



# CONSERVATION COUNCIL

ACT REGION

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**5.00 pm Friday 9 November 2017**  
**Conservation Council office**  
**14/26 Barry Drive Canberra 2600**  
**DRAFT MINUTES**

- 1) **Welcome:** the President, Rod Griffiths, welcomed members to the 2017 AGM and confirmed the agenda. A quorum was confirmed. Rod acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land we were meeting on and paid our respects to elders past and present.
- 2) **Attendance:**
  - a) Rod Griffiths, National Parks Association ACT; Christine Goonrey, National Parks Association ACT; Jacqui Cummins; Kevin Cox, Living Streets; Nick Warg, Sustainable Population Australia; Douglas Finlayson, Ginninderra Falls Association; Ian Falconer, Friends of Aranda Bushland; Ngaire Sidhu, Australian Youth Climate Coalition; Glenys Patulny, Southern ACT Catchment Group; Clive Hurlstone, National Parks Association ACT; Conor Harrington, Food Co-op; Tony Lawson, Friends of Grasslands, Step, Australian Native Plants Society, Field Naturalists Association Canberra; Cynthia Burton, Canberra Bushwalking Club; Kevin McCue, National Parks Association ACT; Sonja Lenz, National Parks Association ACT; Jenny Bounds Canberra Ornithologists Group; Helen Sims Friends of Aranda Bushland; Nick Tebbey, Board member; David Wong Ginninderra Catchment Group; Kamrul Khan, observer; Viv Pearce ACT Australian Association for Environmental Education. Larry O'Loughlin, staff.
  - b) **Apologies:** Helen Sims, Sarah Sharp, Karissa Preuss, Josh Creaser, Ross Kingsland, Peter Ottesen, Christopher Dorman, Anthony Burton.
  - c) **Previous Minutes: Motion 1: "That the minutes from the previous AGM held on the 4 November 2016 be accepted as a true and accurate account."** Moved, seconded. Accepted.
- 3) **Reports:**
  - a) **President's report:**
    - Conservation Council was established in 1979 with a mission to influence government, business and community through effective public policy and engagement to protect nature.
    - Some key moments of the last year:
      - Continued work with a range of groups and individuals to look after the environment in the ACT

- Despite a real shortage of staff, maintaining excellent forums and communications and policy initiatives
- Ongoing good governance of the organisation with active and engaged Board members, well-informed meetings with substantial material delivered in a timely manner
- The largest ever World Environment Day dinner for the Conservation Council with 300 people attending
- A new initiative: Walk the Border ACT
- Good connections across the ACT community
- These are a few things out of a whole range of other achievements that provide a glimpse of the breadth of work performed at the Council.
- Thank you to many people who have worked with and assisted the Conservation Council over the last year:
  - Board members, both ongoing and departing (Josh Creaser)
  - Member groups
  - Volunteers both in the office and at events
  - Staff including Larry, Clare, Belinda, and Estelle and also to Rebecca and Elle who left during the year
- It has again been an honour to serve as president over the past year and I would like to thank Larry, Clare, Belinda and the other past and present staff and volunteers of the Conservation Council, the Board and member groups for their support.

**Motion 2: “That the President’s Report be accepted by the meeting.”**

Moved, seconded. Accepted.

**Executive Director’s Report:**

Key highlights of the year include:

- Ongoing policy development across our focus areas and follow-up for implementation of policy developed for 2016 election ‘asks’ document
- Ongoing engagement with a range of organisations and forums to include environmental issues in strategies and discussions. These include the Peaks Forum of community organisations in the ACT chaired by ACTCOSS, the Canberra Business Chamber Sustainability Task Force, the Environment and Planning Forum and the Joint Community-Government Reference Group
- Ongoing engagement with all Legislative Assembly political parties to develop strong community support to get to zero net emissions as soon as possible
- Obtaining media coverage on a range of environmental issues including municipal waste, removal of mature trees and biodiversity conservation
- Ongoing engagement with ad hoc ACT Government consultation processes including on legislation changes, policies and strategies
- Our World Environment Day Dinner was again successful in being our largest single fundraising event for the year

**Normal and routine activities**

Making some important activities “routine” is more efficient. Examples include:

- Communications – we continue Weekly Wrap to member groups and monthly E-bulletin – Yellow Box Dispatch to supporters. We are active on

Twitter and Facebook and soon Instagram and this content also gets posted on our website. We also have a blog on our website which automatically tweets.

