



ASTW Annual General Meeting 2020 Minutes

Wednesday 16 December, 12:00pm AEDT via Zoom

Present:

David McGonigal (Chair), Elisa Elwin (President), Amanda Kendle, Anabel Dean, Annie Lyons, Belinda Jackson, Beverley Malzard, Briar Jensen, Carla Grossetti, Caro Ryan, Caroline Davidson, Caroline Gladstone, Catherine Marshall, Chris Chamberlin, Christina Butcher, Christina Pfeiffer, Christine Retschlag, Christine Salins, Danielle Lancaster, Danielle Norton, Dan Avila, Deborah Dickson-Smith, Denise Cullen, Ellie Cobb, Emily McAuliffe, Emma Sturgiss, Fiona Harper, Gaynor Reid, Helen Hayes, Jac Taylor, Jacinta Bonus, Jane Lawson, Jennifer Johnston, Jeremy Bourke, Jill Varley, Jim Butcher, Jocelyn Pride, John Borthwick, John Savage, Julie Ihle, Julie Miller, Justin Meneguzzi, Justine Costigan, Karen Halabi, Kate Armstrong, Katie Dundas, Keren Lavelle, Kerri McConnel, Kerry Heaney, Kylee Kay, Lee Atkinson, Lee Mylne, Len Rutledge, Lindy Alexander, Liz Bond, Louise Goldsbury, Louise Southerden, Lucy Siebert, Margaret Barca, Marian McGuinness, Marie Barbieri, Mark Daffey, Melissa Delaware, Michael Smith, Mike Parker-Brown, Nick Wayland, Patricia Maunder, Peter Hook, Peter Needham, Philip Game, Pip Macken, Polly Simmons, Rene Young, Roxanne Williams, Ruth Zukerman, Scott Podmore, Shaney Hudson, Shelley Winkel, Shirley Lowrie (Sinclair), Silke Kerwick, Sue Wallace, Susan Fuller, Tracey Croke, Tricia Welsh

Apologies:

Tiana Templeman
Michael Wooley
Natascha Mirosch
Sally Morgan
Paula Morgan
Rama Gaind

Proxies

Jodi Clark
Rhonda Bannister.

1. Welcome by President, Elisa Elwin

A quorum was determined, and the meeting officially opened at 12:06pm.

President, Elisa Elwin, welcomed members to the 2020 AGM.

2. Appointment of Chairman under Clause 28 (2) of the Constitution

As per Clause 28 (2) of the Constitution, Elisa Elwin nominated David McGonigal as Chair of the AGM.



David McGonigal advised members of the AGM proceedings in the virtual format.

3. In Memoriam

The following members were recognised in memoriam:

- Michael Osbourne – remembered by Caroline Gladstone
- John Pond – remembered by John Borthwick

4. Apologies and Proxies

Apologies and two proxies were noted.

5. Confirmation of 2019 AGM Minutes

David McGonigal moved an amendment to the 2019 minutes to read that next year's convention be held in 2020. Seconded by Jac Taylor. Motion carried.

No further amendments received.

Motion: To accept the amended 2019 AGM Minutes

Moved: Helen Hayes

Seconded: Justin Meneguzzi

MOTION CARRIED.

6. President's Report

President, Elisa Elwin, presented the President's report, and highlighted:

- The challenges to the industry due to COVID-19, the sudden resignation of five Board members and the departure of the previous secretariat
- The many hours spent by the Board, the Awards sub-committee and all other volunteers
- The creation of the Virtual Awards Ceremony
- The ongoing setbacks and time experienced by the Board and the Society caused by a small number of members and the resulting burn-out of many Board members
- Thanks to the previous and ongoing Board members for their dedication and time

Motion: To accept the President's report

Moved: Kylee Kay

Seconded: Shaney Hudson

MOTION CARRIED.

7. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer, Christina Pfeiffer, presented the Treasurer's report, and highlighted:

- There was \$256,344 income in 2019/20 and a total net profit of \$31,080



- An audit exemption for 30 June 2019 was granted from NSW Fair Trading
- An audit exemption for 30 June 2020 had been applied for with NSW Fair Trading
- There was a substantial reduction in sponsorship income due to COVID-19; the full impact will appear in 2021 accounts
- Acknowledged the work of the previous treasurer Deborah Dickson Smith October 2019-March 2020 and Natascha Mirosch March to July 2020. Thanks was extended to Kylee Kay for her work on the 2019/20 accounts.

A question was raised in relation to the reduction in bank balance despite a recorded profit 30 June 2020. Kylee Kay noted that there was a large amount of pre-paid income at 30 June 2019 related to the convention not yet recorded to the P&L.

A question was raised in relation to award prizes of which a full report will be provided in presentation of the 2020-21 financial report when the overall impact of COVID-19 on the Society's balance will be better reflected.

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Moved: Deborah Dickon-Smith

Seconded: Kerri McConnel

MOTION CARRIED.

8. Confirmation of 2019/2020 Financial Statement

The 2019/2020 financial statements as of 30 June 2020 were prepared by a certified accountant and presented with the AGM papers.

Motion: To accept the 2019/2020 Financial Statements

Moved: Shaney Hudson

Seconded: Deborah Dickson-Smith

MOTION CARRIED.

