



2020

ANNUAL REPORT

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Cain Berryman, School Based Apprenticeship (Carpentry),
JD Construction



*Isabelle Martin and Alana Skarpona,
VETDSS Allied Health Assistance students*

About NMLLEN

Background

Northern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network (NMLLEN) is one of 31 LLENs across Victoria which were established in 2001 arising from recommendations of the Kirby Report- Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria. LLENs were established as non-for-profit, community based incorporated associations to identify gaps in education and training, provide advice on local and State-wide policy issues and broker cross-sector partnerships.

NMLLEN is a membership based organisation that brokers partnerships to provide better pathways and support for young people in the Northern Mallee Region. NMLLEN's region covers the Mildura Rural City Council LGA (including the towns of Mildura, Merbein, Irymple, Red Cliffs, Ouyen, Werrimull and Murrayville) and Robinvale (part of Swan Hill Rural City Council LGA).

In 2019, Northern Mallee LLEN was funded by the Victorian Department of Education and Training for the LLEN contract, Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) contract, On Track Connect contract and Navigator-Mallee contract.

Our Mission

Brokering strategic partnerships with stakeholder groups, to improve outcomes in education, training and employment for young people.

Role

NMLLEN brokers strategic and sustainable community partnerships aimed at improving education and transition outcomes for young people including increasing Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates.

Our Vision

Constructive pathways for our young people, leading to employment.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Anne Mansell

Northern Mallee LLEN experienced a very different year in 2020 with much success despite the challenges we faced as a community and as individuals because of COVID 19. However, the NMMLLEN has continued to build on its mission of brokering strategic partnerships with stakeholder groups, to improve outcomes in education, training, and employment for young people in our region.

COVID 19 created uncertainty and some anxiety for our organisation, schools, industry, and community stakeholders. NMMLLEN was challenged in determining how to deliver our programs, yet succeeded in finding new ways to engage with our community and education partners, providing online and other engagement opportunities for secondary school students.

As with all LLENs across the State, NMMLLEN adapted in finding ways to support our education and industry partners to provide opportunities for students to stay connected to education, training, and employment. NMMLLEN supported all our stakeholders to pivot and see the opportunities that existed despite the uncertainty. The collaboration and hope this generated is something, of which we as a Board are proud. I would like to acknowledge and thank our local industries and education sector, who in trying times continued to work with the NMMLLEN to deliver services and programs across our region.

During 2020 the Victorian State Government committed to a further two years of funding for the vital Navigator program. The continuation of the Navigator program will enable NMMLLEN to continue its strategic partnership with Navigator in conjunction with the Mildura Rural City Council, Murray Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network and the Department of Education and Training. Navigator improves opportunities for disengaged young people 12 – 17 years of age to receive intensive wrap around support so they can successfully re-engage with education and training. The support that Navigator provides to young people can be life changing and can change the trajectory of a young person to be safe, well and engaged in all aspects of school, work, and life.

Acknowledgement

I thank the Committee of Management, various sub committees and the dedicated staff of NMMLLEN for working closely with our Executive Officer to steer the organisation through 2020. I also acknowledge Jo McQuinn, Principal of Irymple Secondary College for her work on our Board over the last two years.

As Chair, I would like to publicly recognise the outstanding service Ron Broadhead has provided to the NMMLLEN in his twelve years as the Executive Officer. Ron informed the Board of his intention to retire in late 2020. I wish Ron and his family the best of luck as he enters a new phase in life. As a Board we have found Ron to be a person of integrity and intellect who is steadfast in his commitment that the NMMLLEN be a driver for change and collaboration to improve opportunities for young people in our area.

I now look forward to what can be achieved in 2021 and welcome Rod Martin as our new Executive Officer. Rod has significant experience working with young people, industry and the education and training sector and we are delighted as a Board to have Rod in place, along with the rest of our NMMLLEN team.

On behalf of the Board I thank you all for your support of NMMLLEN and trust that the year ahead, while still challenging, will be a somewhat smoother journey than in 2020.

