

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE WELLINGTON PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY HELD IN PERSON AND VIA A ZOOM CONNECTION ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2022 AT 1937 PM

ATTENDANCE

In-Person

Mel Keith (Chair), Glen Innes, Patrick Flanagan, Shannon Doyle, Julie McGowan, Keith Molloy, Bronwyn Rideout, Lola Makower, Peter Rodgers, Rick Spencer, Patrick Flanagan, Philip Dyer, Russ Finnerty, John Kelly, Lee McLachlan, Julie Brixton, Jeff Mein Smith

Via Zoom

Neil Kennington, Paul Whittam, Mark Fisher

APOLOGIES

John Boyd

WELCOME

Mel Keith welcomed the assembled.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Bronwyn Rideout summarised the key points from the minutes.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting of the Society held on 11 November 2021 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

(P Flanagan/ K Molloy)

CARRIED

Bronwyn apologized for not having the SGM minutes from February 2022 available. These will be made available for review online.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mel Keith spoke to her report acknowledging delivery of a diverse programme despite the ongoing upheavals of the COVID-19 Pandemic. In particular, the change in alert system and vaccination passes had a significant impact with some members being unable to make in-person meetings at all for some time. Thankfully those days are now over and we are mostly back to our regular activities.

Once again, the society has had to place emphasis on meet-ups and group activities. We've visited locations such as Wellington Zoo, the Botanical Gardens, Te Papa and Karori Cemetery to name just few. These activities were a wonderful way to discover new subjects, learn a new skill or simply to get out and socialise.

Mel spoke to some of the guest speakers over the past year on all sorts of topics. Fujifilm not only brought us equipment to play with, but Patina Photography to speak about their award-winning wedding photography. We had some other excellent evenings covering topics such as bird photography (with a practical session following), A long exposure session via Zoom (also with a practical session following it) and other topics such as fireworks, street photography and show and tell sessions.

WPS held the 2021 exhibition at Te Auaha with over 60 images displayed, and also hosted our annual projected image competition, judged by Bob Zhur, via Zoom. The print competition had to be delayed and is happening soon. We also took part in the 2021 Interclub competition and are currently getting entries for this year's Interclub.

Our membership is still healthy, though Mel acknowledged that our numbers were down slightly on last year. Not unexpected given the difficulties of covid.

Our financial position is still quite strong, though as noted in the Treasurers report our income looks to be significantly down from last year due to receiving grant income in 2021 which was spent in 2022. We have also had a significant increase in rent and the incoming committee will discuss what options we may have to help reduce this expense.

Mel paid tribute to members we lost over the past year. Firstly just prior to our AGM last year we lost committee member Brian Gray, and more recently we lost Fred Wotton – a juggernaut of B&W landscape photography. Please keep them both in your thoughts.

Mel concluded by thanking the members of the committee for their continued support and hard work over the last year. Lots of last-minute emails and arrangements have gone on behind the scenes! Mel gave particular thanks to the committee members leaving us – Lee McLachlan and Keith Molloy.

Resolved:-

That the President's Report to the Annual General Meeting 2022 be adopted.

(L McLachlan/J Brixton)

CARRIED

VOTE OF THANKS

Made by Russ Finnerty

TREASURER'S REPORT

Rick Spencer spoke to the Financial Statements for the Year Ending 30th of June, 2022. He explained that our loss is due to costs for the exhibition that came through this year while grants for those costs were recorded in the previous year and as per the rules of our charity application, we need to use a cash accounting approach.

Our membership has been reasonably steady, helped by the increase in fee from November last year, which was done building rent has increased considerably.

Rick apologised that he did not realise that he needed to include the independent accountant's review. There is a review available in writing and it has been submitted and Rick will make it available online for members to review it. The independent accountant is a qualified accountant with experience with charities.

The Charities application is in progress and a renewed charities applications was submitted with Charity services once the accounts were completed. The Charities Commission requested additional information in the form of a performance report from the year ending 2020. As Rick took on the Treasurer role in 2021, he will need time to review those records. Rick expects to have this resolved by mid-October.

