



## Farm Writers' Association of NSW Inc

### Annual General Meeting

Friday 30 October 2020

11:00am

In person at Christie Corporate Suites, 3 Spring Street Sydney  
and via Zoom.

### MINUTES

Meeting opened at 11:02am

#### Attendance and apologies

Attendance in person: Kaaren Latham, Stuart Hutton, Wilfred Finn, Ben Crow,  
George Hardy, Will Sykes, Robert Hardie, Ed Delves, Rachel,  
Matt Simshauser, Paul Dellow, Kirsty Beavon

Attendance via Zoom: Jenetta Russell, Meg Pearce, Bev Jordan, Chris Davidson

Apologies: Colin Bettles

#### Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting

**MOTION:** *That the Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting held on 23 October 2019*

Moved: Robert Hardie; Seconded: Stuart Hutton, **CARRIED**

#### Reports:

##### *President's report – Kaaren Latham*

- Kaaren spoke to highlights from her written report, noting that 2020 has been an 'extraordinary' year as we have adjusted to a new COVID19 world
- This is a voluntary organization and Kaaren appreciates the support the committee provides
- Our new Patron, Adam Marshall MP, spoke at our 2019 Christmas lunch at our end of year Parliament House lunch
- We are in a strong financial position – there has not been a great deal of financial activity because events have been held free of charge. Kaaren noted a modest surplus and appreciated the efforts of Stuart Hutton as Treasurer.
- Membership:
  - 35 corporate members (37 previous year)
  - 21 individual members (24 previous year)
  - 22 rural and retired (20 previous year)
  - 5 life members
- We have missed seeing our members face to face. Our membership fees remain unchanged; thanks to Matt Simshauser for coordinating our corporate members

- Events – 1365 participants in total (462 in person, 923 online). Parliament House lunch and Keith Pitt and Melinda Pavey webinars were the most popular events
  - Some of the topics covered in our events this year include African swine fever and the pork industry, the agricultural economy, deep dives into horticulture and grains
- Great to connect with people from other parts of the state, and Australia, at our webinars
- The Grace has been terrific – thanks to George and Paul for coordinating events
- Keen to return to safe and feasible face to face events
- Looking forward to the return of Agribuzz in 2021 – thanks to Bev for coordinating sponsors, speakers and venues
- Online presence – Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn followers are all up on last year. Thanks to Meg.
- New website is in final stages of review and approval – aiming to launch in coming weeks and certainly before end of the year. Sub-committee of Paul and Stuart to identify the contractor, develop content.
- Awards and ACAJ – Colin Bettles is NSW representative and Ben Waters coordinates awards program. The IFAJ awards are still deferred
- Coming 12 months will continue to present challenges – how we manage the balance between face to face and online events is an opportunity.
- Kaaren thanked the committee for their hard work over the past 12 months

**MOTION:** *That the President's Report be accepted as an accurate reflection of the activities of the Association during the 12 month period to 30 October 2020.*

Moved: Kaaren Latham, Seconded: Paul Dellow, **CARRIED**

George Hardy thanked Kaaren for keeping the show together through the uncertainties of COVID. He noted her sound guidance.

#### *Treasurer's report*

Stuart presented his report for the financial year to 30 June 2020

- Cash surplus \$3,338, below the previous year and below the five-year average principally due to the COVID issues
  - Income was below average
  - Interest income was up
  - Membership subscriptions – early renewals were lower than the previous year
  - Expenses below last year and the long-term average
  - Star prize - \$577 allowance was made for a previous years' winner's expenses and is below the average. We still owe up to \$5,000 to previous years' winners
- Website fees reflect initial payment to developer – total cost in the order of \$8,000 which is significantly below expectations
- Five seminars were held – average attendance was two people per seminar below the long-term average
  - Two Agribuzz events were held with 115 average attendance
  - Gunnedah event was also held at AgQuip
- Membership (per above from Kaaren), 87 is similar to previous years. Current membership (to 30 October) is 39, recognizing the fact that no events have been held to encourage membership renewal.
- Cash assets of approx. \$163k, likely to reduce due to website redevelopment, outstanding prize payments (up to \$10k) and reduced seminar activity leading to

reduced membership engagement. There is likelihood of a significant cash drain in this financial year but this will be manageable given our current position.

**MOTION:** *That the Treasurer's Report and Audited Financial Statements be accepted as an accurate reflection of the financial position of the Association as at 30 June 2020*

Moved: Stuart Hutton, Seconded: Will Sykes, **CARRIED**

Stuart presented the Auditor's Report.

**MOTION:** *That the Auditor's Report be accepted and made available upon request*

Moved: Stuart Hutton, Seconded: George Hardy, **CARRIED**

**MOTION:** *That the President and Treasurer be authorized to sign both the Representation letter and income tax status review worksheet on behalf of all members*

Moved: Kaaren Latham, Seconded: George Hardy, **CARRIED**

#### Election of office bearers

Kaaren vacated the chair. Ben Crow assumed the Chair and declared all positions vacant. At the close of nomination, an equal number nominations was received for the vacant positions; that being the case, the following were duly elected:

President:	Kaaren Latham
Vice President:	Ben Waters, George Hardy
Secretary:	Robert Hardie
Treasurer:	Stuart Hutton
Committee:	Paul Dellow, Wilfred Finn, Bev Jordan, Andrew Marshall, Matt Simshauser, William Sykes
Immediate Past President:	Ben Crow

Kaaren resumed the Chair

Nominations from Kirsty Beavon, Colin Bettles and Meg Pearce were received but, as they were not financial members at the time of the AGM, they were not elected to the committee. It was agreed that, in accordance with the Constitution and conditional upon payment of their membership, they could be appointed to the arising vacancies.

#### Appointment of auditors

**MOTION:** *That Alan Kerr and Co be retained as Auditors of the Association for the 2020/21 financial year*

Moved: Stuart Hutton, Seconded: Paul Dellow, **CARRIED**

Kaaren noted the previous discussion about changing our auditors and that given the circumstances of the year the decision to continue with the same auditors was made.

#### General Business

None

Meeting closed at 11:29am