Yours Sincerely,



Anne Mansell

Chair





HIGHLIGHTS

*Rebecca Clark, VETDSS Hospitality student,
on placement with Dockside Café*

NMLLEN - Extension of Department of Education Training Contract

Northern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network was pleased that commencing in 2020, the Department of Education and Training extended the funding of the 31 LLENs across Victoria for an additional 2 years. The key role of LLENs across Victoria is to develop partnerships which will increase the range of school – employer activities in local government areas. The NMLLEN will continue to do this by assisting schools and industry to develop opportunities to:

- Access structured workplace learning opportunities from the statewide portal.
- Promote school-based apprenticeships and traineeships to all stakeholders.
- Assist schools to engage directly with industry by organising guest speakers, workplace and industry visits.
- Collaborate with schools and employers to ensure that students can develop work readiness skills through activities such as mock interviews and OHS training.

*2,427 placements were used
in the LLEN Statewide Network
during 2020*

2020 Structured Workplace Learning Key Initiatives

The NMMLLEN thanks schools, employers, and their own staff, particularly Rod Martin, SWL Coordinator, and Project Officers Dale Harvey and Amanda Smith in achieving these results. The Northern Mallee LLEN is a small but highly committed team. Behind the scenes supporting our staff is Peta Maas our Administration Officer.

The COVID working environment had some impact on reducing the number of students who could attend placements. However, in response to this, schools, industry and NMMLLEN developed a range of events to give students an opportunity to engage with industry and workplace experiences. The NMMLLEN results in many respects reflect the experience of LLEN across the state. In 2020 work commenced on a School Based Apprenticeship Traineeships Agriculture project drawing on the findings of the Victorian Skills Commissioner's report that identified agriculture as a skills shortage area. NMMLLEN will continue to work on this project in 2021. NMMLLEN identified areas within agriculture and associated industries for students to gain experience in the industry.

Placements used from Statewide Portal in NMMLLEN region in 2020	Target	Achieved
SWL Placements	72	53
SBAT Placements	2	2
School Industry Engagement Events	10	35

Placements used from Statewide Portal in LLEN's Statewide Network in 2020	Target	Achieved
SWL Placements	4602	2176
SBAT Placements	101	251
School Industry Engagement Events	500	705

COVID Response

The NMMLLEN like all organisations across the world needed to adapt to the COVID pandemic. In response to COVID there were practical health and safety directions we needed to implement, such as social distancing and working from home. NMMLLEN assisted students while schools conducted classes remotely or in a hybrid model with some on-site activities. In response to COVID the Department of Education and Training provided NMMLLEN with a letter of variation to support schools and students undertaking Vocational Education Training certificates with mandatory placement requirements so they could successfully achieve their certificates.

NMMLLEN was able to work with schools, industry and the training providers for these students to obtain placements.

NMMLLEN also worked closely with schools to offer support for VET delivery, developing a library of on-line resources for students to utilise during their remote learning time.



Ethan Hicks, 4th Year Electrical apprentice, Devilee's Airconditioning & Refrigeration



Cain Berryman, School Based Apprenticeship (Carpentry), with Josh Dawson, JD Construction



*Ethan Hicks, 4th Year Electrical apprentice,
Devilee's Airconditioning & Refrigeration*



*Aden Coxhead,
VETDSS Plumbing student*



*Brittany Laskaj and Jasmine Balchin,
Riverside Trade Training Centre Beauty students*

Vocational Preparation and Transitions Program (VPTP)

The purpose of the Vocational Preparation and Transitions Program (VPTP) is to facilitate and deliver a range of vocational education and training information sessions in partnership with industry to secondary school students to enhance their knowledge of vocational pathways.

The aims of the program:

- provide insight into local industries
- develop employability skills
- explore vocational education and training and employment transition options
- understand employer expectations
- explore the values, strengths, and weaknesses of students

VPTP Presentations include:

- Occupational Health and Safety
- Local Industries
- Get VET
- Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) portal
- School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBAT)
- Australian Apprenticeships (AA)
- Job Readiness
- Career Tools

Partnering with experts in two areas of employment growth, the NMMLLEN delivered two online industry

presentations, one from the disability sector and one from the early childhood education and care sector.

Working with Samantha Jetson and Alison Goulet from The Christie Centre, Virtual presentations were held on 26th & 27th August for Mildura Senior College VETDSS Community Services students. On the 11th of September a presentation was delivered to SuniTAFE VETDSS Certificate III in Allied Health Assistance students. Northern Mallee LLEN thanks The Christie Centre, Sammy and Ali for their excellent presentation and subsequent work placements for students.

