

TCA GENERAL MEETING MINUTES **[CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENT]**

Date: 22 Sept 2021

Location: Alice Springs Turf Club

General Meeting commenced at 6.01pm

1. Welcome and Apologies – Chair

Present: As per attendees register

Apologies: As per apologies register

Chairperson: Patrick Bedford

Welcome by the Chair, Patrick Bedford, who acknowledged the traditional owners of the land, and thanked all our members for attending this General Meeting. Patrick also welcomed all members watching via the Zoom link.

The Chair recognised and welcomed:

- All our Life Members and
- Staff members

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting – 23 June 2021

MOTION: That the minutes of the General Meeting held on the 23 June 2021 be accepted as a true and correct record, subject to the changes noted.

Moved: Steve Shearer

Seconded: Raelene Ohlson

CARRIED

3. Finance & Treasurer's Report

TCA's Treasurer Jodie Summers acknowledged Rebecca Mai former Corporate Services Manager and Finance Manager who left TCA after six years of service recently.

Over the last three month the organisation has seen a significant impact to our income due to Covid-19 hotspot declarations causing domestic travelers to cancel or postpone their plans.

Jodie presented the financial update, key items included:

Key Financial Highlights YTD

- Commissions on VIC sales were 50 % over budget in June, however this is fallen to over 30% below budget for July and August.
- With another voucher round about to begin and strong interest in the region for 20/21 we expect commissions on VIC sales to increase bringing us in line with budget over the coming month.
- Commercial revenue, and in particular revenue from the Battery Hill mine tour and retail are currently exceeding budget. This is resulting in a strong surplus and increase in untied funds of \$46,000 for the first two month of this FY.
- As you know we have received many grants for the operation of our Visitor Centres along with our industry support programs and regional marketing these have been expended as per the budget.
- The marketing team will be working on several projects to the beginning to increase the spend of Austrade funding. These include the drive campaign and Mates Rates campaign as well others into the new year
- Our industry support team also have a project progressing over the next few month – the financial literacy program which will draw down on the grant funding over the next few years.
- The museums grant for Tennant Creek will be in fully expended by the end of September.

MOTION: That the Financial Report be accepted as a true and correct record.

Moved: Karl Bajzik

Seconded: Raelene Ohlson

CARRIED

4. Chair's Update

The Chair thanked the host of the event Alice Springs Turf Club on behalf of TCA and invited Raelene Ohlson to address the meeting.

- Raelene Ohlson Chief Executive, Sales, Marketing & Hospitality on behalf of Tom Slattery and herself welcomed all attendees to the venue. Raelene gave an update of current happenings and activities at the Turf Club.

Patrick Bedford presented the Chairperson's update, key items included:

- Ongoing, weekly meetings around the Austrade funding and the Mates Rates
- Meetings held with CLC Les Turner around support for the Mereenie Loop Road to be sealed - working together and moving forward.
- Update received from Louise McCormick the NT Infrastructure Commissioner - their first meeting with the Infrastructure Commissioner has been held. They also have open discussions with the Federal Government around opportunities for funding around the Mereenie Loop getting sealed.

- Meetings have been held with Warren Snowdon. Around where the state of the industry is and around support needed moving forward as well as items of priority with the Federal election
- Joint meetings held with TNT and Tourism Top End around the current challenging situation in Central Australia impacting on operators and businesses given the decline in visitation to the region.
- Meetings held with Chamber of Commerce, TNT, Hospitality NT, Major Business Group in Alice Springs and Darwin around the Government's proposed new traffic lights system regarding the management of Covid-19.
- TCA has held meetings in early August with the Chief Minister, Minister Natasha Fyles and Minister for Employment Paul Kirby in Darwin to discuss staff retention support, hardship survival fund support, education events funding and around Mereenie Loop sealing. Three weeks after these meetings there was the \$12.5 million joint federal funding and NTG funding which was announced.
- The Chair strongly recommended that businesses who haven't applied for the grant should do so to show that businesses across Central Australia really do need that money right now. It's important point to so as to support ongoing future funding from the Government.
- TCA spoke with Minister Fyles on the phone discussing about the future of the industry and keeping businesses afloat.

The Chair opened the floor for discussion to sharing thoughts on the industry and where we are at.

