

2022-
2023

Hamilton - Acquittal Report





ABN: 43 576 863 540 | Inc ID Number: INC1901585

Introduction

Established in December 2019, Hamilton Business Association (HBA) is a not-for-profit independent Business Improvement Association (BIA) that represents people who own or occupy commercial premises in the Hamilton precinct. It is the objective of Hamilton Business Association to promote the Hamilton Precinct as clean, full shops and a friendly place to visit.

HBA aims to promote the development, beautification, and advancement of the commercial interests of businesses within the association's precinct through a coordinated and structured promotion, advocacy, and planned program. The goal of the HBA is to see an increase in businesses and employment in the Hamilton precinct with the aim to have full real estate occupancy, attraction of local visitors and tourism, and the support of education around history and culture.

Along with its counterparts in Newcastle, Wallsend, and Mayfield the association has a service agreement with the City of Newcastle (CN) which provides up to \$100,000 annually for projects that promote, beautify, and drive economic development for the Hamilton precinct. These funds are collected by the City of Newcastle via the Special Business Rate Levy. HBA also always ensures that any other income like sponsorships of events, or grants received by the Association, deliver services, programs and outcomes that add value to the precinct.

Each year the Association, with the assistance of the Business Improvement Association Support Service presents a strategic 'Deliverables Plan' to the City of Newcastle outlining planned projects and expenditure for the 12-month funding period. At the end of each financial year this 'Acquittal Report' is also prepared by the Business Improvement Associations Support Service and submitted to the CN. Both the Deliverables Plan and Acquittal Report are uploaded on the CN website along with monthly Board meeting minutes for members and general public to view.

All Business Improvement Associations are governed by their Constitution and a Service Agreement with CN. Both documents are published on the CN website.

Board Members as of June 2023

| Role | Name | Business |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| Chair & Public Officer | Reece Hignell | Cakeboi |
| Vice Chair | Amanda Hinds | Origin Architecture & Heritage |
| Treasurer | Kate Ellis | Sportspower |
| Secretary | Sandra Maloy | Qs Books |
| Ordinary Board Member | Nick Van Baal | Greater Bank |
| Ordinary Board Member | Chelsea Willis | Young Peoples Theatre |
| Ordinary Board Member | Amy Cook | The Neighbourhood Salon |
| Ordinary Board Member | Mara Draper | Son of a Gun Diner |
| Ordinary Board Member | Rob Burton | BEA News |



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Projects And Events

Social Media

Over the course of the Association's lifespan, HBA has grown a significant and valuable social media presence. Accumulating a total of 1600+ likes and 2000+ followers on their Facebook page (increased following of 30% on 21/22 year) plus and an additional 2500+ followers on their Instagram page (increased following of 27% on 21/22 year).

Both accounts were initially run by volunteer Board members and are now professionally managed after a competitive EOI process. The platforms have shown a consistent and large growth annually which presumes that they will continue to grow and remain a valuable tool for the association to use to communicate and engage with their local community and assist in driving the Hamilton precinct economy.

Advertorials

The Board continued a partnership with HunterHunter & Newcastle Weekly to showcase the retail and hospitality businesses in the precinct and promote events. The reaction from the HunterHunter platform is always phenomenal enabling the Association to pick up hundreds of new followers on social media thus highlighting the precinct as the 'go to' destination for shopping and dining.

Promotional Videos

HBA engaged Straightline Media to continue production of a range of short videos promoting local businesses. Specifically, the small business owners explain what they do and why they love Hamilton. With the slogan Love Local, Love Hamilton. These videos are being uploaded weekly on social media and can be used freely by the business owner themselves for their own promotional purpose. They have helped HBA engage with local business owners.

Traditional Media

In the last year HBA has attracted some favourable news coverage across several of their projects and events. This has included print and digital articles and stories, and radio interviews. This media coverage was coordinated and developed by JM Consultancy Services and assisted by appointed Event Coordinators Hunter Events Group and more recently PWP Events.

