



Executive Committee Meeting - MINUTES

Date: 8th July 2026

Time/Location: 5.30pm – Apple & Grape Festival Office

Attendees

Michelle Feenan – President (Chair)

Belinda Surch

Bronwyn Armstrong

Fiona Patti

Samantha Wantling

Samara Cassidy – Admin Support

Invited Guests

Shane Sykes – SDRC

Russel Wantling - SDRC

Apologies

Cecilia Campbell

Trudy Turner

MINUTES:

Item #	Item name	Responsibility
1.	Welcome Conflicts of Interest: - Michelle – Ridgemill Estates interest in being a location for a potential EV charger. - Belinda – Show Queen fundraising at the July small business event. Thank you to outgoing committee members: Aline Teixeira - We'd like to extend our sincere thanks to Aline for her outstanding work with the Chamber. In a short time, she delivered a series of high-impact projects, effectively doing the job in half the expected time. Her ideas for engaging members have already produced real, visible results, and her deep commitment to contributing to the Granite Belt community has been clear from day one. Although she is moving on to new opportunities, we're grateful she remains connected to the region and hope to welcome her back to the committee in future. Nicci Goulter - We also want to formally thank Nicci for her significant contribution as Secretary and as a continuing member of the committee. Nicci brought a wealth of knowledge, strong governance experience, and a highly organised, structured approach that helped shape many of the systems we rely on today. Even after stepping down from the Secretary role, she	Michelle



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	has continued to be a great asset to the Chamber, including volunteering on the Business Excellence Awards working group. We are very grateful for her dedication and ongoing support.	
2.	SDRC Update - Council's Corporate Plan and Operational Plan have been adopted and launched. - Development of the Tourism Strategy is progressing and is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Council has also approved updates to the Economic Development Strategy and development of a Retail Strategy, with industry consultation to be undertaken. - Council advised that a new Industry Development Officer will commence in August, with recruitment for a Senior Tourism Officer to commence shortly. - EV tourism opportunity: Council is working with a provider to install 5–6 fully funded Type 2 “destination” EV chargers at Granite Belt tourism sites (host pays 5 years’ maintenance and power, approx. \$2/hr per car, with co-marketing and proven uplift in on site spending from other regions). - Wider EV charging network: Council is facilitating (not funding) additional EV chargers through private providers, including CBD style sites and destination sites (e.g. potential Killarney location, ongoing efforts near the VIC). - Work continues to establish a Southern Downs Manufacturing Sub-Hub, strengthening collaboration between local manufacturers and supporting business growth.	Shane Sykes
3.	Matters for Discussion A. <u>Action Plan</u> - Michelle presented the Chamber Action Plan, based on the organisation's constitutional objects, as a framework for guiding committee priorities and decision-making. - The committee agreed the Action Plan should remain in meeting packs and be used to ensure activities and initiatives align with the Chamber's core purpose. - Members were encouraged to reference the relevant focus area when presenting reports, proposals and new initiatives. - The committee also agreed to consider aligning focus groups and subcommittees with the Action Plan objectives.	Michelle



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	B. <u>SDRC Strategic Industry Association Funding</u> - Michelle provided an update on the Strategic Industry Association Fund (\$50,000 per year for three years) and advised that the funding guidelines had been circulated to the committee. - A working group meeting is scheduled to develop the Chamber's application, with committee members invited to submit project ideas in advance. - The application will align with the Chamber's Action Plan and focus on initiatives that support advocacy, business capability, member engagement and regional economic development. - Michelle will finalise and submit the application following the working group meeting.	Michelle
	C. <u>BEA Budget Update</u> - The event remains in a positive financial position, although several costs continue to increase. - Marketing and production expenses are being closely monitored, with opportunities identified to reduce non-essential expenditure. - Sponsorship discussions are ongoing, with follow-up actions allocated to progress outstanding opportunities. - Ticket sales were identified as the key priority to ensure the event's financial success, and committee members were encouraged to actively promote attendance. - Entry numbers were tracking well, with further nominations anticipated. - Additional promotional activities, including media releases, EDMs and social media, will continue to support ticket sales and event awareness.	Michelle/Nicci
	D. <u>Minister Steve Minnikin Breakfast – 16 July</u> - The Chamber has promoted the event through EDMs and social media, with James Lister's office coordinating invitations and event delivery. - The committee noted the importance of raising issues relating to small business support, grants, start-ups and regional business growth. - Michelle has a presentation prepared.	Michelle
	E. <u>Event Calendar</u> - July 22nd – Small Business Event - A range of support organisations and speakers have been confirmed, with additional promotion to continue through Council, industry groups and local media.	



