

COGS ORGANIC GROWERS' SOCIETY INC. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

Date: 19 March 2023

Time: 2.00 – 3.00pm

Chair: Andy Hrast

Location: Kambah Community Garden

Attendees: Refer APPENDIX A

Apologies – Walter Steensby, Richard Horobin, David Sloper, Markus Dirnberger, Maya Potapowicz, Myra Escobedo.

	Topic	Outcome	Who	Paper/Attachment
1.	Welcome & Apologies.	Members welcomed, attendees and apologies noted. 30 COGS members present at AGM 2023	Andy	
2.	AGM Minutes 2022	Draft AGM 2022 Minutes were accepted as tabled. These were available on COGS' website; attendees were also provided with a hard copy at the meeting. Moved: Michele Seconded: Deborah	Andy	
3.	Presidents Report	Hard copies of the President's report were available for attendees. The President's report accepted as tabled.	Andy	2023 President's report
4.	Treasurers Report	Hard copies of the Treasurer's report Financial Statement and Auditors Report were available for attendees. Members accepted the Treasurer's report as tabled and agreed to appoint Kim Hanna as Auditor for 2023. Moved: Michele Seconded: Didi	Neil	2023 Treasurer's Report
5.	Question & Answer	No Questions from the floor	Andy	

	Topic	Outcome	Who	Paper/Attachment
6.	Election of Office Bearers	<p>Andy officiated as Returning Officer. Nominations were confirmed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President: Neil Williams • Vice President: Michele Barson • Secretary: Jyl Thompson • Treasurer: Nick Sifniotis • Membership Secretary: Bev McConnell • Community Gardens Coordinator: Jo McMillan • Information Officer: Michael Gisick • Magazine Editor: Ed Highley. <p>Ordinary Committee members: Deb Hamilton*, Teresa rose, Richard Buker, Peter Weddell, and Narelle McLean</p> <p>*Note Deb Hamilton subsequently withdrew her nomination.</p>	Andy	
7.	Other Business	Andy thanked Rebecca for 4 years as Magazine Editor and all her excellent work.	Andy	
8.	Life Membership	<p>New President Neil distributed two Life memberships Awards for longstanding service and leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terry Williams, and • Andy Hrast 	Neil	

The meeting closed at approximately 3.00pm.

Canberra Organic Growers Society - Annual General Meeting

President's report

19 March 2023

The past year was successful and busy for COGS. The easing of COVID restrictions allowed our gardens to get back to more normal operations as the year progressed with more regular working bees and a number of open garden events.

Our Gardens

It was pleasing to see Cook, O'Connor, Oaks Estate and Kambah hold highly successful open gardens. These take many, many hours of work to organise and I congratulate the convenors and all the gardeners who contributed to their success. It was pleasing to see attendance at some of these events of our local politicians. The Charnwood Garden also successfully hosted the announcement by the Environment Minister of community garden grants and was itself the recipient of a grant for raised beds.

The year was one of the wettest on record in Canberra. While the wet and cool conditions benefited many crops, they also presented gardeners with challenging weed growth, flooding and water logging in a number of gardens. These conditions have no doubt contributed to the lateness of many crops and perhaps to reports of greater numbers of rodents in many gardens.

Unfortunately, there has been a spate of break-ins during the year. This is disturbing for garden members and requires even more work by Convenors to replace the stolen equipment. Fortunately, the value of the materials stolen is not too large as COGS self-insures for theft and other damage from break-ins.

The Executive

The Executive met 11 times during the year with excellent attendances by members. COGS met all its regulatory and legal requirements.

COGS membership has been stable at about 500 members and about 370 plots occupied across the 12 gardens. There are waiting lists for most gardens.

The Executive actively engaged with the ACT Government raising the high level of demand for community garden plots and arguing that community gardens are a needed community facility with the changing housing structure of the ACT. While receiving a positive reception from the Government this has not, to date, translated into any new gardens. On a more positive note, COGS took up with the Planning Minister access arrangements to the Cook Garden and signs have been erected in busy Bindubi Street warning of turning traffic.

COGS has been approached by the developers of Ginninderry in west Belconnen to provide advice on a possible community garden and there is the prospect of incorporating the garden into COGS when it is built. There has also been an approach by developers of Denman Prospect about a possible garden.

A major achievement during the year was the adoption at a general meeting in October of a new Constitution. While the new Constitution does not change what COGS does, it brings its legal structure into line with current legislative requirements, streamlines and clarifies responsibilities and administrative arrangements.

