



**BOURKE
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

“From the
General Manager’s Desk”

5 October 2023

Mayoral Election

As most readers would be aware, Councillor Barry Hollman and Councillor Lachlan Ford have been returned, unopposed, as the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, respectively, of Bourke Shire Council. This follows the election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor being part of the agenda for Councils meeting held on Monday 25 September 2023.

With the Mayor at Bourke Shire being elected by Councillors, the office holder would normally hold the position for a two-year period with the Local Government Act requiring Councils to hold mid-term mayoral elections in the month of September, based on a four (4) year election cycle. However, due to the postponement of the 2020 ordinary council elections to 4 December 2021, due to the ‘stay at home’ provisions in place in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the term of the current Council was reduced to a period of less than three (3) years. This has resulted in the mayoral terms for the period December 2021 to September 2024 (being the next Council election), comprising an initial 21-month term and following a “mid-term” mayoral election as required to be held in September 2023, a further period of 12 months.

Given this, Councillor Hollman’s election as Mayor at the mid-term mayoral election in September 2023 will see him hold office until the day of the Council’s next ordinary election on 14 September 2024 when the civic office of the Mayor and all Councillor will expire. The term of the Deputy Mayor mirrors that of the Mayoral term. I congratulate the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on their re-election.

Demerit Points

Drivers with demerit points on their driver licence could have a demerit point removed sooner as a reward for driving safely. This follows recent changes by the NSW Government to the NSW Demerit Points Scheme with the introduction of a trial which will mean that more than 1.7 million NSW drivers who have a full NSW driver licence and who have incurred demerit points as a result of an offence can have the point wiped if they haven’t had any offences since January 17, 2023, and continue to have spotless behaviour until 16 January 2024. Normally, it takes three years to wipe demerit points from a driving record from the date of the offence. You can find out how many demerits you have by accessing either your MyServiceNSW Account or the Service NSW app on your phone. Further information is available from the Service NSW website (<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au>).

In an ideal world, drivers would not offend, and a demerit point system would not be required. Such an idyllic scenario is obviously not the case, however. Whilst one point doesn’t sound a lot, I would imagine that if you’re sitting on 11 or 12 demerit points and you must wait say 2-3 years to get your points back, with a minor indiscretion potentially pushing you past 13 points and onto a period where your licence is suspended, the return of 1 point could be most handy.

J B Mauney – Bull Rider

With the upcoming Back O' Bourke Stampede-Peter Simmonds Memorial Pro Rodeo, I was interested to read of the recent retirement from competitive bull riding in the USA, of J B Mauney. Described as the "greatest of all time", Mauney announced his retirement in mid-September 2023 after being bucked off a bull and landing on his head, resulting in him breaking his neck.

Reports on Mauney describe him "as a true competitor", known for generally picking the rankest bull (ie the hardest to ride) when there was a draw, especially in the championship round of most events. He and three-time world champion bull "Bushwacker" are reported to have been matched up 13 times. Mauney apparently always picked "Bushwacker" in the elite rounds with "Bushwacker" never entered in any rounds that weren't elite. Mauney once said, "If you are going to be the best, you've got to ride the best."

Following surgery that required the removal of a disk, Mauney wrote on his Instagram page that "Unfortunately with the surgery, it ended my bull riding career." To me, it seems that bull riders are like anyone who plays contact sports (eg footballers). Their longevity in their chosen sport is linked to the extent of their injuries. For Mauney, at age 36, he has had plenty of injuries. These have included facial lacerations, numerous concussions, a broken jaw on more than one occasion, dislocated shoulder, broken hand, feet, shoulder blades, and ribs, a lacerated liver, bruised kidney and spleen, fractured hip, a torn acl in his knee and two (2) broken legs, and of course now, a broken neck. Whilst his earnings have undoubtedly been very significant throughout his career, his body has taken an absolute pounding over the years, and he will certainly pay a significant price as he gets older.

Whilst J B Mauney obviously won't be at the Back O' Bourke Stampede-Peter Simmonds Memorial Pro Rodeo on 14 October 2023 at the Renshaw Oval facility in Bourke, I am sure that many of Australia's top riders will attend the Australian Professional Rodeo Association affiliated event. I certainly trust that a large crowd will be on hand as riders take on the Garry McPhee and Gill Bros Rodeo supplied livestock. Gates for the event open to the public at 10.00am on the day in time to view the preliminary rides. At 3pm, the live musical entertainment commences and at 6pm, the main events get underway. Food and trade stalls will be on hand along with a licenced bar and fireworks display.

Wallabies

Whilst I wasn't overly confident as to how far the Wallabies would progress in the current Rugby World Cup (GM's Column 14 September 2023) the "pile-on" in the media and on social media in response to the Wallabies loss against the Welsh has been most interesting. All appear to have some form of an opinion as to the ills currently afflicting the Wallabies. Whilst the results are not great, and the expectations of so many are very high, I very much feel for the players. No one at that level, or any level for that matter, goes onto the playing paddock wanting to lose. Rather, they give it their best and the challenge for these players now is to regroup in readiness for the future. What the future holds for Coach Jones is yet to be seen. I would like to see the powers that be get behind him and the players, find a balance between experience and youth and get on with the job. I know it's not that easy, with many factors at play in the overall rugby mix. Interesting times.

Intergenerational Report

The Australian Government recently released the sixth Intergenerational Report (<https://treasury.gov.au>) which provides an insight into the economic and societal trends predicted to shape the nation's future and influence public policy to 2063. The report considers that five (5) major forces will be affecting Australia in the coming decades. These are an ageing population; technological and

digital transformation; climate change and the net zero transformation; rising demand for care and support services; and geopolitical risk and fragmentation.

The report forecasts a 50% growth in population to 40.5 million people in the next 40 years, with an increase in older demographics within the community. The number of people aged 85 and over will triple, and those aged 65 and over will likely double. This will result in the need for more government spending in the care economy and investment in health and aged care. In terms of the labour force, more people are participating in paid work than ever before, and the labour force participation rate is at near record highs. However, as the population continues to age over the next 40 years, the report predicts that the overall work participation rate will decline gradually from 66.6 per cent to 63.8 per cent in 2062–63. Average hours worked is also expected to decline slightly. The gender gap in participation is expected to continue to narrow.

Another interesting finding from the report was the increased demand for critical minerals and the impact of climate change. Australia is the largest producer of lithium, an essential mineral required to produce renewables like solar power, wind turbines and electric vehicles. The demand for other critical minerals such as nickel, zinc and bauxite could increase by 350% by 2040.

Quote: “Character is doing the right thing when nobody's looking. There are too many people who think that the only thing that's right is to get by, and the only thing that's wrong is to get caught.” J C Watts-American Politician.