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	○ Currently there is a slow uptake from members to attend. ○ Belinda and Fiona will contact Chamber members directly to encourage attendance. Samara to send all details to Belinda, Fiona, Shane Sykes, Samantha. Also share details to GBGA and socials. ○ The Chamber will provide drinks, with fundraising catering to be explored through the Show Queen committee. • The "Just a Farmer" movie event has been deferred until warmer weather to maximise attendance. • The Chamber Cheers & Chats event will be rescheduled to avoid clashing with the Business Excellence Awards, with alternative dates and formats to be considered. • The committee reaffirmed its commitment to delivering monthly networking and engagement events, with ongoing review of timing and format to maximise participation and member value. F. <u>Engaging with Trades and Services – proposed meeting</u> • Chamber will host a dedicated networking event for trades and services businesses to better understand the sector's challenges and strengthen Chamber engagement. • It was agreed the event should be an informal networking session in a venue suited to the target audience. • Russell will work with Michelle to identify a suitable venue and develop a list of key trades businesses to invite. • The event aims to increase Chamber engagement with the trades sector and improve advocacy for their needs.	Michelle
4.	Matters for Decision A. Minutes of executive meeting 10th June 2026 Motion: Adopt minutes as presented. Moved: Michelle, Second: Bronwyn Carried Motion: Upload minutes to website Moved: Michelle, Second: Belinda Carried B. Financial Report Current balances as at 30/06: • Working A/c - \$27,192.85 • Big Thermometer A/c - \$12,901.70 • Debit Card A/c - \$224.47 • Sandhurst Managed Fund A/c - \$34,217.03	Samara Samara Fiona



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	- A year-end surplus of approximately \$6,000, subject to final reconciliation in Xero. Motion: Adopt finance report as presented. Moved: Fiona, Second: Samantha Carried C. Weathermation Live – Big Thermometer renewal - Chamber has a quote for renewal of services to manage the tech side of the thermometer (weather station, monitoring, maintenance). - Committee agreed in principle to accept the quote, with a follow-up question to clarify what the “annual subscription including 200 SMS” actually means. Motion: Accept renewal quote. Moved: Michelle, Second: Bronwyn Carried	
5.	Action Log Action #9: Samantha to complete letters this week, will also include one to congratulate Norm Crisp on his retirement. Action #4: Bush Christmas - Bush Christmas should be delivered as a collaborative community event, with shared planning and clear governance. - The Chamber will retain responsibility for grant funding, insurance and approvals, with all funding proposals to be referred to the committee for approval. - A broad range of community groups, including Rotary, Lions, GBSS, the Neighbourhood Centre, Council, the Stanthorpe Choir and local traders, will be invited to participate. - Belinda and Samantha will lead the planning process and convene the initial planning meeting to gather ideas, identify partner roles and establish a regular meeting schedule. - Michelle will attend the initial meeting to outline the Chamber's governance responsibilities and support the planning process.	All
6.	Matters For Information A. Presidents Report Taken as read B. Correspondence Register Correspondence register was tabled and taken as read. Process noted: items requiring attention are either:	Various



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	Pulled out and added to the agenda or actioned directly by the appropriate person. Some things of note included: • Positive feedback on the recent Psychological Safety workshop, noting strong attendee engagement and value. Participants enjoyed and want more in-depth, practical workshops tailored to specific industries. • Future topics identified included succession planning, business development and the practical application of AI in business. • Michelle and Nara Consultancy will develop a proposed workshop program for the committee's consideration, with opportunities to incorporate the training into future funding applications. C. Sub Committees 1. Events: • Belinda has offered to lead for the rest of the year. • Future events will focus on member businesses, with an emphasis on behind-the-scenes visits and showcasing a broader range of industries, including trades, manufacturing and other non-tourism sectors. • The committee will support Belinda in identifying suitable host businesses and developing the events program. 2. Membership: • Michelle will take this portfolio for now. 3. Economic Development Why Leave Town: • In progress • Visitor Information Centre will be a load up store. 4. Strategic Partnerships Report taken as read. 5. Working Groups: Fundraising: • Heritage Bank – Support for specific, small-scale projects; and partnered volunteering and community involvement. BEA: • Promotions now focused on Gala event – 28 August. • Trophies are ordered, waiting for design concept for approval.	



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	SCRIP: No recent meetings. Minutes of previous meeting were circulated.	
7.	New Business Decorative Lighting, Banners & Power Poles - The committee discussed opportunities to enhance the main street through decorative lighting and event banners using existing power pole infrastructure. - Russell provided an update on the existing banner bracket system, including design improvements to meet current safety and wind-loading requirements. - The committee agreed there is potential to use the infrastructure for seasonal and event branding, subject to technical, regulatory and funding requirements. - A staged banner and lighting project will be explored, including potential grant funding opportunities. - Russell will continue to provide technical advice, with the matter to be brought back to a future meeting for further consideration.	Michelle
8.	Close meeting- Next meeting: 12 August 2026 – 5.30pm Apple & Grape Festival Office	Samara