A second highly successful online presentation focused on the growth opportunities in Early Childhood Education and Care. In collaboration with the Department of Education and Training, Mallee Early Childhood Improvement Branch and working with Jodie Arnold, Bec Burgess and Lisa Smyth an online presentation was delivered to students on 15th and 20th October. It targeted students interested in Early Childhood Education and Care. NMMLLEN thank the Department of Education and Training and in particular, Jodie, Lisa and Bec for their informative and engaging presentations.

Schools that engaged in the Vocational Preparation Transitions Program were:

- Mildura Senior College
- St Joseph's College – Mildura
- Red Cliffs Secondary College
- Irymple Secondary College
- Mildura Specialist School
- Robinvale College
- Ouyen P – 12 College

Highlights

- Thirty-five (35) events were delivered focusing on Vocational Education Transition Pathways
- Eight hundred and eighty-four (884) students engaged in the Vocational Preparation Transitions Program presentations
- The 35 events were presented in a combination of face to face and online deliveries
- A highlight was that the NMMLLEN was able to engage with Robinvale College and Ouyen P – 12 students and staff utilising online platforms to deliver presentations



*Novalli Hudson,
School Based apprentice (Carpentry)*



*Natalie Sapuppo, VETDSS Hospitality student,
Riverside Trade Training Centre*



*Aden Coxhead,
VETDSS Plumbing student*

GET VET Promotion

Northern Mallee LLEN undertook a promotional campaign in the Mildura Weekly Newspaper with a double page advertisement on the 7th & 14th August 2020 to coincide with Get VET resources being delivered to schools.

The purpose of the promotion was to highlight Vocational Education Training careers that are available for secondary students. The promotion raised the level of awareness of the benefits of studying a Vocational Education Training delivered to Secondary students (VETDSS) as a subject.

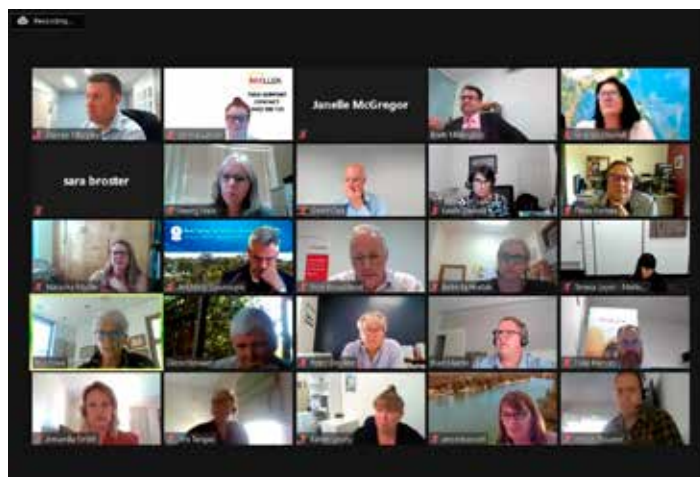
School Industry Roundtable

Northern Mallee LLEN, Mildura Regional Development and the Victorian Department of Education and Training partnered to deliver the inaugural School Industry Roundtable in November 2020.

Representation at the Roundtable included:

- local government
- economic development
- tertiary education
- community organisations
- industry
- education

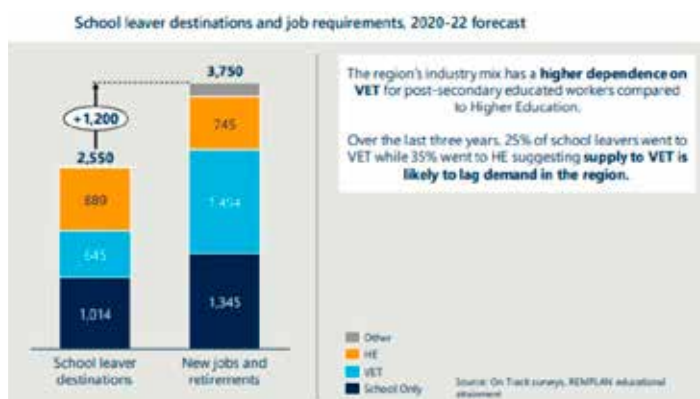
At the Roundtable, participants had the opportunity to hear from Neil Coulson, Victorian Skills Commissioner and Hamish Ride, Principal of the Nous Group. During the Roundtable, the findings of the Mallee Regional Skills Demand Profile Pulse Check were presented. The report highlighted opportunities for schools and industry to come together and to explore opportunities for future school leavers.



