



# *Friends of Grasslands*

Supporting native grassy ecosystems

## **MINUTES - 2023 FOG AGM - 8 March 2023 - FINAL**

The meeting was held at the Conservation Council office, 14/26 Barry Drive, Ground Floor, Lena Karmel Lodge, Canberra ACT 2601, with President Jamie Pittock in the chair, opening at 6:11pm.

The following papers had previously been made available on the fog.org.au website:

- AGM agenda,
- the president's report,
- a notice on election of members,
- the draft minutes for 2022 AGM (held 17 March 2022),
- the annual report for 2022 and
- the annual audited accounts (2022).

Hard copies of the agenda, the draft minutes from the 2022 AGM and the annual report for 2022 were also available at the meeting.

Jamie acknowledged the First Nations people and their past and continuing contribution to Country.

1. **Attendance** - Jamie Pittock (Chair), Marianne Albury-Colless, Paul Archer, Michael Bedingfield, Hugh Coppell, John Fitz Gerald, Stephen Horn, David Johnson, Kat McGilp, Margaret Ning, Trevor Preston, Geoff Robertson, Andy Russell, Janet Russell, Sarah Sharp, Helen Sims, Heather Sweet, Fay Wareham, Matt Whitting, Andrew Zelnik

**Apologies** – Julia Raine, Rainer Rehwinkel, Linda Spinaze, Michael Stone

2. **Minutes of previous AGM** - Motion: that the record of minutes from the previous AGM held on the 17 March 2022 be accepted as a true and accurate account of the meeting.

Moved: Kat McGilp    Seconded: Geoffrey Robertson. The draft minutes were accepted without change.

3. **Matters arising from previous meeting** – The chair explained that there were no matters formally arising from the 2022 AGM though several issues had been discussed – overload/stress; advocacy; website; more assistance for Andrew on the Supported Projects Sub-Committee. These were all addressed by the Committee during the year, with varying success.

In response to Jamie's invitation to discuss the most demanding issue of advocacy, the AGM supported continuation of our adopted policy of emphasising proactive advocacy over reactive advocacy; and noted the informal suggestion that the advocacy group consider a workshop on how to advance and better manage FOG's advocacy role.

Kat McGilp moved that the meeting thank Sarah for the fantastic work and for the energy and devotion she has put into advocacy during the year, particularly both the Planning Review and the Biodiversity Network concept. This was seconded by Jamie Pittock and passed by acclamation.

4. **Reports** – All reports presented under this item are on <https://www.fog.org.au/AGMs.htm>. Persons responsible for the report and those carrying out responsibilities for FOG were invited to address the meeting and attendees were encouraged to ask questions. The chair encouraged attendees to read the annual report.

**President's report.** Jamie addressed topics he had covered in his President's report for 2022 (see p7 of FOG's Annual Report for 2022), stressing the importance of FOG continuing to maintain pressure for the benefit of our grasslands and the better management that results from FOG's links with landholders. He acknowledged and thanked specific people for their commitment. In particular, he noted Margaret Ning's continuous 26 years of service on the FOG committee and the contributions by both Janet Russell and Andrew Zelnik who had announced their decisions to step down from the committee at this AGM. Jamie alluded to the six-month appointment of a Project Officer to assist with advocacy, but with the appointee's departure, a different approach to advocacy would divert those resources to assist in more proactive work.

He concluded by thanking all committee members for their hard work over the year.

No questions were asked.

Motion: that the President's Report be accepted by the meeting.

Moved: Andy Russell

Seconded: Margaret Ning

Accepted

Vice-President Sarah Sharp then publicly gave her support for the great strategic job Jamie has done of leading FOG towards more proactive involvement.

**Treasurer's Reports.** Janet presented the Auditor's report and her financial reports that had previously been made available and remarked that FOG had spent more on restoration than we had previously. Grants have been spent.

There were no comments on the Treasurer's report.

Motion: that the Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 be accepted by the meeting

Moved: Sarah Sharp

Seconded: Andrew Zelnik

Accepted

Jamie thanked Janet, indicating that her hard work was greatly appreciated.

