



MINUTES

ARO VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at the Aro Valley Community Centre, 48 Aro Street, Aro Valley

DATE: Sunday 9 August 2020 from 11.30am to 1.50pm

Current Committee Members Present:

Ingrid Downey, George Sapsford (Incumbent Co-Chairs)
Martin Wilson
Jay Buzenberg
Madeleine Rashbrooke
Ayse Altin Wohlleben

Other Attendees:

WCC Councillors: Iona Pannett and Nicola Young, Jenny Rains (Wellington City Council Officer), Tamatha Paul (arriving at about 11:50am)

Staff members: Dani Fuenzalida, Roxy Coevers

Minute taker: Elaine Edwards (independent minute taker)

Apologies: Luke Allen and Helen Baxter

1. Preliminary Matters

Annual General Meeting Attendance Register was circulated for those present to enter their details. The Attendance Register is not included in the minutes.

2. Welcome and Apologies

George opened the meeting with a Karakia. Ingrid introduced George and herself (Co-Chairs.) Ingrid chaired the meeting, welcomed everyone and thanked them for taking the trouble to attend. Ingrid welcomed special guests Councillor Iona Pannett and Councillor Nicola Young. Ingrid thanked the staff Dani and Roxy for their amazing work over the previous year. The audience thanked the staff with a round of applause.

Jenny Rains from the WCC Community Services Department was welcomed and thanked for her hard work during lockdown and beyond. Apologies for absence were received from Committee members Luke Allen (Secretary) and Helen Baxter, Rep for the Aro Valley Pre-School.

3. Approval of the 2019 AGM Minutes

It was resolved that the minutes of the AGM held on 24 July 2019 be approved as a true and correct record.

Moved: Ingrid; Seconded: Francesca – Carried

The Chair reminded everyone that all minutes were available for review via the website.

4. Annual Reports from Co-Chairs and Staff

The Staff Activity Report was presented by Roxy and Dani by Audio/Visual presentation. Highlights of the previous year's work were:

- One for the Birds; Collaboration with Newtown Community Centre; Let's Get Aro Moving (free mobility scooter), Spring to Action Community Koha Hui; Koffe Gagan, ESOL Classes, Yoga, Xmas Function, Xmas Tree Fundraiser, Xmas Lunch, Sundays in the Park, Climate/Environmental Events, Cooking Workshop, Pottery Workshop, Olympics, Monthly Vegan Market, clothes swap and the Aro Fair. A timebank was being developed and people were encouraged to sign up to this.
- The staff highlighted that the community has successfully run events on a shoestring budget with minimal waste.
- Thanks were recorded to all the volunteers for their effort throughout the year.
- The staff had successfully worked from home throughout COVID-19 and kept in contact with the volunteers. There had been collaboration with the Student Army. It was great to see the community looked after each other during the COVID lockdown.
- Noted the ShareShack had unfortunately been closed over COVID-19 and the building was no longer fit for purpose. It would be removed from site soon by WCC. Plans were underway to develop a bigger, better ShareShack in the future.
- A research survey on the use of the Community Hall was underway (closes on 10 August) and the community were encouraged to provide their feedback. The findings would feed into the planning of relevant classes and activities at the Hall for the community.

Co-Chairs Presentation: The Co-Chairs presented the Annual Performance Report and noted it had been an amazing year especially welcoming the two new staff into the Community. Ingrid thanked George for their support over the year. The Co-Chairs had shared the work and they outlined that this is a business involving various administrative, reporting and financial obligations. The Annual Performance Report outlines the team's professionalism. George acknowledged the Committee's hard work especially on the Declaration of Climate Emergency and they hoped there would be more initiatives based on community action and resilience. The hard work of the volunteers, especially those who work behind the scenes was noted.

Q&A:

Survey - Are the Committee confident that the delivery reached all homes? An independent research analyst had been contracted to deliver the survey and therefore homes with no junk mail signs were not delivered to. To address this, the forms were available on the website and paper copies available at the meeting.

What is happening with the Site Development: The WCC set aside funding a while ago for redevelopment of the Community Centre. WCC has a steering group who represent the community with WCC and they met on Friday 7 August. Aro Valley is represented by four members on the steering group (Ingrid, Luke, Roland and Jacqui). Next steps were for WCC to obtain prices for the various parts of the agreed concept

plan, including moving the hall into the corner to free up the pinch point between the Hall corner and the Playground fence. The concept plan had come in over budget and work was progressing to work out what could be achieved within budget. Another option would be to leave the hall where it is but make improvements which would also be costed, as would be an option “to keep the pavilion watertight and dry” and safeguard it for future decisions to be made.