Pulse Check

Northern Mallee LLEN supported Regional Development Victoria to engage the Nous Group to conduct a Pulse Check against the original Mallee Regional Skills Demand Profile commissioned in 2017. The Nous Group completed the Mallee Regional Skills Demand Profile Pulse Check in September 2020. The Nous Group spoke to 21 employers, surveying 84 businesses representing nine key industry groups and four local government areas in the Region.

Employers can expect continued employment with the potential for between 1,000 – 2,500 jobs to be created over the next three years. An additional 2,000 workers will be required to replace expected retirements.



Reference: Mallee Regional Skills Demand Profile, "Pulse Check" (P19) 2020



*Chloe Griffiths and Sophie McAliece,
Riverside Trade Training Centre Beauty students*



*Piper Nash, VETDSS Allied Health
Assistance student*



*Aldray Hill, VETDSS Hospitality student,
on placement with Shippy's Café*



*Sophie Pope and Piper Nash,
VETDSS Allied Health Assistance students on placement, Princes Court Homes*

Navigator Program

In 2020 Northern Mallee LLEN continued to support the Navigator Program, through an innovative partnership with Mildura Rural City Council, Murray Mallee LLEN and the Department of Education and Training. The Navigator program supports disengaged young people aged 12 – 17 whose attendance is below 30% to re-engage with education and training. Navigator works with young people, their families and support networks to address issues underlying disengagement to help them re-engage with their education. Schools and community organisations may refer young people to the Navigator Coordinator who is based in the Department of Education and Training, Mallee regional office. Eligible young people are then referred to Mildura Rural City Council or Murray Mallee LLEN to be allocated to case managers and be provided with intensive case management using an assertive outreach model.

Re-engaging young people into education and training is a challenging and complex task. NMLLEN continues to work closely with the Department of Education and Training and local agencies to achieve its objectives of supporting young people to access education and training. NMLLEN acknowledges the Navigator Case Managers for their unwavering commitment to supporting young people across the region to re-connect with education, training and employment. The case managers were ably supported by their Manager Gary Green from the Mildura Rural City Council, Deb Quin, Executive Officer from the Murray Mallee LLEN and Jacinta Allen Mallee Navigator Coordinator from the Department of Education and Training.

"They cannot stop me. I will get my education if it is in the home, school, or any place."

Nobel Laureate and author Malala Yousafzai.

Sunraysia Careers Network (SCN)

Northern Mallee LLEN continued to have a strong presence in the Sunraysia Careers Network (SCN). It was disappointing that COVID prevented the SCN from holding a formal Vocational Education Training Delivered to Secondary Students Excellence Awards. NMMLLEN thank staff, Rod, Dale and Amanda for their contribution in supporting the SCN members to support students across the Mallee.

On Track Connect 2020

In 2020 the Northern Mallee LLEN conducted the On Track Connect program on behalf of the Department of Education and Training. With the consent of the young people Year 12 completers and early school leavers from 2019 who were unsuccessful in securing a place in higher education, training and employment were referred to their local LLEN for additional individual follow up.

Northern Mallee LLEN was able to provide these people with advice and support and link the young people with local agencies who could assist them with education, training, and pathway planning. In 2020 NMMLLEN received 9 referrals, 8 of whom were year 12 school completers and 1 was an early school leaver. An example of the type of support provided included providing feedback to one young person on their cover letter and resume as they were seeking an apprenticeship in the automotive area. The young person was linked into some local employers in the automotive industry.

Many of the On Track participants commented on the difficulty they had gaining employment during COVID. The Northern Mallee LLEN was able to refer young people to services that could provide additional support in areas such as food security, staying safe, and maintaining good physical and emotional health.

