfully expanded our regional representation by welcoming Featherston Business Engine and Tupa Ana Business Masterton, boosting our database and strengthening our influence. The sub-regional groups - Martinborough Business Association and Go Carterton, have seen increased memberships and high attendance at events like Business After 5.

Our collective business database proved its value with the Hood Aerodrome Survey, engaging 700 participants to gather crucial insights on a potential Auckland return flight service. This initiative underscores the power of our reach and its benefits to local councils and stakeholders.

In 2024, we hosted 40 training and networking events, including the ongoing WaiHost soft-skills training, which benefited over 100 attendees from diverse sectors and we launched a digital capability program supporting 50 SMEs. Additionally, we have facilitated one-to-some co-funded workshops in leadership, communication skills, and governance.

Our commitment to supporting the SME community continues with our 0800 Helpline, offering free HR and employment legal advice.

A highlight of the year was the MONOPOLY - Wairarapa Edition project, which engaged over 60 businesses and showcased Wairarapa globally while generating revenue for Business Wairarapa.

Our flagship events were also a resounding success. The Wairarapa Business Summit drew a full house of 240 attendees who gained valuable insights from speakers like Nadia Lim and Brad Olsen; and the Business Awards celebrated a record number of entries with a sold-out crowd of 330 participants.

These accomplishments are made possible by the unwavering support of our key partners, including Spark Business Hub Wairarapa, Mediaworks/More FM Wairarapa 89.5, WellingtonNZ, Wairarapa Times-Age, the councils and our esteemed Summit and Awards sponsors.

Also had a vibrant and engaged leadership team - volunteer board members who aren't afraid of robust strategic discussions or doing what needs to be done, and rolling up their sleeves. Monique and Angela we'll miss you!

Looking Ahead to 2025, we aim to have a tangible impact on Wairarapa's economic development, elevating the region's profile with a strong voice in local and national conversations.

Appendix #2 - Board Nominations 2024

BRENT GARE

Brent is a well-connected, well-respected member of the Wairarapa business community. He serves that community and the wider region through his advocacy in his day job, his sports coaching, and multiple governance positions. He will bring fresh ideas, influence and connection to new sections of our community and for these reasons, will be a valuable member of the Business Wairarapa Board.

TESSA O’RORKE

Tessa is a dynamic and driven leader with a unique combination of strategic, digital, technology, data driven marketing & commercial expertise. Throughout her career, she has had the privilege of working with some of the biggest names in various industries, including banking, global QSR, and telecommunications, and has earned the trust of boards, CEOs, and senior leaders.

Her unwavering commitment to excellence and customer focus has seen her hold various senior and executive level roles including Chief Customer and Chief Revenue officer. As the lead judge for Excellence in Customer Service for the Auckland Business Awards, she is dedicated to delivering exceptional customer experiences and improving commercial processes.

Beyond her professional achievements, Tessa also had the privilege of leading an anti-human trafficking NGO in northern Thailand. This experience has given her a deep appreciation for the complexities of the human race and taught her invaluable lessons about listening, humility and leading from the heart. She brings her unique perspectives on leadership and the human experience to every engagement; whether it's addressing a board of directors, inspiring a team, driving donations or coaching an individual.

BRIAN ASHTON

I have spent a few decades now working across the private and public sector in a consulting and leadership capacity. The early part of my career focused heavily on driving commercial profitability in both New Zealand and then Australia media and manufacturing companies. In more recent years, I have been working as a senior consultant with organisations like Meridian, NZ Police, MPI, and Workbridge Holdings; in addition, I also provide support to a few small businesses based in Wellington.

My background includes leading complex, time-critical, large-scale initiatives across both public and private sectors, with particular expertise in:

- Developing and implementing strategic transformation programs that deliver measurable results
- Creating sustainable business models that balance growth with operational efficiency
- Managing large-scale infrastructure and technology projects
- Building collaborative frameworks across diverse stakeholder groups
- Strategic business road mapping

Of potential relevance to the Wairarapa's needs, I have:

- Led major operational improvement programs in manufacturing environments
- Developed comprehensive business improvement strategies that enhanced organisational resilience
- Successfully managed complex government initiatives requiring careful stakeholder management
- Created and implemented financial and productivity models for sustainable growth

I have been living in the Wairarapa permanently now for about 4 years, and it has led me to reflect on the economic future of the region. There is little to suggest that the tough times for the regions are going to come to an end soon. I am certainly interested in exploring how I might be able to contribute to supporting and sustaining the region but also how we can position it for growth in the future. There is no doubt that smaller businesses need to be encouraged and supported, particularly with some tricky economic conditions to navigate. Often the constraints for businesses are bureaucracy, unlocking access to capital, and access to expertise.