

MINUTES of the Annual General Meeting of Members held Wednesday 30 November 2020 at 7.30pm in the Amenities Building, The Bill Spilstead Complex for Canine Affairs, 44 Luddenham Road, Orchard Hills.

PRESENT	Dr K Hedberg BVSc	President
	Mrs L Brown	Senior Vice President
	Mr J Sheppard	Vice President
	Mrs L Brand	Vice President
	Mr M Arthur	Vice President
	Mrs C Rafton	Director
	Mrs N Keck	Director
	Miss V Etherington OAM	Director
	Mr R Britten	Director
	Mr G Spagnolo	Director
	Mr E Pickering	Director
	Mr P Cutler	Director
	Mr R Harbin	Director
	Mrs V Gagan-Wilson	Company Secretary
Mr A Khamis	Operations Manager	

A total of 32 Members present, a list of whom appears in the Minute Book and which includes the above Directors.

- 2. APOLOGIES** Mr K Keck DOGS NSW Member
Mr T Long DOGS NSW Member

MOVED D Smith SECONDED R Duffy
THAT the apologies be received.

CARRIED

1. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

MOVED K Griffin SECONDED S Oliver
THAT the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Members held 6 November 2019, published in the April 2020 Gazette, be confirmed

CARRIED

2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The President reported to the meeting as follows:-

As my first year of being President, I have to call it as the Queen once did, an Annus Horribilis. It was a year starting with droughts followed by months of fires, then floods and finally pandemics. While I am not an overly religious person, it has been a year of biblical proportions!

Late last year we saw the tail end of the drought followed by months of fires coming down from the north and eventually going all the way down to Victoria. Many of the later fires were coastal, while earlier fires were more inland on both sides of the Blue Mountains, and a total of over 5 million hectares in NSW alone was burn out.

Thirteen (13) DOGS NSW members had their homes burnt down while many more were lucky to escape with more minor damage to fences and sheds due to the great service from the rural firefighters. Although, thankfully, no one lost their lives, unfortunately, a few dogs were lost in areas where the fires were moving extremely rapidly.

The RNSWCC Health & Welfare Charity was able to assist with some immediate funds for those that were burnt out as well as assisting with dog bedding and dog food supplies. Royal Canin was very generous with several large donations of dog food which was dispersed into several collection areas throughout the State. Senior Vice President, Lyn Brown, with her husband on one trip, and our Operations Manager, Anthony Khamis, on another trip, managed to move supplies out west as well as down south - their efforts were truly appreciated.

No sooner than the worst of the fires eased off, the opposite problem arose – flooding. At least this stopped the last of the fires, but as the ground was so dry there was lots of run off and flooding occurred very rapidly. Luckily there were very few members seriously affected by this event. This occurred in early to mid-February. The flood effects on DOGS NSW grounds were quite severe with the majority of the internal and external fences being totally destroyed. Luckily the sheep had been sold in December due to lack of feed from the drought, or else they would not have survived the flood event.

Barely a month later came the initial COVID-19 lockdown on 12 March 2020. This was the “official” start of the Pandemic. We were all locked down for 6 weeks, with dog shows and events halted immediately. Dog people, in pursuing their hobby, moving from place to place, sometimes doing 2-3 shows per weekend, are the ideal vectors for spreading disease, particularly viral respiratory diseases. Added to that, the average age of our members places large numbers of us in the “vulnerable category”, ie, the odds of those who do catch the virus and subsequently dying from it is quite high.

Since that time, the NSW Health Department had managed to stabilise the COVID situation several times and we were getting hopeful of returning to shows when “WHAM”, in late July, Victoria exploded into a second wave. NSW just missed getting a second lockdown. I highly commend the NSW Health Department’s tracking teams for the excellent level of control we have managed to achieve in this State.

At time of writing (late August), the situation appears to be stable so we will once again try and venture out to Shows and other events. These will be of a slightly different format for the foreseeable future, particularly for All Breeds Shows where Group starting times may need to be staggered.

On the political side, there have been several developments that affect DOGS NSW. The major one is finally getting the lease extension on the DOGS NSW grounds from the Government. The lease has been extended by 20 years to 2058 and the amount of land we have been able to retain is quite large with the added ability to share a few areas when needed. Many thanks to Senior Vice President, Lynette Brown, and the Media & Government Legislation Committee, in particular Brian Crump, for all their hard work to push this through. Further, the Government has agreed to set up the external fences (dog proof) around the new boundaries. Hopefully, this may well have started by the time of this meeting.

The Animal Welfare Laws review is still ongoing. This is reviewing POCTA as well as the Exhibition and Research of Animals Acts and trying to combine them with similar basic ethics towards establishing a minimal standard of care as the basis across all 3 Acts. This is a slight turn around but a more sensible way to look at welfare, where previously it was punitive based.

