

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Rationalist Society of Australia

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: Thursday 30th April 2009
Time: 6.30pm
Address: 291 Dandenong Rd, WINDSOR

1

Formal Matters

Election of a chair for the meeting:

Motion: That Ian Robinson be chair for the meeting.

Moved by: David McKenzie

Seconded by: Ian Paroissien

Result of Vote: Carried without dissent.

Present

Ian Robinson, David McKenzie, Meredith Doig, Les Fitzgerald, Jean Melzer, Bodye Darvill, Charmian Crosbie-Goold, John Perkins, Leanne McDonald, Cathie McDonald, Wal Parker, Ian Paroissien, Nigel Sinnott, Jason Ball, David Stimson, Kevin Childs, Elliot Birch

Visitors: Ben Seymour, Ed Janet

Apologies

Apologies were received from Robert Bourne, Charles Cornwall, Ian and Patricia Rowe, Lyn Allison, Diane Preston, Tony Lamb.

Motion: That apologies be accepted

Moved by: Cathie McDonald

Seconded by: John Perkins

Result of Vote: Carried without dissent.

Proxies

In favour of the chairman of the meeting:

Diane Preston, Rosa Bradbury, Kevin Rees, Brendan Murphy, Louise Rodbourn, Charles Cornwall, Michael Kowalik, Terence Kennedy, Warwick Dunstan, Derek O'Reilly, Zygmunt Lewis, Sergio Salib, Peter Trebilco, Vince Haywood, David Miller, Ray Broughton, William Gladstones

In favour of Meredith Doig:

David Freeman, Jacques Peron

In favour of David McKenzie

Tony Lamb

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2 **Minutes of last meeting**

The Minutes of the last AGM, held at 6.30pm on 30 June 2008 at 4/99 William St, Melbourne, had been circulated with the agenda to this meeting.

Motion: That the minutes be accepted as a true record.

Moved by: David McKenzie

Seconded by: Meredith Doig

Result of Vote: Carried without dissent.

3 **Business Arising from the Minutes**

Member Robert Bourne asked if the journal was circulated to university newsagencies. The answer is that it appears not, except for Curtin University newsagency. The Secretary has asked the distributors Gordon and Gotch to include the other university newsagencies, where possible.

4 (a) **President's Report**

President Ian Robinson reported on his own activities representing the Rationalist Society since the last AGM, and then outlined the areas the Committee has agreed to work on for the forthcoming 12 months. These are:

1. Supporting a high quality, universal and secular education system.
2. Supporting an open and secular democracy.
3. Supporting the codification of human rights.

The President also thanked the Secretary for her work in streamlining the administration of the Society and welcomed new Committee members Lyn Allison (former Democrats Senator for Victoria), Diane Preston (lawyer) and Jason Ball (Melbourne University Secular Society President).

4 (b) **Secretary's Report**

Secretary Meredith Doig reported that the Society presently has just over 400 members, about 70% of whom are full members and 30% concessional (either student or pensioner). She reported on the various activities the Committee has been involved in since the last AGM, and some that are in the pipeline. She also reported on communications with members and the imminent launch of the Society's new website.

4 (c) **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer David McKenzie reported on that the Society had received about \$12,000 in the period from the last AGM (30 June 2008) up to the end of the March 2009 quarter. Major items of expenditure were: for design of the new website, membership of the Associations Forum and attendance at their annual conference, part payment of issue no 82 of the Australian Rationalist journal, one year membership of National Forum which runs the 'Online Opinion' political blog, and support for new Committee member Jason Ball to accept the invitation to speak at the US Center for Inquiry conference.

Motion: That the Officebearers' reports be accepted.

M: Ian Paroissien

S: Nigel Sinnott

Carried without dissent.

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- 4 (d) The President invited co-opted Committee member Jason Ball to report on his recent trip to Washington to attend the 'Science, Public Policy and Planetary Ethic' conference of the Center for Inquiry. Jason reported that he was able to meet a number of well-known freethinkers such as Paul Kurz, James Randi and Susan Jacobi. He said there was interest in what was happening in Australia and he was able to hand out numerous copies of the Australian Rationalist journal.

5 **Consideration of motions on notice**

The following motions were received with the requisite 21 days' notice:

- (i) That the constitution be amended to add the underlined words:
The annual general meeting of the Society shall be held within 5 months of the end of each financial year to elect office-bearers, record the Committee's annual report and balance sheet, and transact any business of which 21 days' notice in writing shall have been given to the Secretary.

M: Meredith Doig

S: Kevin Childs

Carried without dissent.

- (ii) That membership fees be adjusted as follows:

- Single membership be increased from \$30 to \$35
- Double (couples) membership be increased from \$40 to \$50
- Single concession be increased from \$20 to \$25
- Double concession be increased from \$30 to \$40.

M: David McKenzie

S: Nigel Sinnott

Carried without dissent.

6 **Election of Committee Members**

Nominations have been received from:

Ian Robinson for President, David McKenzie for Vice President, Meredith Doig for Secretary and Treasurer, Lyn Allison, Jason Ball, Kevin Childs, Bodye Darvill, Catherine McDonald, Diane Preston for the Committee.

The number of nominations being less than the number of vacancies for the Committee, the Chair declared all duly elected.

7 **Any Other Business**

None.

CLOSE OF MEETING at 8.10pm