Sponsored SuniTAFE Award

Northern Mallee LLEN sponsored the SuniTAFE Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning Senior Award. Northern Mallee LLEN congratulates Jodine Closter as the VET Student of the Year winner.

Mildura Senior College Professional Development Day

Northern Mallee LLEN partnered with Mildura Senior College (MSC) to coordinate and support seventy MSC staff to visit industries in December 2020 as part of their professional development program. The day was extremely well supported by seventeen employers from a range of industries. MSC staff visited workplaces across the Mallee. Mildura Senior College staff heard from employers about their workplace and the opportunities that exist locally for students. This industry information was then shared with students in the classroom.

Northern Mallee LLEN thanks the following businesses for their support in this professional learning activity.

- Mildura Rural City Council
- Devilee's Air Conditioning & Refrigeration
- Haeusler's Group
- JD Construction
- Mildura Motor Holdings
- Think Water Mildura
- MASP
- SMGT
- Aligned Leisure / Richmond Institute
- Collie & Tierney
- Agromillora
- Sunraysia Resort
- GTS Freight Management
- Aust-Link
- Findex Mildura
- Mildura Weekly

Community Networks

Northern Mallee LLEN has continued its involvement in support for a wide range of community networks in 2020.

These include:

- Mildura Regional Trade Training Centre
- Northern Mallee Community Partnerships
- Victorian Skills Commissioner Transport and Logistics Employment Pathway Program
- Mildura Rural City Council School Holiday Program / Youth Expo
- Mildura Regional Development 50 in 50 promotion
- Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Community Council
- Learn Locals
- Headspace Mildura
- LLENs Statewide
- Mallee Regional Partnerships



Ron Broadhead with Jodine Closter, SuniTAFE VET Student of the Year

Firth Review

Review into vocational and applied learning pathways in senior secondary schooling.

The Northern Mallee LLEN was pleased that John Firth, who led this review, was able to visit Mildura as part of the consultation process into applied learning pathways in senior secondary schools. Ron Broadhead and Rod Martin from the NMMLLEN along with representatives from the regional office, schools, industry, and community groups from across the Mallee were able to share their thoughts and ideas with John as part of the review.

The review made several recommendations including:

- Victoria should move to an integrated senior secondary certificate, with vocational education embedded in the VCE.

- Vocational and VET training should be more closely aligned to Victoria's growth sectors and local industry needs. This training should be available to every senior secondary student.
- A new Foundation Pathways Certificate should be created to formally recognise the skills and achievements of students who are not ready to complete Year 12. This would support those students to make successful post-school transitions. This would be particularly important for students with a disability and additional needs, and for students experiencing personal challenges.

The Victorian Government has accepted in principle all the review's recommendations. NMMLLEN with LLENs across the state look forward to working in collaboration with schools, employers, students, peak industry

bodies to lift the quality and perception of vocational education, assist students to access high quality training and ensure students with a vocational pathway have the skills they need to move successfully into further training and employment.

This work is a long-term commitment beginning with the appointment of area-based Jobs, Skills and Pathways Managers from January 2021. These managers will provide tailored support to government schools in the delivery of the specialist vocational pathways, VET, School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs) including Head Start, career education, school industry engagement and school transitions.

The move to a single certificate will happen in stages. The first is the creation of a new vocational specialist pathway within the VCE, with the first cohort of students starting the new certificate in 2023. The next stage will create a fully integrated senior secondary certificate by 2025.

Agriculture Careers Research Project - Collaboration with University of Melbourne

Twenty-three LLENs across the state participated in the 'Securing the next generation in farming and food careers' Melbourne University research project application. If the application for Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage funding is successful, the 'Securing the next generation in farming and food careers' project will take place over three years. The project will involve the LLENs, industry partners, Rimfire Resources, AusVeg, Wimmera Development Association and Birchip Cropping Group, as well as other agriculture and food industry partners across the state.

To address these aims, the project will focus on researching young people aged 15-35 years old who currently, or have very recently, lived and worked in rural and regional Australia in the agri-sectors, or in associated education and training. NMMLLEN acknowledges the work of Tim Shaw, Executive Officer, Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN who brokered the partnership for participating LLENs.



