BOWLS CENTRAL OTAGO INC.
MINUTES OF PRESIDENTS MEETING
Held at Clyde Bowling Club
Tuesday 15 September 2026 @ 6.00pm

WELCOME:
Peter Dunne welcomed everyone to the inaugural meeting of Central Otago Presidents.

PRESENT:
Peter Dunne (CO President); Allan Rickard (CO Vice President); Pauline Seaton (Centre Manager); Jean O'Callaghan, Tania Holden (CO Board); Steve Archer (ADC); Barry Helm (Alexandra); Geoff Palmer (Arrowtown); Hugh Andrews (Bannockburn); Tony Lepper (Clyde); Richard Bryne (Cromwell); Kyle McGowan (Hawea); Diane Jamieson (Naseby); Ian Clouston (Omakau); Kelvin Budge (Patearoa); David Bryce (Queenstown); Dolina Manson (Ranfurly); Maree Bartrum (Roxburgh); Tony Andrews (Waipiata); Simon Nyhof (Wanaka).

APOLOGIES:
Jock Frew (Middlemarch); Dewald DeBeer (ADC); Richard Campbell (Omakau)

INTRODUCTIONS:
Club Presidents introduced themselves and Peter Dunne introduced the attending Central Otago Board members.

PURPOSE:
In two words " communication tool"
To facilitate open communication setting out the opportunities and challenges facing the Centre and conversely those facing our 16 member clubs.

BOWLS CENTRAL OTAGO INC. BUDGET 2026/27:

Revenue		**Expenditure**	
	$		$
Affiliation Fees	23,648.00	Admin Fees	31,258.00
Grants/Sponsorship	17,000.00	Overheads	4,510.00
Entry Fees	26,856.00	Honoraria	3,300.00
High Perf players	18,850.00	Travel/Accom	30,880.00
Other	2,920.00	Prizes	8,617.00
		Green Hire/catering	4,419.00
		Other	2,300.00
TOTALS:	**89,274.00**		**85,284.00**
			3,990.00
NET PROFIT:			

OVERVIEW:
16 member clubs
Large area – 231km from Middlemarch in the east to Queenstown in the west
15 Natural greens & 5 Artificial greens
Alexandra/Clyde area see as centre/hub of Bowls Central Otago – 5 Natural greens
Wakatipu Basin has 35,000 residents out of a total of 80,000 in the Bowls Central Otago region. This is about 44% (corrected figure) of the total number of residents BUT has only 2 member clubs (12.5%), 0 Natural greens and 3 Artificial greens (15% of total greens) and 111 Full playing members (16% of total).
The Maniatoto has 5 member clubs (31%), 5 Natural greens (25% of total greens) but only 15% of the membership.
Roxburgh has 2 Natural greens (13% of total number of Natural greens) but only 4% of the total membership.
Wanaka has 1 green (Artificial) or 5% of the total number of greens yet have 21% of the total membership.
Queenstown has restricted its operation and has moved to a more commercial model.
The numbers above highlight clear variations in the make-up of our Centre so it should be recognised that there will be some club challenges which are specific to those clubs.

NATIONAL CLUB MEMBERSHIP TRENDS FROM BOWLS NZ ANNUAL REPORT:
Figures over a 15 year period (2010-2025)
Number of clubs has fallen from 596 to 445 (-151 or -25%)
Number of full playing members has fallen from 33,272 to 21,049 (-12,223 or -35%)
When social/twilight bowlers are included that number of 33,272 rises to 43,669 (+ 10,397 or +31%). Casual bowlers have risen from 50,566 to 118,228 (+67,662 or +133%)

IMPLICATIONS FOR CENTRAL OTAGO:
Potential loss of "natural greens" as a risk to the organisation and plan to move forward which potentially would include a cost and therefore impact on 1. above.
Discussion points:
a) Are we going against the tide in looking to retain 15 "natural greens?"
b) Should there be at least one full covered facility in our region?

GREATEST CLUB CHALLENGES: (Responses received)
- Declining membership
- Aging membership
- Attracting new members/full playing members
- Small community to draw members from
- Finances/Affiliation Fees
- Pennants impacting on club activities
- Transitioning members to Board roles etc
- Reliance on volunteers
- Tournament entries required

Overall, the biggest issue is the declining numbers of full playing members. This trend is a national problem as well as local issue. There is resistance within clubs to increase membership fees even though Bowls is a very affordable compared to other sports. Currently annual membership fees range from $60 to $220 in Central Otago.

OPPORTUNITIES: (Taken from Club feedback)
- Creating a pathway for newly acquired competitive members
- Developing a club “personality”
- Events outside of work hours
- Community belonging
- Good rapport with members
- Making green available for visitors
- Getting social bowlers to commit
- Hiring venue for functions
- Coaching within club
- Corporate events
- Fun days & alternatives
- Looking at clubrooms upgrade
- Willing volunteer base
- Number of women bowlers on the increase
-Disability Bowls
- Indoor facility in the future
- Amalgamation

See “Answering the Call – Roxburgh Bowling Club” (attached)
There is a large disconnect between attracting social bowlers to clubs and transitioning them to be competitive players.
Can we solve these challenges or accept and work to provide events that the changing demographic in our communities will participate in?
There was discussion regarding working towards building an indoor facility. Many believed we do not have the population base to support such a facility. What are the missed opportunities, such as hosting national events, if we don’t have an indoor facility?

OTHER:
- Joint "Open Day" in 2027. Can the "Open Day" be part of a club's "Opening Day?"
There was not a lot of support for combining open days.
- 2027 Awards night to have Volunteer Of The Year and Club Of The Year added. There was not a lot of support for Awards being made into a competition. All our volunteers are worthy of recognition.
- Maniatoto would like to enter a men’s joint subcentre team in Interclub 7’s. Board to discuss implications.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?
In summary, the biggest issue is attracting new people to our sport. Whether these people are social/twilight or competitive bowlers we need to retain and grow the existing base and provide events tailored to each market.
Financial returns will be generated as membership numbers grow.

It’s not about you and your club
It’s not about me and my club
It’s about us and our clubs.