5. Presentation of Audited Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 March 2020

The Financial Report was presented by Ingrid (as the previous Treasurers had resigned earlier in the year). The finances had been externally audited. Key points were highlighted as follows:

- \$1,588 profit had been achieved overall. This is in contrast to the last 5 years where losses, sometimes large, were recorded.
- The largest source of revenue was grants, fundraising and donations (3 yr. operating grant from WCC is the main one and there was 2 more years of funding to run from WCC). The sources and amount of income were very similar to the previous year (however expenditure was less).
- The largest expense was staff salaries and payments to teacher and contractors.
- The accountant who had worked closely with the staff confirmed and the books were very clear and well coded. Thanks were noted to Dani for her hard work on the bookkeeping.
- School Holiday Programmes were not cost-effective and a problem to deliver due to high compliance needed. Instead, in future other organisations would use the hall and offer school holiday activities to the Community, which was seen as a better fit.
- \$40k of income in advance was held in the accounts (to pay salaries April, May, June) and the Fridge Project (in conjunction with Newtown Community Centre). Along with a grant for the survey and to improve governance.
- There would be a focus on improving the governance in the next year.

Q&A:

What was the impact of COVID? There was a small COVID impact as there had been a number of cancellations (the report was only to 31 March 2020, so the full impact was not evident in the report).

Profitability of Hall Rental Operations -A member suggested if the hall capacity was increased there was the potential for higher profitability? Noted the WCC had funding set aside to improve the hall. The meeting thanked the WCC for their cooperation.

Martin moved that there be a show of thanks to the Co-Chairs and Liam for his work as Treasurer. Madeleine moved that there be a show of thanks for Luke for his work as Secretary. The members approved and showed their appreciation with applause.

6. Motion to Consider Unpaid Work (Volunteering) as work as described in the AVCC Constitution

The paper explaining the motion was received and noted. Ingrid outlined the purpose of the paper and resolution was for the AGM to consider if the definition of work as used in the Constitution might be read to include unpaid volunteer work in order that volunteers could be considered for full membership of the AVCC. Key points were discussed as follows:

If this was accepted would it mean that somebody having no connection to the Valley could in principle be accepted on the Committee? It was confirmed that there are lots of groups who work around the hall and in the Valley (eg people against prisons, volunteer gardening with the valley, trapping) – it was about acknowledging their passion as a connection with the community. A member suggested it was good in that it increases the network of volunteers. A member suggested the need to know and adhere to the legal implications.

A member suggested the Committee would need to register any change to the Constitution with the Secretary of the Incorporated Societies entity and gain approval for the proposed change, however there had been feedback that this was not necessary as it was just a definitional clarification, not a change to the Constitution.

A member queried if someone who just volunteers on one event would qualify? They would not, the idea was that it would be sustained volunteer work. There was also the need for a balance to ensure the Community has self-determination.

A member noted the Constitution commits the members to consensus decision making and there was discussion about whether the members would be comfortable for a member to be a volunteer working on a project unconnected with the AVCC. The member suggested it should read “volunteer work directly connected with the AVCC”. A member responded that someone might have been renting in the Valley and put a lot of work in and then had to move outside the Valley so it would be nice if they were able to continue their ongoing work. The member’s concern was to enable and continue the community grounding.

A member noted the Constitution allows for honorary membership which had been granted at AGMs in the past and suggested this might be considered instead - however it was noted honorary members could not vote or run for office.

A Councillor suggested the addition of reference to sustained work and noted it was also good practice not to have the same people allowed to stand on the Committee for many years.

A member was concerned about the potential for people to use the AVCC as a vehicle to push their own agenda and suggested counting voluntary work could compromise the true aim of the AVCC. This led to a suggestion that if the only volunteer work the individual engaged in was being on the AVCC Committee, this will not lead to the right results.

Motion was resolved to a) Recognize the definition of “worker” in the Constitution as paid or unpaid work on a sustained level within the Aro Valley Community and b) not to include those in elected AVCC positions on the AVCC Committee as workers for this definition.

Moved: Ingrid; Seconded: Janet Carlyle - Carried Unanimously

7. Election of Committee Members

Ingrid outlined the elections process. First the Officers would be elected, then the Committee and we would get to hear from all of them and requested they make clear if they are a full member not due the expanded definition of “worker”. The Committee is made up of up to 10 people and 2 representatives.

Since there were no representatives present from the Aro Valley School or Preschool, the Co-Chairs would engage with these parties with regard to filling their representative positions. Nominations were closed at 12.44pm. Dani and Roxy were confirmed as the election's officers led by Council Iona Pannett. The two WCC Councilors and Jenny Rains and those who were not full members in the Valley abstained from the voting.

