

AGM Minutes

Meeting:	Western Sydney Regional Advisory Council
Date:	Friday 1 September 2023
Location:	Parramatta Square Business & Events Centre & teams
Time of meeting:	10.00am
Attendees:	Michael Mekhitarian, ATB Partners Anne Parnham, Lighting Plus Australia Bill Parasiris, Western Sydney University John Wakeling, Marketing Heads Australia Stephen Grabowski, Grabowski Financial Planning Sue-Ellen Hogan, University of New England Shefali Pall, Campbelltown Chamber of Commerce Kerrie Sheaves, Sydney Hills Business Chamber Carlene Cardona, Campbelltown Chamber of Commerce (outgoing)
Apologies:	Stace Fishwick, Property & Development NSW Samantha Prescott, Foodbank NSW & ACT Luke Magee, Chill IT
Staff:	David Borger, Business Western Sydney Chris Taylor, Business Western Sydney

Item	Subject
1.	Welcome President opened the meeting at 10.05am.
2.	Apologies Apologies have been recorded above.
3.	Acceptance of minutes of the AGM held on 23 September 2021 No minutes recorded from the previous AGM.
4.	Regional President's Report Michael Mekhitarian provided the regional president's report. Michael reflected on the issues that the RAC have responded two over the previous two years. RAC identified the workforce shortage was an issue across the board in a low unemployment environment. Giving voice for the construction industry during the COVID lockdowns and the impact of government policies -connecting BNSW with industry leaders to discuss government grants. Mental health for business owners during and post-COVID ended up being an article in the Daily Telegraph highlighting the issues. Important that the RAC continues to give on the ground information to BNSW and represent a range of business sizes and industries.

	<p>Mental health and return to the office continue to be challenges for businesses. Losing collaboration and technical skills are what a lot of small businesses are saying. Not going back to five days in the office but need a better hybrid model.</p>
5.	<p>Regional Director's Report</p> <p>David Borger provided the regional director's report and an update of the priorities of Business Western Sydney.</p> <p>On Monday, BWS is launching a new alliance – Housing Now! – to response to the housing crisis. Homing in on the planning challenges and how they've held back housing. Pushing the government on the 'missing middle'. 20 years ago, it was 17% of all new housing stock, now its 1%. Look at the NZ model of rezoning every Tier 1 city to allow additional housing. Government can commission pre-approved designed you can select and get on with building. Increasing housing around train stations. Universities can play a role with their vast property reserves but are stopped by vocational training minister. Modular housing and supporting the Housing Affordability Fund through the Federal Parliament are also priorities. Got the support of business, unions, universities and YIMBYs.</p> <p>BWS looking at setting up a River Cities Taskforce. The region has a bunch of rivers that we haven't utilised very effectively for amenity. Got a group of Penrith, Parramatta, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Olympic Park, and we want to go up to Brisbane to have a look at some good examples at Southbank, Eat Street Hamilton and Howard Wharves of activating water fronts.</p> <p>Made a submission to the cultural industries review. We've argued for more money for Western Sydney. Needs to be a separate fund for the west. Investment into outdoor soundshells for each of the three cities.</p> <p>A lot of government reviews going on now. TAFE, Metro, infrastructure. Impression that there won't be another station on Sydney Metro West given the cost and delays that would be required.</p> <p>Treasurer is addressing BWS on 22 September. RAC members welcome to join.</p> <p>Discussion with RAC on zoning around stations on the North West metro and the need to balance housing with additional commercial office space.</p>
6.	<p>Election of Regional Councillors</p> <p>At the close of nominations on COB Wednesday 30 August 2023 the following nominations were received and have been duly elected to the Western Sydney Regional Advisory Council:</p> <p>Michael Mekhitarian, ATB Partners Anne Parnham, Lighting Plus Australia Bill Parasiris, Western Sydney University John Wakeling, Marketing Heads Australia Stephen Grabowski, Grabowski Financial Planning Sue-Ellen Hogan, University of New England Shefali Pall, Campbelltown Chamber of Commerce Kerrie Sheaves, Sydney Hills Business Chamber Stace Fishwick, Property & Development NSW</p>

	<p>Samantha Prescott, Foodbank NSW & ACT</p> <p>The following position have received nominations from the floor and were elected:</p> <p>President – Anne Parham Deputy President – Stephen Grabowski Three Regional Nominated Councillors to the NSWBC Council – Anne Parham (President), Sue- Ellen Hogan (Western Sydney First) & Shefali Pall (Campbelltown Chamber of Commerce).</p> <p>Anne Parham took the chair as the new President of the RAC and thanked Michael Mekhitarian for his service as the former president. Congratulations to those elected to positions.</p>
7.	<p>Other Business</p> <p>Discussion on next meeting of the RAC in late October. Agreement for bimonthly meetings - alternating between online and face to face.</p> <p>RAC agreed that face to face meetings would not have online option to encourage attendance in person.</p>