- Nick Ruch encouraged everyone to call asking for support. Nick also mentioned to reach out to the TCA membership and industry support team James and Meg.

5. CEO's Update

CEO Danial Rochford presented the TCA Operations update, key items included:

Positives:

- A very strong message from the G'Day Group and the Discovery Parks Group in terms of their acquisitions here in Central Australia. They have announced Kings Canyon and the \$15 million being put into that property, the \$12 million be put into the Glen Helen property and great whisper about other acquisitions applied locally which will surely be revealed in the fulness of time. Despite the many challenges it's great to see that the G'Day Group see a robust future here in Central Australia.

Challenges:

- The CEO acknowledged the enormous challenges that our industry is facing and assured the meeting that TCA is relentlessly advocating on the members behalf to bring the awareness of our situation to the light of decision makers and politicians. TCA will continue that effort on the members behalf.

- TCA is very open and frank in the media in the last few weeks in terms of our observations around the introduction of the Covid pathway forward by the Northern Territory Government.
- TCA will be unwavering in terms of our call to support and to have our members back to try and get funding through to get to the other side.
- The CEO also acknowledged the Chairs' and Nicks' previous comment that there is support out there and if members haven't taken advantage of it yet – they are encouraged to reach out.

1. Advocacy

- **Tourism Voucher Program** – TCA lead a very strong advocacy message to Government that there should be sanctioned levels of funds for Central Australia. The CEO informed that the last three voucher rounds have essentially delivered \$27 million into the pockets of Top End Tourism operators versus just 3 million for Central Australian operators. TCA have called that out to Government in terms of inequity and the unbalanced nature of that program. TCA will certainly be very keen to ensure that we keep a vocal voice on the topic.
- **Mereenie Loop** – TCA is starting to get some traction. The CEO mentioned that on the day of this meeting a major debate took place about Alice Springs in the Northern Territory Parliament. The Mereenie Loop has been mentioned as a critical gamechanger for the tourism industry in our great region.

2. Marketing

- The CEO acknowledged the continuing discussion around the National Aboriginal Art Gallery.
- The critical message now is: Let's get under way. Let's get this going. The time for talk is over. The time for action is now.
- **Vouchers campaign** – The CEO acknowledges the work that we've been doing in terms of the preparation for Round 4 of the voucher program. TCA is taking a very proactive stand in getting prepared in partnership with all our members. Throughout our collective efforts we try to get as much money of the voucher funds threw into Central Australia in this round.
- The CEO thanked the TCA team for all the work they've been doing in the background.
- **Mates Rates campaign** - was one of the very first national marketing campaigns TCA has launched in recent times. That campaign has gone straight into the Sydney lockdown and Victorian lockdown and then all the hotspots in between. TCA has been facing enormous challenges with the downturn in consumer confidence with this campaign but the organisation is working with our partner to turn markets on and turn them off to make sure that we are not wasting important Government and public monies.
- **Summer on Sale campaign** has been announced by the Government through Tourism Northern Territory that will kick off on the 1st of October and run over the summer period.

- TCA is currently working strongly on a partnership with all the Royal Automobile Societies around the nation. This is almost a half a million-dollar campaign funded through the federal Austrade funds to work in collaboration with all the main RAS to get the message out about coming for a drive holiday here in Central Australia in 2022. There are 7 million members of Drive Associations in Australia.
- Also, TCA is currently working with our funding partners to look at the potential of generating some charter flights into Central Australia

3. Industry Support

- The CEO on behalf of Tourism Central Australia warmly welcomed all new TCA members.
- TCA and the Membership and Industry Development Team members Meg and James have been working in partnership with Tourism Northern Territory's Business Enterprise Program and Industry Support Team to roll out the Business Enterprise Program.
- The CEO acknowledges Nick from a Tourism NT and Meg and James who are there to provide business advise, business support and to work with our members on a one to one basis.
- Financial Fitness Program is available to members providing five hours of free financial advice through a professional accountant.

Danial acknowledged and thanked all the staff at TCA and acknowledged three new staff members:

- Merrilyn Spencer - Finance Manager
- Georgia Tidey - Marketing Coordinator
- Karl Herzog - Manager BH Mining Centre and VIC Tennant Creek

6. New Members Update

The CEO tabled the new members:

- TCA has currently a total number of around 450 member businesses, organisations.
- The Chairperson warmly welcomed all new members.