Motion 4: that a vote of thanks be passed recognising the hard work provided to the Friends of Grasslands on a voluntary basis by our auditor Pauline Hore

Moved: Janet Russell

Seconded: Andrew Zelnik. Accepted by acclamation

Motion 5: that Pauline Hore be appointed as our auditor for the year ending 31 December 2023

Moved: Janet Russell

Seconded: Trevor Preston

Accepted

**Annual report.** Helen presented FOG's annual report for 2022 which had previously been made available. The report was compiled from contributions by volunteers who had accepted responsibility for relevant tasks and activities. Printed copies were presented to Margaret Ning, Janet Russell and Andrew Zelnik in acknowledgement of their contributions.

Motion 6: that the Annual Report for 2022 be accepted by the meeting

Moved: Heather Sweet

Seconded: Trevor Preston

Accepted

5. **Motions on Notice** – no motions on notice were received

6. **Elections** –

Motion: that Andy Russell be appointed as Returning Officer for the election of office bearers and Board members

Moved: Helen Sims

Seconded: Michael Bedingfield

Accepted by

acclamation

Jamie stood down as chair and the Returning Officer proceeded with elections for office holders and committee members by first declaring all positions vacant. He announced that nominations were advertised and sought in accordance with requirements of the constitution.

Office bearer positions were announced:

President

Two Vice Presidents

Secretary

Treasurer

As at the closing time 6.00pm 1 March 2023 the Secretary had received sufficient nominations to fill the positions of President, 1 x Vice President and Secretary, and therefore no election is required for these three positions.

President: one vacancy and one nomination from Jamie Pittock. I declare Jamie Pittock elected as President

Vice-President: two vacancies and one nomination from Sarah Sharp. I declare Sarah Sharp elected as Vice-President and one vacancy

Secretary: one vacancy and one nomination from Helen Sims. I declare Helen Sims elected as Secretary

There were no nominations from the floor for the vacant position of Vice President.

For the vacant position of Treasurer, Jamie Pittock nominated David Johnson from the floor This was seconded by Sarah Sharp and accepted by David Johnson. Andy declared David

Johnson elected as Treasurer.

For ordinary committee members, Andy declared the following nominations were received:

- Hugh Coppell
- Margaret Ning
- Trevor Preston
- Julia Raine
- Rainer Rehwinkel
- Fay Wareham
- Matt Whitting

A further nomination to elect Heather Sweet from the floor was moved by Jamie Pittock; seconded by Janet Russell and accepted by Heather Sweet.

Andy read the motion - that the following be noted as duly elected to the Friends of Grasslands committee for 2023

- President: Jamie Pittock
- Vice-President: Sarah Sharp
- Secretary: Helen Sims
- Treasurer: David Johnson

- Other Board Members Hugh Coppell  
Margaret Ning  
Trevor Preston  
Julia Raine  
Rainer Rehwinkel  
Fay Wareham  
Matt Whitting  
Heather Sweet

Moved: Andrew Zelnik

Seconded: Michael Bedingfield

Accepted

With the election of the committee concluded, the President resumed the chair and thanked the Returning Officer for his contribution.

7. Arrangements for follow-up actions were discussed as follows: Sarah notified those present that with the AGM, some roles and responsibilities have become vacant. Members, both on and off the committee, will be asked to consider picking these up. Helen will liaise with Paul Archer for roles and responsibilities to be advertised in the next Newsletter.  
Matt Whitting also provided information about the opportunities and potential threats of the Nature Repair Market Bill which is out for comment, including the opportunity for tradeable biodiversity certificates to be introduced for repair of grasslands. He indicated that once this bill is accepted, landholders looking for 25 year proposals will be seeking groups like FOG for assistance.
8. Jamie concluded the 2023 FOG AGM at 7:13pm and attendees resumed social engagement. A vote of thanks was passed to Margaret Ning and Andrew Zelnik for organising the food and drinks.