



Presidents Report September 2019

Thursday 19 September 2019

The Greater Southern Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce. Inc. AGM
Currumbin RSL

Hilary Jacobs – President

Greater Southern Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce

It's now 3 years since our merger in 2016. As the President of the Greater Southern Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce I'm please to be able to report that your chamber is growing by every measure.

This time last year we had reached around 76 financial members and had around \$33,000 in funds. We've grown our membership by 17% to 89 and our asset base is now sitting at around \$46,000. Our Treasurer John Forrester will have more details on our financial status in his report.

**During the last 12 months we have more than doubled the number of Gold Members to a total of eleven, we have nine Silver members, and eight bronze members, The Sun Community Newspaper are our media partners, we have 57 general members and four lifetime members. Without the support of all of our members and the volunteering of our committee and executive the GSGC Chamber wouldn't exist. So thank you to everyone here for your ongoing and continuing support.

**At our last AGM the executive was confirmed as myself as President, two Vice Presidents being Jo-Ann Smith and Ian Grace, Secretary Mike Remmer and John Forrester was appointed as Treasurer. The Executive was ably supported for the last twelve months by our management board members; Joan Farmer, Peter Doggett, Paul Guerin, John Mitchell and Kate Cross. During the year Peter Doggett stood aside when he retired from Connecting Southern Gold Coast and was ably replaced by Josh Martin the New CEO of Connecting Southern Gold Coast, and Paul Guerin from Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary left the region to head on his next adventure. Chris Ward joined the management board as a casual nomination as well earlier this year. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the executive and management board for their support and efforts during the past 12 months. I'd like to say a special thanks to Peter, and Paul who are no longer active. Thanks to everyone.

**This year we have had eleven events, including today with an average of over 70 people attending each event.

**Following our AGM in August our first breakfast was in September at Coolangatta Surf Club where Cllr O'Neill and Patrick Duigan from the City Place Making group outlined the study which has been happening as part of the Kirra and Coolangatta Master Planning works being completed by the Council. This event also formed a part of the consultation process for that project.

**In October we cemented our relationship with the local schools in the community with breakfast at PBC High School and the Principle Chris Capra was our guest speaker. The trade school put on a lovely buffet breakfast in the school's catering facility.

In December we had an End of Year Dinner at the RSL. We had a great night, with 14 quality raffle prizes including the first prize of a holiday donated by One Step Further training school. As the drought deepened, we raised \$1,380 for Drought Angels on the night. Entertainment was provided by Mark Watson and Emma Lancaster!



**Our first event for 2019 was held in February and Karen Andrews, Federal Member for McPherson and Minister for Industry, Science & Technology was our guest speaker. This was sponsored by John Flynn Private Hospital which was also the venue for the occasion. The John Flynn team proved that what they say about hospital food isn't always true! We had a great breakfast attended by 85 members and guests.

**Our first After Dark for 2019 was held at the Kirra Beach Hotel. The Kirra team put on excellent food and sponsored a free bar. The Kirra Beach Hotel also unveiled their plans for development of the site which have recently been released into the final planning stage.

In April our previously postponed speaker from last November was rescheduled, Annaliese Battista from Destination Gold Coast was due to speak, however Annalise was again unable to make the event, on the day Jason Thomas stepped into the speakers seat.

May saw Geoff Hogg from The Star as our guest speaker. The venue was the RSL and Geoff spoke about the Star and it's plans for the Gold Coast. The Star are now a Gold Member of the Chamber.

**Timezone is another Chamber member which has supported an event during the last year, our After Hours at the Coolangatta Timezone in June was a great hit with over 70 members and their guests enjoying a night of fun, food and drinks. The bowling alley and laser skirmish took a pounding from the teams from a number of workplaces who took the opportunity to team build.

**July saw the Chamber hosting an opportunity for the business community to talk to the promoters of SandTunes. TEG Dainty provided more details of the planned event and answered questions from the floor. The Chamber of Commerce were very active on this subject, with the needs of the local business community and local residents front of mind. Safety was a big issue with the danger from the surf and unsupervised late night swimmers, along with the potential for drug use in the mix. The Chamber maintained a position that SandTunes wasn't suitable for the chosen location. If the festival had gone forward then we also believed that there needed to be more opportunity for the community to enjoy and benefit from the event. Ideally had SandTunes gone ahead we wanted to see a street style party event and the festival to have pass-outs as well.

Last month Mayor Tom Tate was our guest speaker and Cllr O'Neil also spent some time talking to us about SandTunes and the works currently being undertaken at the Kirra boardwalk. Over 90 members and guests joined the breakfast held here at the RSL.

The GSGC Chamber of Commerce is consulted by many committees and groups. As President I attend meetings with many of these groups. The Chamber is recognised as the voice of business for our area from the Tallebudgera Creek to the NSW Border. In the south of our catchment I represent the Chamber on the Southern Gateway Advisory Committee and the Coolangatta and Kirra Core Business Centre Master Plan group, our role in the consultation on the SandTunes event was pivotal in ensuring that SandTunes was moved to a more suitable venue, a win-win for the City. For the northern sector of the area we have in the past been included in the Palm Beach Business District Masterplanning and we promote and attend the Burleigh, Palm Beach & Elanora (Police) Community Consultative Committee.

For the whole of our catchment the Chamber is included in the Light Rail Business Advisory Group which I attend regularly, I also attend the World Surfing Reserve Local Stewardship Committee which we are also a member of and we promote and encourage recognition of the Chamber for the local media. I have been asked to speak on topics by the local press, radio and TV, The ABC radio and Win TV regularly asks for comments on local business issues and as recently as Monday of this week I spoke on the subject of consultation about parking changes in Division 14.



**The Chamber has good relationships with the Sun Community Newspaper with which we have a media partnership, thank you to everyone at the Sun for your continued support. I write a piece for The Sun paper every few weeks and The Sun has ensured that we have had editorial support for issues close to the Chamber's heart like SandTunes in both the free sheet and the Gold Coast Bulletin. The Chamber is also a bronze affiliated member of the CCIQ and I was recently asked to join the Regional Policy Unit for CCIQ, which no doubt will mean more voluntary time for meetings to represent your needs and views.

The Chambers of Commerce on the Gold Coast work together on many issues, light rail is a good example of this. However we have also had robust conversations around the use of the name Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce, which the Central Chamber has been seeking to adopt for the last nine months. This topic has seen the remaining chambers, championed by this Chamber and the Southport chamber oppose most vigorously, so far with some success. This matter has been a catalyst to more collaboration as a positive outcome and a recognition that not all Chambers are the same and that we all have our unique business mix and geographical differences that impact our needs and wants as a group.

The chamber is active in many other areas around the area. One longstanding arrangement is the support of PBC School, for Australian Business week. Again in December we sponsored this event by providing medallions for every student who took part in a week-long virtual business environment to learn about how business works. The Chamber also assisted in locating business mentors for the event.

Our Facebook following has increased 20% in the last year. We now have over 270 followers. The page is used to promote the Chamber, our activities and to keep the local businesses informed of events and activities in the area. This included things like the Community Police Consultative Committee meetings at Palm Beach and Coolangatta and our activities around SandTunes and the proposed change of the name for the Central Chamber.

In summary we have continued to grow and build our relevance to you, our business community. Our membership, and financial security continued to improve. We can now do more for our members and our dedicated management board are planning to take us even further in the coming year.

In closing I'd like to thank our past and future board members for their continuing endeavours and commitment to what is a very voluntary role.

I'll now pass you to our current treasurer, John Forrester – John