Co-Chair (2) Nominations: Ingrid Downey, Barbara Wheeler, Martin Wilson and Ayse Altin Wohlleben.

Ayse subsequently withdrew her nomination. Each candidate gave a short speech outlining their reasons for standing and their connection to the Community. The elections officers dismissed the candidates and held the vote. It was confirmed that each member held two votes (for two Co-Chairs). **Ingrid Downey and Barbara Wheeler were elected as Co-Chairs.**

There was a vote of thanks to George the outgoing Co-Chair.

Secretary Nominations: There were two candidates, Ayse Altin Wohlleben and Martin Wilson.

Martin withdrew his nomination. Ayse outlined her reasons for standing and was dismissed from the room for voting. **Ayse Altin Wohlleben was unanimously elected as Secretary.**

Treasurer Nominations: There were three candidates, Michael Herry's, Liam Hunt and Ingrid Downey.

Liam withdrew his nomination. Ingrid withdrew her nomination on the basis that she had been appointed Co-Chair and it was not appropriate for her to also be Treasurer. Michael outlined his reasons for standing and was dismissed from the room for voting. **Michael Henry's was unanimously elected as Treasurer.**

Committee Nominations: Iona outlined the voting process and noted as there were less than 10 nominations (9) the agreed process was that voting would be a show of hands for the block of the nominees to be appointed to the Committee.

Phaedra Brice-Chen, Cameron MacKay, George Sapsford, Lorna Travers, Melanie Vautier, Jill Musgrave, Liam Hunt, Martin Wilson, Emma Reid were nominated for the Committee. Each spoke to outline their reasons for standing and links to the Community. The candidates left the room for voting/discussion.

Discussion - A member suggested one candidate was not appropriate to be appointed (under articles 2a.3 and 2a.4) on the basis that they had not demonstrated a sense of community, were a chaos maker and would not represent the best interests of the Community. Another member disagreed with this sentiment. A member noted the Constitution was silent on this matter and proposed proceeding with the block vote and then for the member to introduce a vote of no-confidence after the vote. Another option was to vote everybody down and call for nominations from the floor. This option was deemed to take too much time.

A member noted the Committee had never experienced an issue like this and should be more inclusive/tolerant as a society and that natural justice should be provided, allowing this person a right of response. Another member suggested it was just one person that was the problem and that the Code of Conduct would allow the Committee to manage this issue.

It was decided a vote would take place for the slate of candidates (a vote of accept or not accept the whole group was confirmed as the process agreed before the meeting and this should be honored). It was agreed that at future AGMs, the election process would be advertised beforehand and more transparent to all members.

Phaedra Brice-Chen, Cameron MacKay, George Sapsford, Lorna Travers, Melanie Vautier, Jill Musgrave, Liam Hunt, Martin Wilson, Emma Reid **were unanimously accepted onto the Committee by show of hands.**

After the vote, two members expressed a lack of confidence in one individual voted onto the Committee. Other members suggested it was unfair for that individual to be named. Another member suggested if this discussion proceeded there would need to be a further meeting on the basis this was not a majority, or a community view and that the larger community should take part in this issue.

It was agreed that the Committee be responsible for managing the conduct and accountability of every Committee Member, using the Code of Conduct, including the issue brought up in the motion, discussion and the declaration of no confidence by two individuals. This included the potential need to call a Special General Meeting of the whole Council at which there could be a wider discussion about the make-up of the Committee and behavior expectations and allow natural justice to be achieved, if this could not be achieved by the Committee.

It was resolved to accept the Committee as voted and pass it to the Committee to manage this issue and arrange a Special General Meeting, should the Committee not be able to achieve a good result. It was agreed that the Committee would be accountable and would report back to a Special General Meeting (if needed) within one month. It was recommended that there be a neutral, independent person who does not live in the Community appointed to manage this process.

Moved: Lisa; Seconded: Mathieson Carlyle – Carried

A member gave feedback that he was shocked at the discussion which had just ensued.

The nominees returned to the meeting and the resolution (above) was read to them.

Action: a) Committee to develop a written outline of all the voting processes to be followed in future.

b) Committee to hold a meeting prior to 9 September 2020 to agree expectations of the Committee members conduct and accountability – including the potential need for a Special General Meeting to agree the membership of the Committee.

8. Appointment of Auditor and Honorary Solicitor

It was resolved that the Committee be granted authority to appoint the honorary solicitor and auditor –

Moved: Ingrid; Seconded: Naginbhai Neil Patel - Carried unanimously.

9. Deferred Vote (from 22 February 2020 Meeting) Regarding Attendance of Committee Members at Committee Meetings

This item was postponed to a future General meeting due to time.

10. Other Business

There was no other business

11. Close

The meeting closed at 1.50pm.