Another initiative members will have noticed was the adoption of Welcome to Country at COGS functions to recognise the original owners of the land on which COGS gardens are located.

COGS record keeping, like that of most community organisations, has been a little haphazard. A project to digitise COGS records is underway and is already paying dividends. A key element is digitising past editions of the Canberra Organic and placing them on the COGS website. This has proved to be particularly popular.

As a prudent governance measure the Executive recently undertook a risk assessment looking at the physical, cyber, financial, personnel and governance risks and identified mitigating strategies for the identified risks.

A key aim of COGS is to promote organic growing and it has done this through its presence on social media, the quarterly magazine and speakers at its garden events. Its Website, Facebook page and Instagram account are popular. The Planting Guide on the website is particularly popular with more than 2000 hits in some weeks. COGS representatives and gardens featured regularly on the ABC, 2CC and in the Canberra Times. The quarterly magazine is provided to all members of the Legislative Assembly and to Senator Pocock (who visited Mitchell Garden prior to his election).

Finance

Although COGS had a small deficit of \$5,461 in 2022 its overall financial position is strong with a reserve of \$157,688. The deficit last year was the result of a one-off large capital investment in fencing at Oaks Estate and changes in the membership fee structure.

In setting the fees for 2022-23 the Executive recognised that COGS reserves were sufficient for any foreseeable eventuality and decided to reduce membership fees to \$15 for full members and \$10 for concession card holders down from \$35 and \$30 respectively. This also had the effect of increasing the share of income from plot fees - a more user pays approach.

A number of gardens have taken advantage of the strong finances and brought forward projects for funding. In addition to the large fencing project at Oaks Estate major capital projects have been funded at O'Connor, Betty Cornhill, Cook, Kambah and Charnwood (jointly funded with an ACT Government grant).

The wet weather reduced water consumption, the single largest item of expenditure in the COGS budget, to historically low levels. This will no doubt turn around with the ending of La Nina. Fortunately, COGS is well placed to meet any future cost of increased water consumption.

Our Volunteers

COGS is a substantial organisation with more than 500 members, 12 gardens covering an area of nearly 3 hectares, a substantial presence on social media and a quarterly magazine. It takes a lot of work to keep it functioning. COGS has no paid staff but is fortunate to have many volunteers that put in thousands of hours each year – the Executive, Convenors, garden committees, helpers at working bees, writing articles, editing and proof reading the magazine, maintaining our website, and much unseen but essential work.

They are a wonderful group of people that are committed to taking COGS forward in the changing social and economic Canberra environment. Without them COGS does not exist. Thank you

This is my final report as President. My three terms have been a privilege and it has been a pleasure to work with and be supported by so many dedicated people. Thank you.

Andy Hrast
President

Canberra Organic Growers' Society

Annual General Meeting

19 March 2023

Treasurer's Report

As foreshadowed in my Treasurer's report at last year's AGM, in calendar year 2022 we recorded a modest deficit of \$5,461 (down from last year's surplus of \$20,121).

COGS' cash at bank at the end of December 2022 was \$157,583 compared to the balance at the end of the previous year of \$161,006. Table 1 below provides a summary of our results for the last five years.

TABLE 1 – FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR LAST 5 YEARS

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Member fee	\$12,556	\$13,162	\$17,655	\$17,156	\$8,888
Plot fee	\$33,128	\$48,131	\$59,795	\$58,838	\$59,595
Total Revenue	\$64,179	\$70,762	\$85,055	\$83,636	\$73,952
Capex	\$22,655	\$22,435	\$1,021	\$19,669	\$40,042
Garden exp	\$8,097	\$10,383	\$8,881	\$12,809	\$16,234
Water Bill	\$27,264	\$25,443	\$23,208	\$16,157	\$9,228
Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$14,840)	(\$5,764)	\$33,398	\$20,121	(\$5,461)
Cash at bank	\$104,296	\$101,302	\$138,185	\$161,006	\$157,583*
Net Assets	\$123,982	\$118,218	\$152,886	\$171,737	\$166,275

*Balance as at end February 2023 was \$151,871

Key things to note from the above and in the financial statements at [Attachment B](#) are:

- The reduction in revenue of \$9,684 compared to 2021, was primarily due to the significant reduction in our membership fees, returning surplus cash back to members in the form of lower fees;
- Expenses were up by \$15,897 with the following key movements:
 - Administration expenses were up by \$903, primarily due to increased MYOB fees and IT costs, including licence costs for Adobe software for our digitisation project;
 - Capital costs were up by \$20,373, primarily due to the significant investment in new fencing at Oaks Estate;
 - General garden expenses were up by \$3,425, partly due to some lumpy expenses (eg plumbing/irrigation repairs, tree removal for garden safety) and higher mowing and vegetation maintenance/removal costs due to increased growth;
 - The increased expenses were offset partly by our water bills being significantly down by \$6,929 on the already historically low year last year – confirming it was a wet 2022!

