

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Open Gardens Canberra Inc Level 1, Hellenic Club, Civic

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) opened at 7.42

Apologies: Shirley Pipitone and Nikki Lucas.

Welcome delivered by a/g Chair Mr Geoff Corner. Geoff referred to the Open Gardens Canberra Inc minutes of 27 October 2015 and distributed to attendees (see list at Attachment A).

Geoff called for the minutes to be accepted. Moved by Chris Lord; seconded by Judy Massey. Members agreed.

Geoff said that the OGC Committee had met the previous week when advised of the President's ill health. Subsequently, Shirley had provided a lovely written report and copies were made available. Members were encouraged to take copies of her report.

Geoff provided the following overview of the first year Open Gardens Canberra Inc as follows:

Open Gardens Canberra Inc had developed into a successful organisation and like all new organisations, there had been problems. Prior to incorporation, Open Gardens Canberra had very little funding. At the time of incorporation, there had been 21 members and \$550 in funds. Now, the current membership was over 500 with nearly \$18,000 in the bank.

The primary business was in opening gardens. To that end, 14 open gardens had been supported including community gardens in Queanbeyan. This had helped fulfil the obligation to assist community organisations. We had met our aims through the presentation of a wide variety of gardens both urban and rural and these had been shown over three seasons. Several had strong sustainability elements and visitors had appreciated this aspect. It was important that everyone was aware of our success.

The variety of gardens was a great surprise and was terrific. It was a great credit to Shirley who did the majority of selection work. Many of the open gardens had additional attractions – coffee shops, plant sales and fund raising for community organisations. For example, Carol had supported the organisation *Beyond Blue*. Open Gardens Canberra Inc had elected not to collect cash on the day for charities but leave that to owners. Community Gardens in Queanbeyan was an example. A number of members had been keen to show their gardens. Publicity had been managed through the website, newsletter and street signage. All of these had put the organisation on the map. Shirley built goodwill in the media and there had been a number of news items. Various members gave interviews on radio stations. Had been amazing how fast word about Open Gardens Canberra had spread. There were a few nice things organised – garden owner notes, owners didn't appreciate them but

visitors liked them and we made sure owners had a visitors' book. Volunteers ensured these were signed.

The success of Open Gardens Canberra was not just because of the committee. It had come from the volunteers, the garden owners and the membership. Everyone assisting with assisting on the gate, distributing flyers, etc. Everyone involved provided their assistance on a volunteer basis. No money was ever handed over. Feedback about the gardens had been great.

Geoff invited those present who had opened their gardens to speak about the experience. Both Tom and Carol spoke positively about their open garden experience. In summary, people of Canberra and Queanbeyan had embraced Open Gardens Canberra and the organisation was now well placed to proceed with a future season in 2016.

Sheree delivered a finance report. Tom moved that the report be accepted and this was seconded by Chris Lord. Members agreed to accept the finance report.

Appointment of public officer. Geoff said that Shirley had held that position but would not be renominating. He said the public officer role was mandated by the ORS and was not a committee position. It would need to be held by a resident of the ACT with a verifiable address in the ACT. The public officer would be someone that the ORS could address material to and would need to be publicly accessible. Geoff sought a candidate and Ian Davenport volunteered for this role.

Geoff spoke about the committee in its first year. As stated in the minutes of 5 May 2015, it listed the inaugural committee members. The rules stated that there would be four office bearers and seven others, a total of 11 members. He said that in fact, there were a total of six on the committee. In its first year, the committee had varied up and down at between six and seven members. He said there was a lot of work involved and there was an urgent need for a number of committee members to help run the organisation. The more on it, the better. In the first year, the work load had been extremely high with start-up activity which had been a significant burden. However, going forward, it was fair to say the workload would be less. Also, the committee didn't have to take responsibility for doing everything itself as sub-committees could be formed. Also, those with specific expertise or skills could be approached to assist.

Geoff encouraged the filling by members of the eleven vacancies. He said to assist this, he would move the motion that Rule 16 be relaxed to allow nominations to be made from the floor, provided that this was seconded and that the person nominated was either present and accepted the nomination or if absent, had provided permission for someone to nominate them. The motion was moved by Geoff and seconded by Liz. Members agreed. Geoff nominated himself as the Returning Officer. He declared all positions vacant.

The following are members who agreed to committee roles/membership:

Committee Office Bearers:

President: Trevor Fuller - nominated by Tom; seconded by Ange

Vice President: None

Treasurer: Merryl Bradley - nominated by Sally Stevens;
seconded by Ange

Secretary: Sheree Minehan- nominated by Ange;
seconded by Liz

Membership

Secretary: Ian Davenport - - nominated by Shirley;
seconded by Maureen

Committee Members:

1. Tom Baker/Trevor Fuller/Chris Lord
2. Deirdre Kiorgaard/Ange
3. Chris Lord/Ange
4. Ann Lord/Ange/Liz

Also, Peter Collas, has advised he would be happy to serve as honorary auditor.

Members attending the AGM were :

Geoff Corner

Elisabeth Morrison

Sheree Minehan

Trevor Fuller

Tom Baker

Carol Kemp

Lyn Adler

Anne and Chris Lord

Denise Stephenson

Judith Massey

Ange McNeilly

Merryl Bradley

Maureen Boyle

Olga Bevan

Deirdre Kiorgaard

Ian Davenport

Maureen Davenport

Geoff Corner

Jennie Curtis