

# Friends of Grasslands Annual General Meeting

Thursday 17 March 2022

## Draft Minutes

The meeting was held at 7 Moroney St Fraser, with President Jamie Pittock in the chair, opening at 5:30pm. The following papers had previously been circulated: AGM agenda, the president's report, a notice on election of members, and the draft minutes for 2021 AGM (held 16 March 2021), the annual report for 2021 and the 2021 annual audited accounts.

### Attendance and apologies

#### *Present:*

Jamie Pittock, Janet Russell, Sarah Sharp (minutes), Helen Sims, Andrew Zelnik, Marg Ning, Heather Sweet, Alice Hathorn, Andy Russell (returning officer), Linda Spinaze, Marianne Albury-Colless, Kat McGilp, GCG, Michael Bedingfield, Geoff Robertson, Kim Pullen, Brigitta Wimmer.

#### *Apologies:*

Naarilla Hirsch, Jennifer Liney, Rainer Rehwinkel, Jenny Horsfield, Maree Gilbert, John Byrne, John Fitz Gerald, Clare Henderson, Larry O'Loughlin, Sarah Hnatiuk, Ken Hodgkinson.

### Minutes of 2021 AGM

The draft minutes were accepted without change. Moved Kat McGilp, seconded Alice Hathorn.

### Matters arising from minutes

There were no matters arising from the 2021 AGM minutes.

### Annual accounts and auditor's report

The auditor's report was tabled and accepted. Moved: Andrew Zelnik, seconded Geoff Robertson.

The relatively large amount of funds available to FOG was noted, to be discussed after the meeting and by the Committee members.

Thanks were expressed to the auditor Pauline Hore and to the FOG treasurer, Janet Russell.

### Presidents Report

Thanks were given to Ann Milligan who collated the report and Sarah Sharp for assistance editing. The President noted the broad array of activities undertaken by FOG. Particular mention was given to the important conservation work at Top Hut TSR, led by Margaret Ning and June Wilkinson. The president stressed the importance of the grants scheme, used to support work in and by the community. The convenor Andrew Zelnik, and other members of the team, Janet Russell, Ken Hodgkinson were thanked.

The President expressed his concerns about the Committee members and other active members affected by stress and overwork, noting there were four committee members and others who have chosen to step back or resign. Naarilla Hirsch was thanked and highly commended for her work over 12 years of convening the Advocacy Group. Geoff, a major force for many years had decided to take a further step back, and Linda Spinaze and Maree Gilbert are both resigning from the committee. All were thanked for their significant contributions.

In light of the high workload Jamie recommended that the members present at the AGM and the new Committee discuss expectations and options to decrease workloads and stress levels. Two areas in particular to be discussed:

- a) The extent of the advocacy agenda, and the hope that by undertaking proactive work the need to respond reactively would decrease; and
- b) To manage advocacy and other tasks to better use resources to advance our agenda.

The president's report was accepted, moved by Heather Sweet and seconded by Geoff Robertson.

## Draft Annual Report

Geoff Robertson stated that the volunteer hours reported were indicative of the significant effort that the members expended. Geoff formally announced that he would be stepping back and no longer compiling the newsletter or other communication tasks, or organizing and running events. He recommended the new committee should consider how to record volunteer work hours.

Janet Russell announced that she would be standing down from evaluating projects; Andrew Zelnik stated he would continue to coordinate the Supported Projects, but stressed the need for assistance in evaluating new projects.

The AGM identified that the Committee should consider reviewing the website.

The annual report was accepted, moved by Janet Russell and seconded by Marianne Albury-Colless.

## Motions on notice

There were no motions on notice presented.

## Election of office bearers

Andy Russell was Returning Officer.

The outcome of the election follows.

### *President*

Jamie Pittock had nominated prior to the meeting. There being no other nominations Jamie was appointed to the position of President.

### *Vice Presidents*

Andrew Zelnik and Sarah Sharp had nominated prior to the meeting. There being no other nominations Andrew and Sarah were appointed to the positions of Vice-President.

## *Secretary*

Helen Sims had nominated prior to the meeting. There being no other nominations Helen was appointed to the position of Secretary

## *Treasurer*

There were no nominations for Treasurer prior to the meeting. Janet Russell nominated at the meeting and was appointed to the position of Treasurer.

## *Ordinary members*

The following FOG members had been nominated prior to the meeting: Rainer Rehwinkel, Alice Hathorn, Margaret Ning and Heather Sweet. All were appointed as committee members. No other nominations at the meeting were received.

## Round table discussion

Advocacy: the coordinator position is not filled. The position was identified as having two elements, based on the type of work:

- a) Administrative: weekly web checks, notification to the advocacy group of potential issues and clarification of who will take the lead in preparing responses, coordinating the submission, then filing and notification of the submission and writing a bimonthly report on advocacy issues for the committee and newsletter.
- b) Technical: writing the responses and editing the responses, requiring a level of experience about the issues, including knowledge of past submissions that overlap.

Some options were raised: further cooperation with the Conservation Council who also undertakes web searches, asking other members of FOG for assistance, based on a detailed description of the job requirements.

Newsletter and Bulletin: also lack a coordinator. Consider contacting prospective members or others to find out if anyone could take it on.

Overall, try and draw in the membership to be more involved, either joining the committee or from outside the committee. Need to consider succession planning.

Another alternative is to create a paid position to undertake administrative work, with an estimated cost of about \$10,000 pa for a half day a week.

## Items for next Committee meeting:

Consideration of roles and responsibilities and how to recruit more committee members or others to fill vacant roles.

Consider the key matters for FOG to address in order to best manage expectations without burn out and how to build in succession planning.

## Close

The meeting closed at 6:45pm

Next ordinary meeting: 31 March, Conservation Council office, 5.30.