During member review it was asked whether the lapse of our charity status disadvantages WPS when it came to grant funding and Mel Keith responded that we are still eligible through our PSNZ membership. Rick added that Charity Status can affect our tax status but only comes into play if we earn profit in excess of \$1000 per annum.

Russ Finnerty asked how many more years' accounts were still to be filed with the Charities Office. Rick replied that this was up to the Charities Office but they have only requested a performance review for the year ending 2020. Rick explained that the Performance review is not a financial report but a summary of meeting had and the outcomes of those meetings including guest speakers and club activities; they want to know what value we bring as a charity.

Paul Whittam asked from Zoom if the club has any tax issue if we had a surplus in the previous year and no charitable status. Rick answered in the negative as it's less than \$1000. Paul then stated that the Performance Report was an actual financial report. Rick acknowledged that statement.

Philip Dyer asked if we had a budget for this year. Rick replied that we did not have a budget for this year and understood that the society did not have a budget. Peter Rodgers stated that they had previously; Shannon and Mel replied that creating a budget hasn't been possible the past couple of years due to uncertainty around events like the exhibition.

Mel stated that the rent will be the cost that has more of an impact. Russ Finnerty commented that the rent has gone up and asked if the committee had seen to getting that expenditure minimised. Bronwyn replied that the Committee is reducing the number of nights that we have the space booked from three meetings a month to two per month and are cutting down on our storage needs, which in part why old prints were on display for members to take with them. Russ Finnerty asked if the cupboard space was still a significant cost but Mel answered that the unfinished basement where we store our frames and prints was the biggest cost, which was no longer free. It is also not the best storage space but WPS was lucky to have it nonetheless. Rental rates were increased to keep in line with the increase in Wellington City Council rates. Keith Molloy added that the Tramping Club is also a charity, so not making a profit from this. Bronwyn Rideout added that there will be no recommendation made this year to increase membership fees.

Russ Finnerty noted that in one of the reports, there was suggestion of a capital expenditure to replace some hardware but nothing showing up; he wondered if this had been shelved for the moment. Mel Keith said that purchasing of hardware requires her to write and submit grant applications. The ability to host dual zoom/in-person meetings requires more equipment than just a computer, making it a costly endeavour and one that the committee prefer to have as much of it covered by grants but there may be a need for the society to cover some costs. Russ argued that then this expenditure does need to go into a budget for the coming year.

Glen Innes asked how much the society has in its accounts, which Mel replied was about \$24,000 in term deposits. Glen then asked if we could utilise those funds for purchasing hardware, to which Shannon and Mel noted that would be unwise if opportunities for grant funding had not been utilised. Another delay has been the reduction in in-person meetings this year.

There was significant confusion between the Treasurer, Russ Finnerty, and Philip Dyer regarding whether an official certificate from the Independent Accountant was required rather than a letter. Rick was not able to retrieve the appropriate documentation at this time; this will be provided the membership online.

A vote was put forth to the assembled that the Treasurer's Report to the Annual General Meeting 2020 be adopted subject to the Committee providing the documentation from the Independent Accountant. 1 Abstention and 11 Yays.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Mel, reporting on behalf of Helen Beaven. Mel thanked Helen for taking on the role as Terry Harkin stepped down due to time commitments. Membership did drop slightly from 138 to 142, surprisingly good due to COVID restrictions. WPS also welcomed new members from the now-defunct Hutt Camera Club and into the under 19 category. Helen also acknowledged the loss of Brian Gray and Fred Wotton in her report.

Resolved:-

That the Membership Report to the Annual General Meeting 2022 be adopted.

(P Flanagan/L Makower)

CARRIED

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2022/2023

Bronwyn read out positions and the list of nominations received. At this stage, no elections were required as no positions were contested and no nominations were received from the floor. Peter Rodgers commented that we cannot ask for objections from the floor as the positions made it through to nomination. Peter was thanked for his clarification.

