

Wildcare Tasmania

Annual General Meeting Minutes



Saturday, 21 March 2020

(meeting conducted via Zoom Meeting video conference)

Meeting Attendees:

- (a) By Zoom Meeting: Ian Lundy (Chairperson), Sharon Smith (Wildcare CEO), Kim Willing (Wildcare Member Services Coordinator), Glen Hayhurst (minute taker), Erika Shankley, Sally Simco, Georgina Davis, Cathie Plowman, Joanne Naylor, Priscilla Richards, Ann Hamilton, Karen Ziegler, Gary Campbell, Stan Matuszek, Melanie Becker, Bruce George, Jen Fry, Sally Salier, Donna Burton, Lynne Forster, Priscilla Richards, Rowena Larsson.
- (b) By phone: Sam Cuff

Meeting opened at 10.01 am.

1. Welcome to all Attendees

Ian welcomed all attendees to the meeting, announced that the Friends of Bass Strait Islands presentation unfortunately wouldn't be delivered during the meeting and acknowledged the challenging times being faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Apologies: Carol Jackson

3. Meeting Business: Ian Lundy advised that the AGM is being run in accordance with section 13 of the Constitution. No other special business is to be conducted. We want this meeting to be a thank you to our members, volunteers and donors and to the State Government and other land owners that see the value in volunteering and support it.

4. CEO's Report

Sharon Smith delivered the CEO's Report. Key points:

- Many changes during 2019-20: constitutional changes in March 2019 that enabled the establishment of a more skills-based Board with a great mix of Board Members with Wildcare volunteering and work skills and those with board and corporate organisational skills. The Board also had good gender diversity and has been a great board to work with.
- Linda Lever, a volunteer who is now a paid staff member, supported by the other Office Team Members made an excellent contribution in solving the membership data issues that were occurring (eg duplicate membership records, members not being able to log in or not knowing their membership status) by cleaning over a 1000 membership records. This work has had a positive impact by freeing up some of the time of the other Office Team Members.
- The Branch Leaders have continued to effectively harness the energy and passion of volunteers and have worked with a range of land managers from Parks, local councils and private land managers.
- The Wildcare Gift Fund (public fund that accepts donations) has been activated. There is now a new process in which the Gift Fund is opened twice a year, the first opening last year resulting in \$100k of grants being given to Branches. We also have a new Gift Fund Committee.
- Thanks to Kim Willing for her fantastic contribution and to Bec and the other Office volunteers.

- The Wildcare model is unusual in that volunteer groups are not only supported centrally (eg through education, fundraising and account management) but they are also able to act autonomously (eg organising their own events and reporting on these on the website). This allows the Branches to make great achievements, including facilitating significant grants to Wildcare.

5. Financial Statement/Auditors Report for 2019

Sharon Smith commented on the financial statement:

- Wildcare made a cash flow net profit in 2019 (a positive change from a loss in 2018).
- Income flow is uncertain as it relies on Parks Pass sales - \$25 provided by PWS for the sale of each pass for which the purchaser ticks the box to indicate that they'd like to be a Wildcare Member.
- Monthly financial report presented to the Board for scrutiny.
- An increased amount of money transferred to the Branches and project applicants via the Gift Fund.
- The Branches were very diligent in successfully applying for grants from external sources such as the Tasmanian Community Fund.

Q&A

- Q: What is the item represented by "Loan – Wildcare Gift Fund" (\$90 533) as a current liability?
A: This is for a successful PWS application for funding to support maintenance of walking tracks in SW Tasmania – a project that hasn't yet been able to be implemented due to the impact of the 2018/19 bushfires.
- Q: Why is the Projects - Merchandise expenses figure (\$15 408) so large when we don't sell many items from the Wildcare Shop?
A: This includes all Office and Branch merchandise. Several new products were developed by Branches in 2019. There is a need to better support the Branches with more product retailing information so that we can ensure that the sales of all products generate an appropriate income for Branches.

6. Chair's Report

Ian Lundy presented the Chair's Report. Key points:

- 2019-20 was a year of renewal for the Board with new Board members - Joanne Naylor, Melanie Becker, Gary Campbell and Ian Lundy.
- Focus has been on building previous Board experience while maintaining the grassroots Members to keep us connected to our membership.
- Sadly, Board Member Adrian Sullivan passed away in August 2019. His enormous efforts and commitment to Wildcare and the Friends of Freycinet will be missed.
- The Gift Fund Committee has undergone some changes. Two existing members remain (Leslie Frost and Rosemary Gales) and there are four new members: Anne Hamilton, Isaac Standaloft, Ciara Turner and Jacqui Doyle who are welcomed to the Committee.
- The Board has devoted significant effort to updating its governance and to reviewing the health and safety of volunteers eg ensuring that appropriate safety systems are in place and assisting land managers through educating volunteers about safe working expectations.
- We are maintaining strong relationship with PWS – about two thirds of our activities is on PWS-managed land.

- Funding is an ongoing challenge for Wildcare as it is for most not-for-profit organisations. The CEO has been increasing efforts to identify other sources of funding.
- Wildcare continues to seek ways to support individual Branches. We're very grateful for the work of all our volunteers and, in particular the Branch Presidents and others involved in organising activities.
- A special thankyou to Sharon, Kim and everyone else who contributes in the Wildcare Office.
- As a result of the coronavirus, 2020 will be one of change and challenge and funding is likely to become a greater issue.

Karen Ziegler agreed that 2020 will be very different and stated that Friends of Bass Strait Islands are not planning for working bees, but will use the time to concentrate on infrastructure, equipment, strategic planning and applying for grants (but with a proviso that the work might not get done until 2021).

7. Appointment of an Auditor

Sharon recommended that we continue to use the services of Accru as that company understands Wildcare and our fairly complex system of Branch accounts, operating account and Gift Fund. There was discussion about the process of making independent enquiries of the auditor as instituted by the Board this year to minimise the risk of an undesirable relationship between management and the auditor, the period of time that Accru had been our auditors (*at least since 2013*) and regularly changing the audit partner within the same auditing company.

The meeting agreed to use Accru as the auditor for 2020 on the proviso that the actual audit partner being used was appropriately rotated.

8. Election of Five Board Members

Ian Lundy thanked retiring Board Member Erika Shankley for her contribution to the Board over a period of three years.

Sharon Smith described the SurveyMonkey form voting process. Five applicants applied for the five available positions on the Board, four with a two year term and one with a one year term.

Donna Burton offered to accept the one year term.

All five applicants were elected to the Board:

- Melanie Becker
- Donna Burton
- Gary Campbell
- Jen Fry
- Joanne Naylor

(Note: Although not announced during the meeting the Chair confirmed after the AGM that Donna Burton had received the smallest number of votes and so she is elected with a one year term while the other four candidates are elected with two year terms.)

Meeting closed at 10.51 am.