



Friends of Grasslands

Supporting native grassy ecosystems

FOG Annual General Meeting 2025 –draft Minutes

Wednesday 30 April 2025

Conservation Council Offices, Unit 14/26 Barry Drive, Ground Floor,
Lena Karmel Lodge, Canberra City

1. The meeting commenced at 6.07pm with a welcome and Acknowledgement of Country from President and Chair, Jamie Pittock.
2. Jamie read the following apologies – Naarilla Hirsch, Peter Geelan-Small, Pamela Orr, Brigitta Wimmer and David Johnson. No further apologies were offered from the floor. In attendance (from the signed Attendance Sheet) were Rainer Rehwinkel, Margaret Ning, Jamie Pittock, Julie Raine, Helen Sims, Fay Wareham, Matt Whitting, Emily Sutcliffe, Heather Sweet, Geoff Robertson, Catherine Robertson, Andrew Zelnik, Jeanette Mill, Paul Cheeseman, John Fitz Gerald, Matthew Kent and Matthew Mullaney, plus Sarah Sharp (via Zoom).
3. Minutes of previous AGM. The chair referred to the draft Minutes from the 2024 AGM which had been available on FOG's website for some weeks. There being no comments, Motion 1 was put:
Motion 1: that the record of minutes from the previous AGM held on the 20 March 2024 be accepted as a true and accurate account.
Moved: Andrew Zelnik Seconded: Margaret Ning
Agreed by show of hands
4. Minutes of GM (3 August 2024). The chair referred to the draft Minutes from the General Meeting of 3 August 2024 which had been available on FOG's website for some weeks. There being no comments, Motion 2 was put:
Motion 2: that the record of minutes from the General Meeting held on 3 August 2024 be accepted as a true and accurate account.
Moved: John Fitz Gerald Seconded: Andrew Zelnik
Agreed by show of hands
5. Matters arising from the previous AGM and General Meeting. There were no matters arising from these meetings, so the chair proceeded to the next item.
6. Reports: -

(1) Annual report, including the President's Report.

For the meeting Jamie summarised his President's report, printed in full in the Annual Report for 2024. He expressed his amazement at just how much is achieved by such a small organisation each year. He acknowledged again contributions by - Sarah Sharp, Matt Whitting, Paul Archer, John Fitz Gerald, Margaret Ning, Hugh Coppell and Trevor Preston (who both moved from Canberra during the year) and Heather Sweet (who stepped down from the Committee last year and became a Participating Observer while she continued in her 7-year tenure of Membership Officer until this AGM). And then there are all those who contribute without necessarily taking a leading role.

From that point, Jamie referred to the upcoming federal election and last year's ACT election, and expressed the hope for positive results from working with new Ministers. He referred to the workshop that focused on opportunities for NSW to lift their game and acknowledged the good documentation of the workshop by Ann Milligan. He also referred to the Committee's change in orientation of the Supported Projects program during the year with no new grants issued, but plans for commissioned projects initially with further site mapping and preparation of a management plan for Gundry TSR. Finally Jamie noted the NSW Environment Minister's efforts in relation to brumbies in Kosciuszko.

The President's Report appears in its entirety in the Annual Report on www.fog.org.au.

Comments and contributions from the floor –

Votes of thanks from Rainer to Jamie for his presidency and guidance; from John Fitz Gerald to the field workers who turn up time after time. Both very positively received.

Andrew Zelnik asked questions about the possibility of housing pressure further threatening grasslands and whether there had been any follow-up from the South Eastern Highlands workshop. FOG has been working with all ACT Government people with knowledge, on the idea to use the mapping project and the Biodiversity Network concept to review proposed development areas so that FOG's efforts (and FOG) are not seen as impediments. Sarah also referred to much high conservation value on Commonwealth/National land and the plans to extend the Biodiversity Network concept to other land managers in the Commonwealth.

Regarding any follow-up from the workshop, Jamie advised that NSW Environment Minister and local member Steve Whan were sent outcomes of the

workshop but so far FOG had received no feedback. He noted that FOG should pursue this during 2025, although Rainer reported that NSW is not looking to develop a Biodiversity Network at this stage.

With that, motion 3 was put -

Motion 3: that the President's Report be accepted by the meeting.

Moved: Helen Sims Seconded: Fay Wareham

Agreed by show of hands.

Persons responsible for other aspects of the report who carry out responsibilities for FOG were invited to address the meeting in response to questions raised by attendees. There being no further discussion, motion 4 was put -

Motion 4: that the Annual Report be accepted by the meeting.

Moved: Matt Whitting Seconded: Matt Mullaney

Agreed by show of hands.

(2) Financial Reports (Treasurer, David Johnson's covering report)

In the absence of the Treasurer, his report was presented to the meeting by the chair.

Consistent with the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991*, as Treasurer, I hereby present to FOG's 2025 AGM my financial reports for 2024.

General Account

The General Account had a balance of \$104,996.08 at the end of 2024, up from \$92,081.43 at the end of 2023. This represents a net income of \$12,914.65 for 2024, which was less than the net income from the previous year (\$17,569).