Resolved:-

That the following officers and committee members be declared elected for the 2021/22 year.

President:	Mel Keith (2 nd term)
Vice President	Bronwyn Rideout
Honorary Treasurer:	Rick Spencer
Honorary Secretary:	Julie McGowan
Membership	Helen Beaven
Committee:	Julie Brixton
	Jeff Mein Smith
	Lola Makower
	Donna Jennings

Immediate Past President: Shannon Doyle

(L McLachlan/B Rideout)

CARRIED

Mel gave special thanks to Lee and Keith for their significant contribution to the society. They will be greatly missed.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2021/22

The committee has made no recommendation to change subscription fees.

Resolved:-

That the Subscription fees for 2022/23 be set at the following levels:-

Full Member	\$90.00
Student/Unwaged	\$50.00
Youth under 18	no fee

(P Flanagan/J Mein Smith)

CARRIED

Lola asked why her membership fee is \$50.00; Shannon replied that it meant she was unwaged or retired. John Kelly stated that this was not clear on the website but Shannon said that this is explained on the website; Rick offered to review John's subscription and correct it accordingly.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Resolved:-

That the 2022/2023 annual financial statements of the Society be subjected to an independent financial review and that the committee is authorised to appoint a suitably qualified person to undertake that task.

(P Dyer/P Rodgers)

CARRIED

GENERAL BUSINESS

COVID 19 was covered last year with the looming proposition of vaccine passes at the time. A lot has changed since then but Mel mentioned that for now we retain the policy of masks at in-person meetings but vaccine passes are not required anymore. WPS will also continue to keep an attendance register as well. A change in mask requirements will change Nationally within the next week. Russ suggested a resolution that we follow the national guidelines on masking while Bronwyn added that there is also the requirements of the Tararua Tramping

Club to consider. Mel noted that we can make our own rules as well and would prefer that we encourage people to mask up if they are unwell.

Resolved:-

That the society will follow COVID-19 protocols as outlined by the Government of New Zealand/

(S Doyle/P Flanagan)

CARRIED

Russ Finnerty inquired as to the plan for the programme for the upcoming year. Mel stated the intention to host our normal activities. This includes the exhibition which will not be hosted in 2022; when in 2023 is uncertain but likely not to be done until the next financial year. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find a suitable venue at an affordable price at an appropriate time. WPS is looking for a venue that costs less than \$5000 which has been the cost in the past. Shannon adds that we try to keep our programme sustainable and stick to grants and not cost the club money; while we are able to access grants, venues like Te Auaha increase their costs every year. Plus, you cannot apply for a grant before you have your dates and venue secure so there is risk that the club has to pay the whole expense.

Thistle Hall was suggested; Mel and Shannon confirm that we have been applying there via the ballot system and have failed 4 times. Patrick asked how the exhibition performs in terms for bringing in members; Shannon stated that social media and facebook are by far the most effective. Philip commented that the point of the exhibition was to display the work of the members, not make money; Mel replied that even if we did hold an exhibition with a financial hit, that is not sustainable.

Russ recalled a previous exhibition at the Institute of Fine Arts and that they were able to get back-to-back funding from the Nikau foundation. Shannon spoke that the foot traffic there was not optimal.

Lee suggested approaching businesses to put photographs into foyers. Russ mentioned that they had looked at doing that a few years ago with banks but now there are not a lot of physical banks. Shannon noted that was a job in and of itself.

Mel spoke to the question of having a budget. With the exception of the print exhibition, which is an unknown cost at all times, there was no expectation that other costs will change significantly. We have been informed that the rent may go up to 5% but that is yet to be confirmed. There may be reinvestment into social media advertising now that in-person meetings are resuming.

Peter Rodgers inquired about IMPACT and whether the committee will bring it back or in a different form. Shannon said that no one else is willing to take it on and the benefit of a weekly newsletter when the society is currently unable to plan too far ahead. At present, it overlaps with social media and currently there is no one who have the technical ability to sort the website or MailChimp.

The meeting concluded at 2055pm with thanks from the Chair.