The Local Publication

The Local publication was chosen by the Board for a monthly one-page article promoting news and events of the Hamilton precinct to a nearby broader community. The Local is a monthly publication and assists in drawing foot traffic from outer suburbs into the Hamilton precinct. It is delivered to 11,000 homes in Lambton, New Lambton, North Lambton, Hamilton North, Broadmeadow, Jesmond & Kotara areas. Articles showcase existing local businesses via editorials to bring people from other areas into the Hamilton Precinct. It is also dropped at several Hamilton businesses for locals.



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Street Art

The HBA engaged Flying Spanners Gallery to revisit their artwork in the precinct for maintenance. The HBA also supported another Paul Maher art project with mosaics from a Hamilton Public School project installed on the front of the Hamilton Library. The HBA funded a small amount for part of the installation and this project was well supported in the media.

Markets in Hamilton

The BIA put out Expressions of Interest for a market stall coordinator to assist with setting up Markets in James St Plaza. This position was filled, and the Markets had a soft launch on Saturday May 7, 2022, for a 12-week trial basis. New branding for the "James St Providore Markets" was created and launched along with a map to lead people from Gregson Park Markets back to James St Plaza on the monthly dates when the two markets were held simultaneously.

James St Plaza markets were targeted at small makers and traders of food. The desired result of 8-10 regular Saturday market stalls proved challenging due to the ongoing wet weather and covid causing stallholders to cancel at short notice. It was also difficult to entice small local produce stallholders as most already had commitments at established markets such as Farmers Markets. Eventually the Board made the decision to cancel the markets and look for an alternative project to activate James St Plaza.

It should be noted that the independent Gregson Park Markets also ceased for the same reasons.

James St Plaza Projector Art

As the James St Plaza Markets were not as successful as anticipated, the Board voted to engage the expertise of Art Thinking to better use and manage the projector in the Municipal Building on James St Plaza. The projections commenced in January and added colour and interest to the Plaza at night. The first activity in January was a Curious Legends project called Spirits of Newcastle which ran for approximately 6 weeks. The following projections were the We Are Project by WH!P, and Mario Minichiello exhibitions.

12 Days of Xmas

In the lead up to Christmas, the Hamilton Business Association, with the assistance of Hunter Events Group launched '12 Days of Christmas' in December 2023 to help local businesses promote the diverse retail, hospitality, and business options available in and around the precinct.

The activation was held over 12 Days and was in collaboration with several businesses in the precinct. The Christmas activation drew a modest increase in foot traffic to the Hamilton precinct as well as a significant amount of promotion of the area and the Hamilton Business Association. The activation also hosted several Live Spots music acts and offered free or paid professional Santa photos. It was accompanied by an independent Twilight Xmas Market in Gregson Park.



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Mother's Day

Mother's Day was a competition via social media platforms along with paid advertorial in Newcastle Live. HBA collaborated with 12 local businesses with gift vouchers given away via a digital competition promoting Hamilton as a destination for beauty, boutique shopping and dining.

Greenery

Hanging planters with live flowers and green walls with living plants have continued to be installed by the HBA on suitable business facades in the precinct. This is an ongoing project to assist with beautifying the street from the road and the pavement. The Newcastle Men's Shed assists with caring for the plants with a watering system that has been purchased by HBA. The HBA also supported the SBR Contestable funded project by Herb Urban via letter of support to plant lemon myrtle trees in the existing mosaic planters along Beaumont St. Some funds were then expended to replace vandalized trees.

SBR Funding Info Session

In April 2023 Hamilton Business Association (HBA) alongside The City of Newcastle held a public information session about the upcoming SBR Contestable Funding in the precinct. This information session was attended by a solid number of applicants for this precinct proving that the BIA was very successful in communicating to their network about the SBR grant. The session provided potential applicants with all the information they need for the application process as well as a networking opportunity. Applicants were able to brainstorm and collaborate with each other during the information session. HBA were also able to speak with applicants about the potential to collaborate on upcoming projects and provide letters of support for the applicants.

BIA Ideas Exchange

The HBA Board attended the annual CN BIA Ideas Exchange in March. Each Chair gave a brief overview of projects and plans for the past year and a vision for their future. This was coordinated by JM Consultancy services in conjunction with the CN Economic Development team. The night was well attended and proof of the effectiveness of collaboration between BIAs and the passion of the volunteer Boards.

