

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 23 August 2020 2.00-3.00 pm

Kambah Community Garden

Draft Minutes

1. Opening of Meeting

The meeting was opened at 2 pm by the COGS Secretary Julie Gorrell, who explained that the President, Peter Weddell, and Treasurer Andy Hrast were unable to attend due to ill health.

2. Election of Meeting Chair

The Secretary asked for a volunteer to chair the meeting. Members agreed that the Secretary would chair the meeting.

3. Attendance

The following members attended the meeting: Michele Barson, Assunta Battaglia, Shirley Bolton, Richard Buker, Donna French, Anna Dacre, Marcus Dirnberger, Aylwen Gardiner-Garden, Patricia Georgee, Julie Gorrell, Ed Highley, Richard Horobin, Karen James, Barbara Jesiolowski, Siobhan Leyne, Bev McConnell, Narelle McLean, Joanne McMillan, Cathy Morison, Anna O'Halloran, Teresa Rose, Mario Serenelli, DiDi Sommer, Stef Straub, Anne-Marie Thomson, Rebecca Travers, Mike Vale, Doug Widdup, Joanne Widdup, Sigine Zangino.

4. Apologies

The following members advised that they were unable to attend; Andy Hrast, Ann Smith, Peter Weddell, Terry Williams, Susan Wood.

5. Minutes of the 2019 Meeting

The draft minutes had been posted on the COGS' website and additional copies were available at the meeting. Minutes were accepted; moved by Shirley Bolton, seconded by Michele Barson.

6. Report on Activities of COGS during the last financial year

The COGS Executive Committee report had been posted on the COGS' website and additional copies were available at the meeting. The Chair briefly highlighted the following:

- COGS gardens have remained open during the COVID19 health emergency,
- Licensing discussions with the ACT Government have moved slowly due to COVID. A draft was prepared for discussion last week; the proposed discussion may not have taken place. The term of the licence is now expected to be 5 years, COGS was hoping for a 10-year licence. Some special conditions have been added to the licence; overnight parking in the gardens is not allowed, and the special conditions relating to livestock in the gardens now reflect COGS' rules.
- During the year, the Executive developed a dispute resolution procedure to meet the requirements of the amended ACT Incorporations Act. The procedure has been made available to all convenors and can be downloaded from the COGS' website.
- The COGS' website technology has been updated, and content and functionality improvements are underway. Cathy Morison is thanked for her work on the website.
- Patricia Georgee, COGS' Information Officer, is thanked for her work keeping the COGS' Facebook page current.
- COGS' quarterly Newsletter is looking wonderful. The Editor, Rebecca Travers, is thanked for her work on this.

The Report's acceptance was moved by Karen James, seconded by Jo McMillan.

7. Treasurer's Report and Audited Financial Statements

The Treasurer's Report and Audited Financial Statements had been posted on the COGS' website and additional copies were available at the meeting. The Chair noted the following:

- Plot fees were raised again this year due to the increased cost of COGS' water bill. Membership fees stay the same. The Executive Committee over the last couple of years had decided to spend down the accumulated surplus to offset increases in operating costs. It is anticipated that significant funds are likely to be needed for future water bills as climate in the longer term continues to dry. Additionally, COGS may be charged for water in the gardens where water is currently made available to COGS at no cost.
- Andy Hrast the Treasurer was thanked for his efforts on behalf of COGS.

The Report's acceptance was moved by Bev McConnell, seconded by Patricia Georgee.

8. Appointment of Auditor for 2020

The Treasurer's recommendation of Kim Hanna of Houston and Hanna Chartered Accountants as Auditor for 2020 was accepted.

9. Election of Office Bearers and the Executive Committee

The Chair noted that six nominations had been received for the six Ordinary Committee member positions. These were: Michele Barson, Aylwen Gardiner-Garden, Karen James, Narelle McLean, Teresa Rose and Terry Williams. They were elected unopposed.

Nominations were received for the positions of Treasurer (Andy Hrast), Gardens Coordinator (Jo McMillan), Newsletter Editor (Rebecca Travers) and Membership Secretary (Bev McConnell). All were elected unopposed. The Chair thanked them for their work in 2019-20 and for agreeing to continue in their roles.

The Chair noted that no nominations had been received for the positions of President, Vice President and Secretary. The people in these positions had an important leadership role for COGS, especially in developing and maintaining COGS' reputation for education and innovation in gardening. The Chair also noted that these positions required a significant commitment of time. Members were asked to consider these issues and whether they were able to take on one of these positions. The roles would stay as vacant positions until they are filled.

Teresa Rose asked if it was possible for a stipend or other encouragement (such as waiving plot fees) to be provided to these office bearers. The Chair noted that the COGS' constitution didn't allow for Executive Committee members to receive fees.

Aylwen Gardiner-Garden suggested that ordinary members may have the skills needed to take on some of the educational and other activities that COGS would like to do. It would be useful to know what skills people had. Bev McConnell (Membership Secretary) noted that some of this information was recorded with the membership details.

10. Other Business

Didi Sommer, a COGS member who is also on the Tuggeranong Community Council and a member of Tuggeranong Sea Change, asked how the gardens accrued the assets mentioned in the financial statement. It was explained that gardens accrue assets by purchasing these with the revenue from members' annual plot fees and funds received from ACT Government grants.

She asked if the confidential legal issue referred to in the Executive Committee's report would affect COGS' operations. The Chair advised that this would not be the case.

Didi Sommer also asked if COGS' members had Working with Children's Cards? Rebecca Travers advised that COGS was not legally obliged to obtain these as it was not an organisation that provided services. Didi noted, based on her experience in a similar community organisation that there was a need. The Chair agreed that this issue could go on the Agenda for the next Committee to consider.

Didi also asked whether COGS was considering developing new gardens in the Tuggeranong area. Jo McMillan (Gardens Coordinator) advised that there were no new gardens being considered for Tuggeranong. If COGS was approached by a group which had obtained land for a garden, the Executive would need to consider whether it had the resources to assist with garden establishment.

The Chair closed the meeting at 2.45 pm, thanking Shirley Bolton (Kambah Garden Convenor) and Narelle McLean (Mitchell Garden Convenor) for setting up the meeting space. The meeting thanked the Chair for her work as Secretary, and for chairing the Annual General Meeting.