New Members

- Alice Holiday Tours
- Alice Riverside Apartments
- Wild Women Journeys
- Red Centre Café
- Rocky's Pizza & Fat Kebab
- Lasseters Health Club
- Woks Up
- Manta Bus
- Rainbow Valley Cultural Tours
- Kunawarritji Aboriginal Corporation
- Jajjikari Café
- Tourism Holdings Limited (Britz Campervan Rentals + Maui Motorhome Rentals)

- 100% Adventure
- E-Torque NT
- Red Spaces Cultural Tours
- Safari Lodge Motel
- Sporties Club Inc Tennant Creek
- Back to the Track
- Akeyulerre Healing Centre/Arrernte Living Culture Centre
- 8CCC Cafe
- The Coffee Horse
- OnCountry Two Way Learning
- Rawley van Haren
- Blue Desert Star Productions
- Cool Blue Kangaroo
- Lhere Artepe IGA Supermarkets (Northside, Eastside, Flynn Drive)
- Barrow Creek Hotel
- Lombarde Builders Pty Ltd
- Tobermorey Station Roadhouse & Caravan Park
- Autopia Tours
- Holidays of Australia & the World
- Kingfisher Tours Pty Ltd
- John Batman Group
- Outback at Isa
- The Alice Springs Steiner School

7. Guest Speaker – Tracy Puklowski – Senior Director, National Aboriginal Art Gallery

- The Chair informed that the NT Civil and Administrative Tribunal have released their statement on the land acquisition process of a National Aboriginal Art Gallery recently.
- The Chair welcomed guest speaker Tracy Puklowski who is the new Senior Director of the National Aboriginal Art Gallery
- Tracy spoke to a power point presentation and provided an overview of the project and some updates.

8. NT Parks & Wildlife Masterplan Presentation and Discussion

- The Chair informed that TCA is putting forward submission to the Masterplan request. The Masterplan is a critical document in shaping the future of national parks in moving forward
- The Chair welcomed Dr. Aggie Wegner who is the Senior Director Commercial and Community Partnerships NT Parks and Wildlife who gave an overview of the process of the 30 years Masterplan.
- The Chair encouraged all members to write down their thoughts, ideas and comments on the sheet provided.
- Draft has been distributed – close date 15th October 2021

9. Member Presentations

i) 100% Adventure

- The Chair warmly welcomed Cam James to the stage who is the Director of 100% Adventure.
- Cam gave an overview about the business.

ii) Centenary of the First Flight

- The Chair warmly welcomed Franca Frederiksen and Alex Nelson from the Aviation Museum.
- Franca and Alex talked about the history and gave an overview of the event.

iii) Bindi Enterprises

- The Chair warmly welcomed speaker Annette Coleman who is the Business Development Specialist at Bindi Enterprises.
- Annette gave an overview about Bindi Enterprises and provided some insights behind the gallery around services and workshops.

10. General Business

i) Railway fence

Steve Shearer raised concerns regarding the Railway Fence. The CEO indicated that on that day a tender was announced by DIPL for the work, but TCA would follow this up.

ii) Signs in and around Alice Springs

Steve raised several issues and concerns regarding a variety of signs in the region such as:

- Central Road and Tanami Road – no welcome to the Northern Territory sign
- Parrtjima Sign – this sign needs updating and is out of date
- Red Centre Way signs – graffiti and that they are faded
- Binns track - signs to be audited
- Sign 'Welcome to Alice Springs' on the North path of the highway – there is unsafe vehicle access

iii) Other issues

Steve Shearer also raised the following points

- Feral trolleys
- Locals are parking all day taking away visitors parking opportunities
- TCA location review
- The need for better Caravan/trailer parking

- Brendan Heenan informed the meeting that there is an app available called 'NeatStreets' which can be used for online reporting of graffiti and shopping trolleys.
- Nicole from Tourism NT Sector and Distribution Development encouraged TCA members to approach her and Valerie to talk about the various support grants
- Nicole informed that Tamara's contract is coming to an end and transition to Studying NT is starting now to integrate a domestic and international education focus of tourism and share ideas and concepts.
- The Chair acknowledged and thanked Dave Batic (not present on the night) for all his work done in the industry. Dave is leaving the town; he is a previous board director and a Chairman of TCA as well as the chair of the Major Business Group and General Manager of the Alice Springs Airport. The Chair wished Dave all the best on behalf of the organisation.