Natalie Sapuppo, VETDSS Hospitality student, Riverside Trade Training Centre



Novalli Hudson, School Based apprentice (Carpentry) with Graeme Blaby, CPM Builders

NMLLEN STAFF



RON BROADHEAD Executive Officer

Ron joined NMLLEN in August 2008 as the Executive Officer.

Ron has had over 30 years' experience in education and training which has included teaching and lecturing; senior management roles at Sunraysia Institute of TAFE and Box Hill TAFE; and as Campus Director of the Mildura Campus of La Trobe University. His tertiary qualifications include economics, education and management.

Ron's role as Executive Officer includes stakeholder management and community engagement; strategic planning and implementation; board management; financial management; operational management; governance, reporting and accountability; project and contract management.



ROD MARTIN Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator

Rod commenced as the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator in February 2018. He has extensive experience in the vocational training sector having worked at SMGT for 14 years.

The SWL Coordinator's role is to source Structured Workplace Learning opportunities with local businesses and upload these opportunities onto the online Portal. The SWL Coordinator also works closely with schools and local industries to develop programs that will increase awareness for workplace learning.



AMANDA SMITH Project Officer

Amanda joined NMLLEN in June 2018 as the Project Officer. She has extensive experience in the Vocational Training sector which involved working with local industry and those undertaking a trainee-ship, specifically in business with Sunraysia Skills Centre and SMGT.

Amanda's role is to work closely with the NMLLEN team, local secondary schools and industry to ensure the success of the project at hand.



PETA MAAS (PART TIME) Administration Officer

Peta joined NMLLEN in December 2018 as the Administration Officer. Peta has an extensive background in administration and management gained in her lengthy service in the Royal Australian Navy and other administrative roles.

Peta's role is to maintain the day to day operations of NMLLEN and provide support to the Executive Officer and Board.



DALE HARVEY (PART TIME) Structured Workplace Learning Program Project Officer

Dale joined NMLLEN in April 2018 as the Structured Workplace Learning Program Project Officer. He has extensive experience across Education and Employment Services Sector including as an Employment Consultant, School Based Training Coordinator and Business Development Officer.

Dale's role is to assist the SWL Coordinator in all facets of managing the program.

2020 COMMITTEE

of Management



Category 10

Anne Mansell *(Chair)*

CEO,
Dried Fruits Australia



Category 2

Geoff Dea *(Deputy Chair)*

CEO,
Sunraysia Institute of TAFE



Category 6

Peter Devilee *(Treasurer)*

Managing Director,
Devilee's Air Conditioning & Refrigeration



Category 6

Melissa Wade *(Secretary)*

Executive Manager,
Sunraysia Community Health Services



Category 1

Graeme Forrester

Executive Principal,
Chaffey Secondary College



Category 1

Jo McQuinn

Principal,
Irymple Secondary College



Category 1

Greg Kluske

Deputy Principal,
St Joseph's College Mildura



Category 3

Karen Levey

State Training Manager, VIC & NSW,
Madec



Category 4

Dr Deb Neal

Head of Campus,
La Trobe University, Mildura



Retired 2020





GOVERNANCE

*Sophie Pope & Piper Nash with Jenny Garonne (CEO),
Princes Court Homes*

Committee of Management

The Committee of Management is drawn from 11 membership categories.

Committee of Management member changes

In 2020 the following changes to the Committee of Management occurred:

Members who renewed their participation:

- Karen Levey (Category 3)
- Janet Hicks (Category 6)
- Melissa Wade (Category 6)

Members who resigned:

- Jeremy Seward (Category 4)
- Dean Wickham (Category 8)
- Joelle Brown (Category 8) Appointed 31/8/20
Resigned 30.11.20

New Members:

- Bethany Simpson (Category 11)
- Dr Deb Neal (Category 4)
- Alisi Fangaloka (Category 8)

Executive Sub Committee

The role of the Executive Sub Committee is to ensure the efficient operation of Northern Mallee LLEN through receiving reports, monitoring financial reports and making recommendations to the Committee of Management for consideration and approval.

The Executive Sub Committee meets monthly.

Chair:

- Anne Mansell

Members:

- Geoff Dea (Deputy Chair)
- Peter Devilee (Treasurer)
- Melissa Wade (Secretary)
- Ron Broadhead (Executive Officer)