



Friends of Grasslands

Supporting native grassy ecosystems

DRAFT MINUTES - 2024 FOG AGM - 20 March 2024

1. The President opened the meeting at 6pm with an Acknowledgement of Country

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

- Notice of the AGM
- Agenda
- Draft Minutes from the 2023 AGM (agenda item 2)
- Annual Report for 2023 containing the president's report and the annual audited accounts for 2023 (agenda item 3)
- Details of a nomination for Life Membership of FOG for Richard Bomford (agenda item 4)
- Notice of a special resolution to amend the constitution, with accompanying clean copy of the proposed constitution, a marked-up version of the constitution showing changes and an explanation of the proposed changes (agenda item 5)
- Notice of election of members, committee nomination form, voting procedure and list of nominees for committee positions (agenda item 6)

Apologies were announced from Richard Bomford, Rainer Rehwinkel, Brigitta Wimmer, Pamela Orr, Sandra Hand, Naarilla Hirsch, Linda Spinaze, Julia Raine, Ann Milligan, Warwick and Shirley Daniels, John Fitz Gerald, Heather Sweet, Janet Russell, Bruno Ferronato

Attendance - Members present:

Jamie Pittock (chair), Sarah Sharp, Andy Russell, Helen Sims, Margaret Ning, Marianne Albury-Colless, Alan Ford, Geoff Robertson, Andrew Zelnik, Fay Wareham, Paul Archer, Hugh Coppel, Trevor Preston, Matt Whitting, Emily Sutcliffe, Cathy Robertson, Kat McGilp, Stephen Horn

2. Minutes of previous AGM

Draft minutes had been made available.

Motion 1: that the record of minutes from the previous AGM held on the 8 March 2023 be accepted as a true and accurate account

Moved: Trevor Preston Seconded: Marianne Albury-Colless. Approved by show of hands.

There were no actions arising from the 2023 AGM.

3. Reports: -

The President's report was presented as included in the annual report which had been made available prior to the meeting.

Kat McGilp proposed a resolution of thanks to Sarah Sharp for her sterling efforts to progress the Biodiversity Network across the ACT Government. Moved: Kat McGilp seconded by Andy Russell. Approved by show of hands.

Motion 2: that the President's Report be accepted by the meeting

Moved: Sarah Sharp Seconded: Andrew Zelnik – Approved by show of hands.

The chair called on the treasurer David Johnson to present the Treasurer's report as included in the annual report.

Motion 3: that the Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 be accepted by the meeting

Moved: Margaret Ning Seconded: Matt Whitting — Approved by show of hands.

The treasurer then referred to the auditor's report which is included in the Annual Report

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

Moved: David Johnson Seconded: Andrew Zelnik – Approved by show of hands

The treasurer then moved Motion 5.

Motion 5: that Pauline Hore be appointed as our auditor for the year ending 31 December 2024

Moved: David Johnson Seconded: Michael Bedingfield — Approved by show of hands

The chair presented the Annual Report – Questions and discussion ensued about the Nature Repair Act and EPBC reform and regional planning. It was also informally agreed that FOG engage with Australian Land Conservation Alliance (ALCA) directly as well as engaging with members of the alliance.

Sarah proposed a vote of thanks to Jamie for leading the organisation in such a very professional way. Unanimous agreement.

Motion 6: that the Annual Report for 2023 be accepted by the meeting

Moved: Marianne A-Colless Seconded: Fay Wareham – Approved by show of hands

The chair thanked Helen Sims for minute-taking and preparation of the annual report.

4. Motions on Notice –

Honorary Life Membership for Richard Bomford as recommended by FOG's committee, with the nomination prepared by Geoff Robertson.

Motion 7: that the meeting approve Honorary Life Membership for Richard Bomford in recognition of his many years' contributions to the organisation and to grassy ecosystems generally.

Moved: Andy Russell Seconded: Andrew Zelnik. Approved by show of hands.

In Richard's absence, Geoff Robertson read the following message from Richard.

“Greetings from the South Coast. My apologies for not joining you this evening.

FoG is a wonderful, multifaceted organisation, and I am honoured to be associated with it.

I have enjoyed many days on FoG excursions. They have ranged from grasslands in Western Victoria, to cemeteries in central NSW; and, from time to time, nearer to home, on the coastal escarpment.