Overall income was higher (\$42,7388 vs \$38,220), largely due to increased book sales and \$28,887 grant money for Blue Gum Point, but the increase in expenses was even higher (\$32,473 vs \$20,650), with \$26,706 of this spent on the Blue Gum Point restoration.

Income from memberships in 2024 (\$5,490) remained almost the same as 2023 (\$5,440).

Gift fund

The Gift Fund received \$7,400 in donations in 2024, considerably less than \$20,800 in 2023 when we actively campaigned for donations. The reduced donations coincided with increased expenditure, leading to a net loss of \$1470 for 2024. The largest items of expenditure were the final payment of three FSP project grants (\$4,500) and the cost of running the grasslands workshop.

The end of year balance for the Gift Fund 2024 was \$30,148.

David Johnson, Treasurer
Friends of Grasslands Inc

15 March 2025

Jamie acknowledged FOG's deep appreciation to the ACT Government for the grant money for Blue Gum Point and commented that the Gift Fund funds will be used for Top Hut and the revised Supported Projects program.

Motion 5: that the Treasurer's report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 be accepted by the meeting.

Moved: Rainer Rehwinkel Seconded: Heather Sweet

Agreed by show of hands

Also on behalf of the Treasurer, Jamie formally tabled the report from Auditor Pauline Hore as follows:

To the Members of the Friends of Grasslands Incorporated

Scope

I have audited the financial report of Friends of Grasslands Incorporated as set out in the Consolidated General and Publications Accounts Financial Reports for the year ended 31 December 2024 and the Gift Fund Account as of 31 December 2024. The Friends of Grasslands Incorporated committee is responsible for the financial reports. I have conducted an independent audit of the financial report to express an opinion on it to the members.

The audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Audit Standards to provide reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial reports and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements and the requirements of Friends of Grasslands Incorporated to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the association's financial position and the results of its operations.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion the financial report presents fairly in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements and the requirements of Friends of Grasslands Incorporated, the financial position of Friends

of Grasslands Incorporated as of 31 December 2024 and the results of its operations for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Pauline Hore JP(ACT); CPA

16 April 2025

Motion 6: 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: Andrew Zelnik Seconded: Paul Cheeseman

Jamie then advised that Pauline Hore has been approached and has agreed to act as auditor for FOG for the financial year 2025-2026.

Motion 7: that Pauline Hore be appointed as our auditor for the financial year ending 31 December 2025

Moved: Matt Whitting Seconded: Helen Sims

Agreed by show of hands.

7. Motions on Notice –

There being no motions on notice, Jamie stood down as chair.

The Returning Officer for the 2025 AGM elections, Geoff Robertson, took the chair.

8. Elections

- Positions vacant:

Office Bearers: President, two Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer (5 positions)

- Ordinary Committee members (up to 9 positions)

Geoff explained that as at the closing time for nominations of 6pm on 16 April 2024, the secretary had received sufficient nominations to fill all nominations for both office bearers and ordinary Committee members, with the exception of one vacancy for Vice-President. He dealt with nominated positions first –

President – Jamie Pittock

Vice-President – Julia Raine

Treasurer – David Johnson

Secretary – Emily Sutcliffe

Ordinary Committee Members –

Matthew Whitting

Margaret Ning

Sarah Sharp

Rainer Rehwinkel

Far Wareham

Jeanette Mill

Matthew Kent
Matthew Mullaney
Helen Sims

The Returning Officer declared those nominees to be elected.

He turned to the vacancy of one Vice President and called for nominations from the floor. After some moments of indecision and meaningful looks, there being no nomination from the floor, the Returning Officer declared the position Vacant. He noted that FOG's Constitution provides that vacancies in the Committee can be filled during the year; and if that nomination comes from within the ordinary Committee members, a consequential vacancy at that level may be filled.

Motion 8: The motion is - that the meeting accept the 2025 FOG Committee as declared elected

Moved: Andrew Zelnik Seconded: Paul Cheeseman

Agreed by show of hands.

Geoff then passed the chair back to the (re-elected) President of FOG and chair, who moved –

Motion 9: Vote of thanks to Geoff Robertson for acting as Returning Officer at FOG's 2025 AGM.

Moved: Matt Kent Seconded: Helen Sims

7. Closing comments

Jamie thanked all who had attended the meeting and welcomed the new Committee for 2025. He noted that the first meeting of the new Committee is scheduled to start at 5.30pm on 22 May, to finish at 7.15pm.

New Committee member Jeanette Mill moved a vote of thanks to the outgoing Committee and Jamie echoed earlier acknowledgements of Hugh Coppell, Trevor Preston and Heather Sweet. Passed by acclamation.

There followed discussion about FOG's appreciation of the support which has been given to FOG over the past year from various people within the ACT Government agencies. It was agreed (informally) that the outgoing secretary draft a letter to the Minister for the Environment along these lines, noting specifically Rosie Cooney, Marie Gilbert, Brett Howland and to encourage continuance of the focus that the NRM has given to grasslands and woodlands which will lead to long term outcomes, both broadly and specifically.

8. The meeting closed at 7.05pm

Jamie Pittock, FOG President

For all enquiries please contact secretary@fog.org.au