11. Meeting Closed

With no further business the meeting was closed at 8.04pm.

12. Attendees Register

Campbell	Nicole	Tourism NT
De Beer	Joe	Megafauna Central
Maharjan	Raj	Megafauna Central
Lehman	Andrea	Outback Ballooning
Livingston	Jason	Outback Ballooning
Lowing	Sondra	Alice Springs United Church
Mahendra	Mahesh	ALICE HOLIDAY TOURS
Marshall	Estelle	Alice Springs Desert Park
Prus	Nick	National Roadtransport Hall of Fame
Shearer	Steve	Thrifty
Woo	Allen	Airport Development Group
Catchlove	Jill	Parks and Wildlife
Wegner	Aggie	Parks and Wildlife
Ross	Lindsay	Office of the Chief Minister
Ohlson	Raelene	Alice Springs Turf Club
Nowland	Ross	Dept Industry, Tourism and Trade
Stafford	John	Alice Springs Expeditions
Slattery	Tom	Alice Springs Turf Club
Ncube	Temba	Lhere Artepe Supermarkets
Rehman	Atiq Ur	Lhere Artepe Supermarkets
Collins	Tony	Akeyulere Aboriginal Corporation
Connellan	Sonya	Mt Zeil Wilderness Park
Coleman	Annette	Bindi Enterprises
Rockchild	Liesl	Bindi Enterprises
Bajzik	Karl	Yubu Napa Art Gallery
Petrick	Justin	Outback Cycling
Petrick	Clarke	Outback Cycling
Di Maria	John	Tourism NT
Neindorf	Rex	Alice Springs Reptile Centre
Brand	Tim	Australian Audio Augmented Reality PTY Ltd
Connellan	Sonya	Mt Zeil Wilderness Park
Ryland	Toni	Oscar
Brendan	Heenan	Big 4 MacDonnell Range Holiday Park
Prest	Claire	Outback Tour Services
Shegog	Kim	Kim's Handyman Services PTY Ltd
Summers	Jodie	TCA Board
Duffield	Malcolm	AAAR
Lyons	Gareth	This is Aboriginal Art
Amptmeijer	Saar	Bindi Enterprises
Frederiksen	Franca	Aviation Museum
Nelson	Alex	Aviation Museum
Smith	Valerie	Tourism NT
Loy	Danielle	Blue Desert Star Productions
Huyben	Jeff	Voyages
Stuart	Ord	TNT
Fife	Nick	100% Adventure
James	Cam	100% Adventure
Ryan	Damian	GAICD
Stuart	Mona	Central Australian Singing
Ruch	Nick	Tourism NT

13. Attendees online

Perry	Lisa	Reality Bites Catering
Severin	Lyndee	Curtin Springs
Hart	Nerida	Walk Darwin
Dakin	Anna	The Artist Expedition Society
King	Stephanie	Professionals
Robinson	Angus	Leisure Solutions
Drabsch	Clare	Trek Larapinta
Whan	Grant	Business Enterprise Centre NT
Morgan	Suzanne	NTG
Wang	Steven	Uluru Chinese Tours
White	David	Voyages
McLaughlin	Jeffrey	Mayor of the Barkly Regional Council
Siemionow	Tamara	Tourism NT
Keirle	Jessica	Tourism NT
Baldwin	Steve	Outback Caravan Park

14. Apologies

Lambley	Robyn	Robyn Lambley MLA
Peterkin	Lynne	Lynne Peterkin (Life member)
Hart	John	Walk Darwin
Hamilton	Lester	National Road Transport Hall of Fame
Williams	Marcus	Pyndan Camel Tracks
Mclver	Dale	Alice Springs Events
Standish-White	Jen	Jen Standish-White
Oosthuizen	Nicky	Alice Springs School of the Air Visitor Centre
Shearer	Gayle	Lasseters
Capp	Rebecca	Hermannsburg Potters
Fritz	Kathy	Kathys Place Bed and Breakfast