- Events – our signature event is the World Environment Day Dinner. Subject to resources we try to conduct our annual symposium and a Spring Mingle. This year we had Walk the Border ACT and this will be evaluated for repeating
- Policy discussions and networking – our monthly “Environment Exchange” at a regular time and venue has been very useful and will continue in 2018.
- Civi database – we continue to increase our supporter database and to improve its functionality. We have obtained additional technical support from a local provider and we have now also moved our hosting to Canberra.
- Administration – office manual and ongoing streamlining of admin systems
- Governance – Annual Planning Day with staff and Board, operational Plan, regular Board meetings

### **Challenges**

The Conservation Council is essentially an organisation based on volunteers with some paid staff resources. We have two point two five staff made of four individuals to look after policy, communications, governance and operations so the wonderful contributions of volunteers and interns are vital to our success.

We need to keep working to remain relevant in the eyes of decision-makers and the community. We continue to work through a range of official and non-official channels to obtain information and to influence decisions. We also try to respond when we receive requests from member groups, the community, government and politicians (that’s often two separate groups) and the media. This sometimes puts pressure on the office when several requests come at once, however, we do what we can when we can.

The ACT Government conducted a review of its Community Partnerships Program under which it funds the three environment organisations: Conservation Council, SEE-Change and Canberra Environment Centre. It is a challenge to keep educating public servants as to the varied roles of these three organisations and to restate the value to government of funding advocacy even when the advocates might occasionally criticise the government. We await a copy of that review but at least the government decided to provide an additional three years of funding although it is not indexed and has not increased since 2011. We have to keep looking at how we can develop ongoing funding sources to reduce the proportion of our income from government. Our engagement with Bank Australia has been useful in providing some additional funds but that will plateau, hopefully higher than our current position, and we then need to look at other options.

### **Looking forward**

Key things in 2017-18 will be:

- Ongoing engagement on environment issues with MLAs and Ministers
- Developing strong community support to get to zero net emissions
- Obtaining additional resources to provide for more staffing

- Further engagement with volunteers and interns
- Increasing our core funding

### **Acknowledgements**

The Conservation Council could not be what it is without all the various people who are involved or have been involved over the period.

- Staff – Clare, Belinda, Elle, Estelle.
- Volunteers – particularly Robert who does data entry for our system 'Civi'.
- Interns and Students
- The Board for its ongoing support
- Biodiversity Working Group for its ongoing substantial policy work.
- The people who come in with issues and advice and comments

I look forward to working with you next year.

**Motion 3: "That the Executive Director's report be accepted by the meeting."** Moved, seconded. Accepted

#### **4) Statement of accounts and the reports pursuant to section 73 (1) of the Associations Incorporations Act 1991**

- a) The auditor's report and annual accounts were tabled.

**Motion 4: "That the Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2017 be accepted by the meeting."** Moved, seconded. Accepted

**MOTION 5: "That a vote of thanks be passed recognising the hard work provided to the Conservation Council on a voluntary basis by our auditor Mr Saminda Maddumahewa".** Moved, seconded. Accepted

**Motion 6: "That Saminda Maddumahewa be reappointed as our auditor, for the year ending 30 June 2017".** Moved, seconded. Accepted.

#### **5) Election of members of the board, including office bearers.**

- a) Rod Griffiths will stand down from the chair following approval of the following motion: **"That Charlie Salter be appointed as Returning Officer for the election of office bearers and Board members"**
- b) Nominations were advertised and sought in accordance with requirements of the constitution. All member groups who put in nominations were current financial members for the 2016-2017 year and their membership status was constitutional.
- c) As at the closing time 5.00 pm 2 November 2017 the Secretary had received sufficient nominations to fill all positions without the need for an election. Note that the Treasurer is appointed at the first Board meeting by Board members and that the Board can co-opt three more members.
- d) The nominations:

- President: there was one vacancy and one nomination Rod Griffiths. Rod Griffiths elected as President
- Vice-President: there were two vacancies and two nominations: Nick Tebbey and Christine Goonrey. Nick Tebbey and Christine Goonrey elected as Vice-Presidents
- Secretary: there was one vacancy and one nomination Helen Sims. Helen Sims elected as Secretary
- Other Board members: six vacancies and six nominations. The following are elected as Board members:
  - Jenny Bounds
  - Anthony Burton
  - Peter Ottesen
  - Ian Falconer
  - Glenys Patulny
  - Christopher Dorman

e) The duly elected Conservation Council Board for 2017-18:

- President: Rod Griffiths
- Vice-President: Nick Tebbey
- Vice-President: Christine Goonrey
- Secretary: Helen Sims
- Other Board members:
  - Jenny Bounds
  - Anthony Burton
  - Peter Otteson
  - Ian Falconer
  - Glenys Patulny
  - Christopher Dorman

*Please note that Charlie Salter is again prepared to be nominated as Treasurer.*

*The Board will consider co-opting people for the Board over the coming year.*

- 6) The president, Rod Griffiths thanked members for coming and invited all present to enjoy the refreshments provided. The meeting closed at 5.30 pm.