

Board of Directors Update

June 2018



Your Board of Directors remain proud to represent members in what is a remarkable facility offering the best in bowling options and a “home away from home” for so many of our members. What remains surprising is the lack of awareness amongst our local community of what we have to offer despite extensive advertising. To increase awareness, we are looking to provide new activities or functions to make your club more known to potential members and guests. Our dining facilities are rated very high by Trip Advisor which helps with the tourist market, our Sunday afternoon barefoot bowls brings in new visitors of all ages. Shows like the recent Lisa Hunt night exposed a whole new group to the marvellous facilities we provide. The recent Commonwealth Games raised new interest in the sport of lawn bowls and we have many new bowlers currently being coached at the club. We would encourage members to introduce your family and friends to what your club can offer.

While our club is operating at high capacity at present with increased social membership (over 20,000), increased entertainment options (e.g. Lisa Hunt/Cooly Rocks On/Tribute Shows) and increased bowling activity, our overall revenue is reducing. This is due to a broad trend across most clubs with reduced income from gaming, food and beverage. Whether this trend continues, due to other gaming and hospitality options (e.g. digital wagering and on-line shopping) remains to be seen, however the rising cost of living, particularly electricity is having a significant impact on people’s entertainment dollar. At the same time our costs are increasing significantly, meaning we will need to be looking for more income generating options. This is not new and was foreseen many years ago, hence the reason for the Master Plan to make better use of our facilities. These ongoing issues were raised and discussed at length with our members at our recent “Our Future Forums”. The opportunity for our members to “have a say” about the future of their club was invaluable for the Board and Management who are working closely to introduce necessary change to ensure the future of our great club. We will schedule more such forums in the near future.

Several major projects are now coming to completion such as our upgraded car park across the road which will be opening as soon as Council signs off on the work. It certainly looks inviting with the lighting, sealed surface, line markings and green surrounds, all of which has improved the image of the whole block. Subject to additional Council approval, we will manage access and exit of the car park with a boom gate system. Members will swipe their membership cards in the club, receive a token voucher and then use the token to exit from the car park. Visitors without cards will be looked after by the front reception staff who will advise them that their sign-in slip can be used to get an issued token for car park exiting. We will monitor usage and adopt procedural changes where necessary. Parking remains a challenge with many non-club patrons using our parking facilities and management are very active in addressing this issue while still encouraging visitors or potential members to enjoy our fine facilities. For example, most members would not be aware that we lock the back car park at close of business and open it the next morning to dissuade non-patron use. In addition, the council car parks are only shut during their business hours thus providing those areas for our usage. This month we are purchasing a courtesy bus (twelve seats) to cater for members and guests visiting the club and needing assistance or transport. This bus has been a long-term plan as we hope to make our club more accessible for members and guests. Our intention is to introduce a second bus later in the year.

Also, just completed is our upgraded front reception that now offers a more inviting experience for members and guests with a very modern and open design. Credit for much of the design and work goes to our own staff. This is no surprise to those of us aware of how the club is served by such dedicated and high quality people working quietly, often unseen, to provide you with the best facilities and service.

As we look to provide a wider variety of services for members and guests at the club, particularly in the health and welfare area, the club is currently seeking to change or amend our current zone to allow more services being offered from within the club. This involves both local government and state government processes that will take some time and effort. We are excited by the range of services we could offer, and the high interest currently being shown by professionals to join us in a commercial capacity.

Over the past few years our bowling membership has been dwindling, we have lost more than 25% of bowlers and we must look to the future. To this end the men's and women's bowling sub-clubs are working well with our forward-thinking bowls manager, Wayne Turley, to offer an increasing range of options for our bowlers. To provide a more innovative, integrated and holistic service they are looking at options to combine both sub-clubs into one committee. This is a trend amongst most bowling clubs nationally and brings us into a more modern practice whilst still offering independence and a separate voice to our men and women bowlers and retaining our key traditions. This of course will only happen with the separate endorsement of the men and women bowlers at their AGMs. We congratulate our bowling member, Ken Hanson for his recent gold medal at the Commonwealth Games. Ken and his wife Coral split their year between Colac in Victoria and Tweed Heads where they are active members and volunteers. Ken's coach at the Games was Kelvin Kerkow OAM who recently joined us to strengthen our bowling stocks at the top level. Having both Wayne and Kelvin leading the charge, we are attracting a whole new set of quality bowlers that can only widen the exposure of the club to the public. The women bowlers are likewise attracting quality new bowlers to ensure they remain at the top of their competition. Congratulations to our new member, Chloe Stewart on being selected in the Australian Jackaroos squad. Part of the reason for attracting new members has been the more open, modern and friendly approach led by the sub-clubs and bowls management. Indications of the success of these efforts are the recent victories over our sibling club, Coolangatta, in the Cross Border and the Commemorative Shields. In addition, we will be fielding the most Pennant teams for many years with many more bowlers than places available.

Congratulations to all our bowlers who have recently competed at either District, State or National level.

It is noticed that our level of inclusiveness for members living with a disability is increasing, as we become more aware of what they can bring to our club. This is evidenced particularly through bowling members who live with physical issues and whereby fellow members welcome them into our club. This also extends to many of our social members needing assistance and the efforts by our outstanding staff to provide that assistance on a daily basis.

Recent national events, namely the RSL and the Master Builders associations chose Tweed Heads Bowls Club to host their national bowling events, involving large numbers of their members from all states. The feedback was of the highest level highlighting the bowling facilities and our excellent eating and function facilities underpinned by very high quality customer service. Sometimes we take our club for granted so occasional external feedback such as this makes us better appreciate the terrific club we have.

Yours faithfully,



Leigh Tynan
Chairman
On behalf of the Board.