

# **CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INC.**

Committee Meeting -13 October 2020

## **Draft Minutes**

The monthly meeting of the Committee of the Canberra Organic Growers Society Inc. was held on Tuesday, 13 October, 2020, commencing at 7.30 pm. The usual meeting format was suspended because of the COVID-19 pandemic and members of the Committee met via the video-conferencing platform, Zoom.

### **Attendance**

Michele Barson, Andy Hrast, Aylwen Gardiner-Garden, Bev McConnell, Narelle McLean, Jo McMillan, Cathy Morison, Teresa Rose, Rebecca Travers, Patricia Georgee, Terry Williams, Karen James, Minh Chu, Peter Rouse, Neil Williams, Shirley Bolton, Barbara Jesiolowski

1. **Apologies** Peter Weddell, Nick Potter, Didi Sommer, Allan Sharpe, Fiona Hemmings

2. **Minutes of meeting 8 September 2020.**

The minutes were accepted with the following amendment to Item 10 - a COGS member to COGS members..

All matters arising from the minutes have been actioned.

Accepted      Moved Michele Barson                      Seconded Karen James

3. **Standing Reports**

**3.1 President's Report**

- Action arising from last month's meeting have been completed.

**3.2 Treasurer's Report**

- There are still some members that have outstanding plot fees.
- Invoices for the ACT Government grants have been issued.
- All reimbursements have been paid.
- Narelle McLean advised the water meter is fixed at Mitchell Garden.

**3.3 Membership Secretary's Report**

- Current membership (480 members) is the highest it's ever been.

**3.5 Information Officer Report including Webmanager report**

- The online membership application process is going well. No issues have been reported.
- Items from the magazine are being added to the COGS webpage to keep the content fresh.
- How to start a community Garden paper is on the COGS webpage.

**3.4 Garden Coordinator Report**

- All garden AGMs have now been held. All Gardens have elected convenors.
- An email has been sent to all new and existing convenors which included the Convenors Kit.

- A convenors meeting is tentatively scheduled for the weekend of 7-8 November.

**ACTION ITEM:** Jo McMillan to provide list of convenors to update the convenors@cogs.asn.au email group.

### **3.6 Magazine Editor's Report**

- Contributions for the next issue of the magazine are due 15 October, however not a lot of content has been submitted. Contributions will be accepted until 23 October.
- Advertisers have been contacted. Responses have not been received so advertisements will not be included.

### **4. ACT Community Garden Grants**

- Invoices have been issued for Charnwood (construction of a shelter) and Cook (repair of irrigation system) Gardens grants.
- Andy Hrast encouraged Charnwood and Cook gardens to commence work on their projects if they are ready to go.

### **5. Licence Renewal**

- Peter Weddell received the latest iteration of the draft licence.
- Andy Hrast expects this iteration is close to the final version of the licence.

**ACTION ITEM:** Andy Hrast to circulate to the latest iteration of the draft licence to COGS Committee members.

### **6. Strategic Workshop**

- The Strategic Workshop committee put forward a draft running sheet for the workshop.
- Proposed that the workshop be held in late January or early February with duration of five hours.
- The workshop is split in two sessions. The first session will be for invited guests to talk about their experiences with community gardens. The second session will be open discussion with prospective attendees limited to COGS Executive, convenors and potentially past COGS presidents.
- Mike Avent could be an option to facilitate the workshop.
- The Strategic Workshop committee would like to have pre-reading material to discuss on the day. For example a new COGS structure.
- To ensure all attendees have an opportunity to contribute, a facilitator is recommended.
- Karen James asked for a way for COGS members to contribute and that the workshop be held before the COGS AGM in March.
- Neil Williams suggested a survey as a way to encourage COGS members to submit ideas.
- The survey could be posted on the COGS webpage.
- Andy Hrast suggested that the Strategic Workshop committee look for an indoor venue for beginning of February.

**ACTION ITEM:** Andy Hrast draft a short questionnaire and circulate to COGS Committee members for comment.

## 7. Indigenous Edible Plants

- This agenda item was withdrawn by Aylwen Gardiner-Garden.

## 8. Oaks Estate screen planting funding proposal

- Karen James based the proposal on the application submitted for the ACT Government grant. Karen and some gardeners have already bought plants to with the intent they screen the garden from public.
- Andy Hrast noted that there will be future costs for Oaks Estate when the fences at the north end of the garden will need to be done to reflect the actual boundary of the garden. This will increase the size of the garden.
- Andy Hrast moved that a maximum of \$1,000 be made available for Oaks Estate to purchase plants for screening along the fence of the garden.

Accepted

Moved Andy Hrast

Seconded Michele Barson

## 9. Sharp edge metal

## 10. Bird Netting

- These agenda items were discussed together.
- Bev McConnell noted that the Convenors Kit states garden committees should look at safety issues at their gardens.
- Jo McMillan said safety and OH&S will be raised at the upcoming convenors meeting.
- Jo McMillan said as per COGS policy wild life safe nets are to be used at COGS gardens. Convenors should ensure their garden members are aware and remove any netting that is not wild life safe.

**ACTION ITEM:** Andy Hrast to circulate older COGS documents on safety and OH&S assessments at the gardens to COGS committee members.

## 11. Information request

- Andy Hrast, Michele Barson and Sue McCarthy met with the solicitor engaged to provide advice on the request for COGS records including emails from COGS members.
- Andy Hrast is waiting for the written advice to decide on how to respond to the request. The written legal advice is expected in November.
- The initial advice from the solicitor is individuals named in the request should be advised of the request. Andy Hrast has spoken to individuals named in the request.

## 12. President's AGM report - Request to amend

- The Committee agreed that the wording of the response provided by Steve Whybrow (barrister who has represented COGS) would be used.
- Karen James suggested the draft response be changed to;  
*The COGS Executive Committee considered your request to amend the Presidents 2020 report at its most recent meeting on 13 October 2020.*

*The Committee decided that there was nothing inappropriate with the factual statement that does not identify any individuals or even the nature of the dispute and therefore the President's report will stand.*

### **13. Other Business**

- Andy Hrast mentioned Fiona Hemmings may raise at the next meeting offering discounted plot fees to members that take up plots that are under shadows from Dickson College. There are 27 people on the Dickson garden waitlist and Fiona Hemmings would like to offer plots to reduce the waitlist.
- Jo McMillan will talk to Fiona Hemmings about ways to manage the waitlist.
- Andy Hrast raised the COGS Christmas Party. Support for a party on 24 November at Kambah. Barbara to advise availability. Terese offered Charnwood Garden if Kambah is unavailable.

Meeting closed at 8.58 pm