Business Beat (Renamed Operation Confidence)

Hamilton Board Member Kate Ellis (formerly a Police Officer) assists the BIA Support Service with coordinating this project. The 'Business Beat' initiative is at no cost to the BIA and aims to show support of local police by local businesses and gives Police the opportunity to talk about local policing issues (inform, educate, connect, visibility). There have been two walking patrols into businesses that have been coordinated by the HBA since January 2023.

Hello Hamilton Monthly Update to Database

The Board voted to send a monthly update to their database following each Board meeting. The update would be a summary of the meeting minutes in an easy read enabling members to contact the HBA directly with any queries. This is at no cost to the HBA is prepared by the Secretary in conjunction with the Chair and BIA Support Service. The HBA currently have 128 members who have chosen to be on their database.



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Business Brekky Club

Created to engage face to face with businesses in the precinct on a regular basis. Three breakfast meetings were held, and the Board voted to discontinue due to low attendance and individuals' inability to devote time to grow this project.

Monthly Board Meetings

The HBA held 12 monthly Board meetings and 1 AGM in the 2022/2023 financial year period.

Annual General Meeting

Hamilton Business Association Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 17 November 2022, at The Blind Monk, Hamilton. All Board members were present with apologies from Robert Burton (BEA News), and it should be noted that Kate Ellis (SportsPower) attended via ZOOM.

Conclusion

Hamilton Business Association has continued to build strong relationships with the community and business owners in the past 12 months. The Board met monthly and remained stable and committed to their projects, following their set Deliverables Plan with a few changes advised to CN. The success of this Board is due to everyone's willingness to participate and be proactive. Along with their combined commitment to make informed decisions quickly to keep projects flowing. Whilst some of their goals were revised the Board moved swiftly to pivot some projects and enjoy a successful 2022/2023.

Hamilton Business Association Financial Report as of 30/06/2023

SBR Funds received \$110,000.00 (incl. GST) 04/08/2022.

Expenditure Summary 2022 / 2023

| Category | Budget | Actual Spend |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Beautification | \$10,000.00 | \$10,566.20 |
| Promotion | \$38,000.00 | \$35,961.90 |
| Economic Development | \$47,000.00 | \$52,842.18 |
| Live Spots (ED Budget) | | \$1,950.00 |
| Governance | \$5,000.00 | \$6,790.68 |
| ATO BAS PAID | | \$7,939.00 |
| TOTAL INCOME incl. GST | \$110,000.00 | \$116,049.96 |

Opening Balance as of 01/07/2022 \$43.78

Income CN \$110,000.00 + GST \$5,893.00 + Refund \$175.00 = \$116,068.00

Subtotal \$116,111.78

Less Expenses \$116,039.96

At bank 30/06/2023 \$61.82

Expenditure Breakdown 2022 / 2023

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Beautification Actual \$10,566.20 | | Greenery Maintenance \$6,369.00 Street Art Maintenance \$3,000.00 Installation Mosaic Art \$1,197.20 |
| Promotion Actual \$35,961.90 | | Social Media \$24,655.00 The Local \$6,449.30 Newcastle Live \$1,064.80 Hunter Hunter \$2,145.00 Newcastle Weekly \$1,647.80 |
| Economic Development Actual \$52,842.18 Live Spots \$1,950.00 | | Business Brekky Club \$959.58 Hunter Events Group Xmas \$21,472.00 Xmas Branding, Social Boosts \$1,670.50 License Fees Plaza \$1,295.10 Hunter Hunter Xmas Editorial \$605.00 Art Thinking \$15,840.00 PWP Events Noodle Markets \$11,000.00 Live Spots Artist Fees \$1,950.00 |
| Governance \$6,790.68 | | Accounting \$1,140.00 Insurances \$5,095.00 Room Hire \$260.00 Bank Fee \$2.50 Assoc. Fees \$98.43 License Fees Plaza \$194.75 |
| BAS PAID TO ATO | | BAS \$7,939.00 |

Authorised by Chair Reece Hignell