9. Election of Board Members 2020/2021

David McGonigal announced the results of the nominations for the Writer and Digital Publisher vacancies on the Board 2020/21. As no competing nominations were received, the successful candidates were:

Caroline Gladstone

Christina Butcher

Christina Pfeiffer

Elisa Elwin

Jocelyn Pride

Kerri McConnel

Scott Podmore



Shirley Sinclair

One nomination for the PR position on the Board was received from Pip Macken.

David McGonigal opened nominations to the floor for the second PR member vacancy. Shelley Winkle, nominated by Helen Hayes and seconded by Christina Pfeiffer, accepted the position.

10. Election of Office Bearers for 2020/2021

David McGonigal invited nominations for the position of office-bearer from the newly elected Board.

President

Elisa Elwin, nominated by Kylee Kay and seconded by Fiona Harper, accepted the nomination.

Vice President

Caroline Gladstone, nominated by Kylee Kay and seconded by Debora Dickson-Smith, accepted the nomination.

Jocelyn Price and Scott Podmore declined to be nominated.

Treasurer

Kerri McConnel, nominated by Christina Pfeiffer and seconded by Elisa Elwin, accepted the nomination

Christina Pfeiffer declined to be nominated.

Secretary

Christina Pfeiffer, nominated by Pip Macken and seconded by Carla Grossetti, accepted the nomination.

Elisa Elwin, as ongoing President, thanked the membership and spoke to the future of ASTW in 2021.

11. Special Resolution

A Special Resolution Explanatory Memorandum was tabled with the AGM papers to adopt the full revised Constitution as an official document with NSW Fair Trading following the amendments that were accepted and legally came into effect as of 27 October 2020.

Special Resolution: *To approve the adoption of the revised Constitution incorporating the amendments that came into effect 27 October 2020*

Moved: Shaney Hudson

Seconded: Jac Taylor

SPECIAL RESOLUTION CARRIED.

12. General Business

Acknowledgment of 10, 20, 30 and 40-year memberships

Lee Mylne acknowledged and congratulated the following members:



40-year anniversary

Life and Full Writer Member – Lorraine Ironside

30-year anniversary

Full Writer Member – John Borthwick

20-year anniversary

Friend – John Kerr

Full Writer Member – Christine Salins

Full Writer Member – Helen Hayes

Full Writer Member – Louise Southerden

Full Writer Member – Sheridan Rhodes

PR Member – Caitlin O'Loan

PR Member – Caroline Davidson

PR Member – Silke Kerwick

PR Member – Susan Fuller

10-year anniversary

Full Writer Member – Carmen Jenner

Full Writer Member – Shirley Sinclair

PR Member - Shelley Winkel

Life Member Announcement

Lee Mylne congratulated Len Rutledge who was bestowed with Life Membership of ASTW.

Len Rutledge thanked the Board and membership.

Native Content

David McGonigal advised that a motion had been tabled by Jac Taylor prior to the AGM following the call for agenda items in relation to Native Content. Jac Taylor was invited to speak and noted the definition of native content and the changing landscape of travel writing, however native content is not eligible for award entries.

Peter Hook supported the motion and provided background on behalf of the Awards Committee.

Motion: That this meeting requests that the Awards committee consider including native content as valid travel writing for the purposes of entry to any and all categories of the ASTW Awards for Excellence. If that is not accepted then there should be a specific category, or categories, for native content.

Moved: Jac Taylor

Seconded: Peter Hook

MOTION CARRIED.

Announcement of 2021 Convention Host

Elisa Elwin announced that the 2021 Convention Host will be hosted by The Tweed Tourism Co.



Louise Terry from The Tweed Tourism Co provided a short video and presentation.

Questions/Motions from the Floor

David McGonigal invited members from the floor to provide further motions and questions.

Mark Daffey tabled a motion from the floor and was invited to speak in relation to the Terms & Conditions of the Awards for Excellence 2020 and a decision made by the Board and Awards Committee to uphold a winning entry despite being found to have breached the Terms and Conditions.

Peter Hook provided a statement on behalf of the Awards Committee and noted that this was considered a technical issue and that the decision of the judges was final as per the Terms and Conditions and not appealable and communication will not be entered to. Peter Hook apologised to anyone affected and noted that the Awards Committee will be reviewing and considering all feedback for the 2021 Awards for Excellence.

There was a robust discussion amongst members. David McGonigal noted that he was uncertain whether a motion made within an AGM can override the decision of the judges and suggested that the motion be taken as an advisory motion to reflect the views of the members present at the AGM and to inform the Board, but will not be binding on the Board, Awards Committee, or judges.

Advisory Motion: That awards entries found not to have abided by the rules of entry and Terms & Conditions be immediately disqualified, even if the discretion was discovered after the awards have been announced.

The Advisory Motion did not receive a majority of those present. Therefore, the Chairman recommended that this be taken by the new Board and Awards Committee for their consideration.

Roxanne Williams enquired whether ASTW intends to encourage young members to join and was advised that ASTW is open to younger members if they meet the membership eligibility. Roxanne was invited to lead a working group focused on recruitment in 2021.

13. Close

David McGonigal thanked members for attending the 2020 AGM and declared the meeting closed at 1.47pm.