As noted in last year's report the review of COGS' infrastructure during 2021, together with the certainty of our 10 year lease with the ACT Government, and our healthy cash balance presented an opportunity for continued investment in improvements to our assets.

Key investments undertaken during 2022 included:

- \$23,432 for new fencing at Oaks Estate Garden;
- \$2,114 for a new shed at O'Connor Garden;
- \$689 for installation of a donated shed at Kambah Garden;
- \$6,822 for finalisation of the new shelter at Charnwood Garden and for new raised beds for people with less mobility, which were partly financed by a \$1,894 grant from the ACT Government; and
- \$6,414 for a new shelter and new lawn mower at Betty Cornhill Garden.

At Attachment A to this report is a table and graph summarising expenditure at each Garden.

At Attachment B to this report are the audited financial statements for the year 31 December 2022, together with the auditor's report.

Outlook for 2023

The Bureau of Meteorology's outlook for Autumn is for warmer, drier conditions. I would expect our water bills to rise back up to at least those of 2021 and possibly higher. Capital expenditure should moderate back to the level in 2021. This should see, subject to any unforeseen major expenditure, a modest surplus in 2023.

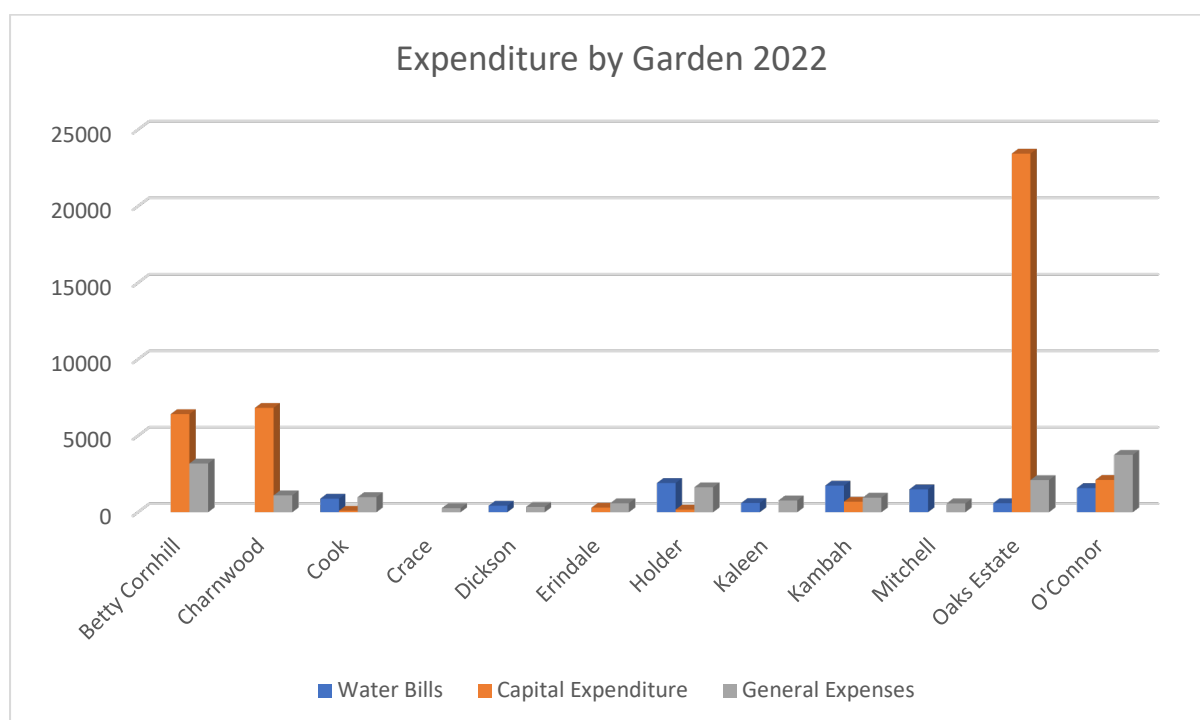
Neil Williams
Treasurer
Canberra Organic Growers' Society
March 2023