It has been my pleasure to manage the FoG website. I started with very little knowledge and a good book - an introduction to Microsoft FrontPage 2003. At the time FrontPage was part of the Microsoft Office software suite; but it didn't last. Microsoft had bought it from someone else and put their 'Office' stamp on it. Which meant it did some things very well, and many things in a particularly Microsoft sort of way. Those many odd things are not obvious until you get into the underlying HTML [*Hyper Text Markup Language*] code: but there you find Microsoft this and Microsoft that in every paragraph.

The learning process continued as I came to grips with CSS – Cascading Style Sheets. Most of what Microsoft was adding to the code turned out to be 'styles'. The introductory book mentions styles but doesn't come to grips with them. I bought a manual, *Learning Web Design*, and read it pretty much cover to cover, pencil in hand, while looking after my Mum up at Noosa. That's when the blue navigation buttons on the FoG web pages came into existence, right down to the radius of the curves on the corners and the exact colour of the blue. Luckily, once you've specified the buttons in a style sheet they look after themselves: you don't have to remember how you did it.

From that point on, the website has been pretty plain sailing. Many people contribute content: my job is to load it up, to make sure we are not infringing copyright or defaming anyone, and to be sure we are getting our dates and spelling right.

So, like most things, the website is a joint effort. I think this award reflects the importance that a well-managed and up to date website has for a community group, as a readily accessible repository of our collective wisdom. It is great to see it getting that recognition.

Thank you to FoG, and all who make FoG work, for this award.”

5. Special Resolution to amend the FOG Constitution

The chair introduced the special resolution, referring to the earlier notification and availability of both the draft revised Constitution and its explanatory statement.

Motion 8: that the meeting approve the amendments to FOG's Constitution as tabled

Moved: Matt Whitting Seconded: Sarah Sharp. Approved by show of hands

6. Elections

The president stood down as chair; and the Returning Officer accepted the chair and declared all positions vacant.

As at the closing time 6.00pm 13 March 2024 the Secretary had received sufficient nominations to fill the office bearing positions of President, 1 x Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary, and therefore no election was required for these four positions. The returning officer declared the following positions:

President: Jamie Pittock

Vice-President: Sarah Sharp and one vacancy

Treasurer: David Johnson
Secretary: Helen Sims

Hugh Coppell was nominated from the floor for the vacant position of Vice President by Helen Sims; seconded by Jamie Pittock. There being no further nominations, Hugh Coppell was declared as Vice-President, his nomination as ordinary committee member being withdrawn.

Ordinary Committee members -

The following nominations were received and with no further nominations from the floor the nominees were declared as ordinary members, thus completing the 2024 committee.

- o Margaret Ning
- o Trevor Preston
- o Julia Raine
- o Rainer Rehwinkel
- o Fay Wareham
- o Matt Whitting
- o Emily Sutcliffe

This was supported by Motion 9

Motion 9: The motion is - that the following be noted as duly elected to the Friends of Grasslands committee for 2024

- *President: Jamie Pittock*
- *Vice-President: Sarah Sharp*
- *Vice-President: Hugh Coppell*
- *Treasurer: David Johnson*
- *Secretary: Helen Sims*
- *Ordinary Committee Members—*
 - o *Margaret Ning*
 - o *Trevor Preston*
 - o *Julia Raine*
 - o *Rainer Rehwinkel*
 - o *Fay Wareham*
 - o *Matt Whitting*
 - o *Emily Sutcliffe*

Moved: Helen Sims Seconded: Michael Bedingfield. Approved by show of hands.

The Returning Officer stood down and Jamie resumed the chair.

The chair acknowledged the role of Returning Officer performed by Andy Russell and also that Andy was standing down as Public Officer for FOG after many years, the AGM marking his resignation.

Motion 10: Vote of thanks to Andy Russell for acting as Returning Officer at FOG's 2024 AGM was passed by acclamation.

7. Closing comments – The returning president took the opportunity to notify members present of an upcoming SE Highlands grasslands conservation conference / initiative to be held at St

Mark's Centre Barton on 1 May, and asked for volunteers to see him after this meeting to assist with logistics, collecting abstracts from the presenters, etc.

8. The meeting closed at 7pm