Table 1: Expenditure by Garden 2022

Garden	Water Bills	Capital Expenditure	General Expenses	TOTAL
Betty Cornhill		\$6,414	\$3,183	\$9,597
Charnwood		\$6,822	\$1,102	\$7,924
Cook	\$884	\$101	\$987	\$1,972
Crace			\$265	\$265
Dickson	\$426		\$346	\$772
Erindale		\$298	\$585	\$883
Holder	\$1,910	\$172	\$1,630	\$3,712
Kaleen	\$602		\$764	\$1,366
Kambah	\$1,741*	\$689	\$950	\$3,380
Mitchell	\$1,496		\$572	\$2,068
Oaks Estate	\$590#	\$23,432	\$2,100	\$26,122
O'Connor	\$1,579	\$2,114	\$3,750	\$7,443
TOTAL	\$9,228	\$40,042	\$16,234	\$65,504

*Offset by \$817 water refund from ACT Government (TCCS) for their water usage near garden

#Offset by \$74 water refund from ACT Government (TCCS) for their water usage near garden



CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS
SOCIETY INCORPORATED

Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 December 2022

CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INCORPORATED

COMMITTEE REPORT

In the opinion of the Committee, the accompanying Statement of Income and Expenditure, Statement of Assets and Liabilities and Notes to and forming part of the Accounts:

present fairly the financial position of the Canberra Organic Growers Society Incorporated at 31 December 2022, and the financial results of the Society of the year ending on that date.

the names of the executive members of the Committee during the year ended 31 December 2022 were:

Committee Members

The names of the committee members throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

Andy Hrast	President
Michele Barson	Vice President
Neil Williams	Treasurer
Jyl Thompson	Secretary
Beverley McConnell	Membership Secretary
Rebecca Travers	Magazine Editor
Joanne McMillan	Gardens Coordinator
Cathy Morison	Information Officer
Teresa Rose	Committee Member
Narelle McLean	Committee Member
Deborah Hamilton	Committee Member
Peter Weddell	Committee Member

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the Society during the financial year were to facilitate, foster and promote organic gardening & growing techniques in the ACT and operates many community gardens.

Operating Result

The surplus(Deficit) of the Society for the year end 31 December 2022 amounted to (\$5,461)

Dated this 19th day of Feb 2023.



Committee Member

Name:

Andrew Hrast President

Committee Member

Name:



NEIL WILLIAMS TREASURER

CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INCORPORATED

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

2021 \$		2022 \$
	Income	
17,156	Annual subscriptions	8,888
6,643	Donations, Fundraising & Sundry income	3,575
58,838	Garden Income (Mainly plot fees)	59,595
1,000	Misc Income - ACT Government Grants	1,894
<u>83,636</u>	Total Revenue	<u>73,952</u>
	Expenses	
3,212	Administration	4,115
2,720	Depreciation	2,143
19,669	Gardens - Assets	40,042
12,809	Gardens-General outlays	16,234
16,157	Gardens-Water bills	9,228
402	Insurance	402
879	Postage and Other General Expenses	95
7,667	Magazine Production	7,156
<u>63,516</u>	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>79,413</u>
<u>20,121</u>	Net Operating surplus (loss) for the Year	<u>(5,461)</u>

THE ACCOMPANYING NOTES FORM PART OF THESE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INCORPORATED

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022**

2021		2022
\$		\$
151,616	MEMBERS FUNDS	
20,121	Opening Balance	171,737
<u>171,737</u>	Surplus (Deficit) for year	<u>(5,461)</u>
	Closing Balance	<u><u>166,276</u></u>
	CURRENT ASSETS	
161,006	Cash at bank	77,583
-	Term Deposit	80,000
-	Trade Debtors	<u>105</u>
<u>161,006</u>	TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u><u>157,688</u></u>
	NON-CURRENT ASSETS	
10,730	Plant and Equipment	<u>8,587</u>
<u>10,730</u>	TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	<u><u>8,587</u></u>
<u>171,737</u>	TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>166,275</u></u>
	CURRENT LIABILITIES	-
<u><u>171,737</u></u>	NET ASSETS	<u><u>166,275</u></u>

CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INCORPORATED

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Note 1 Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial report is a special purpose financial report, non reporting entity that has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (1991).

Canberra Organic Growers Society Incorporated is an association incorporated in the Australian Capital Territory under the Associations Incorporation Act (1991).

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by the Society in the preparation of the financial report. The accounting policies have been consistently applied to all years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Reporting Basis and Conventions

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs modified by the revaluation of selected non-current assets, and financial assets and financial liabilities for which the fair value basis of accounting has been applied.

Accounting Policies

(a) Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on non-current assets by charges against income at rates based on the estimated useful life of the respective assets using the straight line method. The rates applied are as follows:

Class of Fixed Asset	Depreciation Rate	2022 \$
Depreciaton of P&E - Current year		2,143
Non garden equipment	25%	5,373
Fences	15%	9,603
Plumbing	20%	7,785
Mowers/trailer	30%	2,283
Sheds	25%	1,243
Other garden fixtures	25%	16,055
Accumulated depreciaton at 31 December 2022		42,342

All new garden capital purchases are written off as expenses in the year they were incurred. As it is considered that there is little realised value to the organisation once incurred.

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed and adjusted, if appropriate, at each balance sheet date.

An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than its estimated recoverable amount.

(b) Plant and Equipment

	Book Value 2021 \$	Book Value 2022 \$
P & E as at 31/12/22	16,917	8,587
P & E purchased		
Non garden equipment	567	425
Fences	4272	3631
Plumbing	2144	1715
Mowers/Trailer	225	157
Sheds	357	286
Other garden equipment	3166	2373
	10,731	8,587

CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INCORPORATED

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

(c) **Income Tax**

The Association is a tax exempt body under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act, 1997.

(d) **Comparative Figures**

Comparative Figures have been changed where necessary to facilitate comparison with the current year's figures.

(e) **Revenue**

Revenue from the provision of a service is recognised upon delivery of the services .

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to financial assets.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

(f) **Impairment of Assets**

At each reporting date, the entity assesses whether there is objective evidence that a financial instrument has been impaired. In the case of available-for-sale financial instruments, a prolonged decline in the value of the instrument is considered to determine whether an impairment has arisen. Impairment losses are recognised in the Income Statement.

(g) **Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Cash and Cash Equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within cash at bank in current assets on the balance sheet. Cash and cash equivalents are recognised at nominal value.

(h) **Cash on Deposit**

Cash on Deposit is comprised of deposits with financial institutions that can be drawn on at short notice. Cash on deposit is recognised at nominal value.

(i) **Interest bearing liabilities**

Interest bearing liabilities are recognised at fair value and are systematically repaid over the term of the liability.

CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INCORPORATED

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

In the opinion of the Committee the attached financial report :

1

Presents fairly the financial position of the Canberra Organic Growers Society Incorporated as at 31 December 2022 and its performance for the year ended on that date.

2

At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Canberra Organic Growers Society Incorporated will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

19th February 2023
Date

MLA
Committee Member

NWdb
Committee Member

HOUSTON & HANNA
PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

K D Hanna FIPA (Principal)

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0414 526 136

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email: kim@khanna.com.au

**INDEPENDENT REVIEW REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
THE CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INCORPORATED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

Reviewer's Opinion.

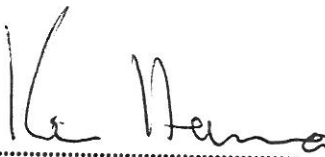
In my opinion,

- (a) The financial statements of the Association are properly drawn up:
 - (i) So as to give a true and fair view of matters required by subsection 72(2) of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991 to be dealt with in the financial statements
 - (ii) in accordance with the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991; and
 - (iii) in accordance with proper accounting standards, being Applicable Accounting Standards;
- (b) I have obtained all the information and explanations required;
- (c) Proper accounting records have been kept by the Association as required by the Act; and
- (d) The review was conducted in accordance with the rules of the Canberra Organic Growers Society Incorporated.

Scope.

I have reviewed the attached financial statements of the Canberra Organic Growers Society Incorporated for the year ended 31 December 2022. The Committee is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and the information they contain. I have conducted an independent review of these financial statements in order to express an opinion on them to the members of the Association.

The review opinion in this report has been formed on the above basis.


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Kim Hanna FIPA

Date. 22/02/2023