DOGS NSW has put in a submission to this Review which included the need for an Ombudsman to be used where there are issues with the Welfare agencies, rather than the current situation of no avenue for redress. This motion has already been accepted and we are looking forward to further input into developing the Codes of Practice for the Breeding of Dogs and Cats. The Government Working Party has been actively involving us (and listening!) at the various stages of this review.

Further, the Government has been assisting with various payments to cover the COVID lock down, sufficiently that we have survived the crisis still in a reasonably good financial position. Chair of the Finance Committee, Senior Vice President, Lynette Brown, will cover this much more extensively in her financial report. I commend all her efforts in tirelessly managing limited funds and looking at the long term financial stability of the Company.

The Board has approved various improvements across the grounds which include the replacement of damaged ring covers, new lawn mower, new computers replacing old IT equipment that was over nine (9) years old - again these will be discussed in the Senior Vice President's financial report.

The Office

The Office has been working extremely well, even through the difficult COVID situation. All of the staff worked part time in the initial lockdown and we are now back to reasonably normal conditions although still on reduced hours. The majority of the work with registrations, etc, can be done online. The Reception has been closed during those times when the COVID risk was high. There are a few members that are not comfortable using technology to conduct business and prefer to deal directly with the Office staff, this can be done when the COVID situation is stable.

I would like to thank both the Company Secretary, Virginia Gagan-Wilson, and the Operations Manager, Anthony Khamis, very much for their support throughout the year for the "Rookie President". They have made the job much easier with all the many ins and outs of dealing with the effective running of DOGS NSW. They are both very competent individuals who dovetail their activities fairly seamlessly. The Office is working well and is now a very productive atmosphere. I thank all the hardworking Staff members who are always very cheerful and helpful to the members. DOGS NSW has the fastest turn around for registrations in the country which has been at zero days for almost 24 months, ie, applications received in the morning are processed and sent out the same day in most cases. Congratulations to all!

Library and Archives

The Research & Education Centre continues to be given some wonderful books and canine objects that are irreplaceable. Members should take the time to look through the Library building once shows recommence. Director Nancy Keck and her hardworking Committee have been cataloguing and arranging the objects and it looks amazing. Many thanks for all their hard work.

Conformation Judges Education Program

Despite all the troubles during the year with disrupted lectures, shows, etc, the Conformation Judges Training Committee and CJEP Examinations Committee managed to get through the required lectures and examinations. The vast majority of the Candidates (well over 70%) passed – Congratulations to those people. The practical side of the course has had to be delayed until February 2021, to allow fields nights, critique writing and the practical judging requirements to be completed. Many thanks for the hard work of Directors Russell Britten & John Shepherd and all the Group Co-ordinators for getting through this difficult time successfully.

ANKC Ltd

We are still trying to get the National Business System up and running. It has finally been passed, in principal, but many of the finer points still need to be sorted. This will result in a much improved online and technology experience for our Members.

RFG – the Respiratory Function Grading System developed by Cambridge University has just been accepted by the ANKC. The exact points of how this will work and the training of Assessors, etc, is still being sorted out in conjunction with The Kennel Club and Ms Jane Ladlow, The Kennel Club's Chief Assessor. We are also conferring with the New Zealand Kennel Club who has also accepted the System to see what teething issues there might be. This has been accepted by quite a few countries and is backed by the FCI. Initially, this will be for French and British Bulldogs as well as Pugs. Other Brachycephalic breeds will be looked at to be included over time.

The Board of Directors

In closing, may I thank the Board for all its help and support in a very difficult year. We have weathered the disasters and pandemic and still came out in a good state. Much of this good management is as a result of the strong background work done by the previous President. I inherited a financially strong Company and well balanced and well run Office which, together with a hard working Board, has seen us come through successfully in these unprecedented times.

MOVED P Cutler

SECONDED D Harbin

THAT the report of the Chairman, as published in the 2018/2019 RNSWCC Ltd Annual Report, be received.

CARRIED

3. CONSIDERATION OF SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Company Secretary reported to the meeting as follows:-

Australian National Kennel Council Ltd

The RNSWCC Representative at the Annual General Meeting held on 19 October 2019 was Mrs L Brown and the Directors appointed by RNSWCC were Mrs L Brown and Mr J Sheppard. Mr J Sheppard was unable to attend the meeting on 19 October 2019 and Dr K Hedberg BVSc attended the meeting as an Observer.

Mrs L Brown and Dr K Hedberg BVSc attended the Board Meeting held on 19 & 20 October 2019. Dr K Hedberg BVSc was appointed as Alternate Director as Mr J Sheppard was unable to attend. Mr A Khamis, DOGS NSW Operations Manager also attended the meeting to assist in discussion on the ANKC Ltd National Business System.

Mrs L Brown attended the Special Board Meeting held on 8 & 9 February 2020, as did Dr K Hedberg BVSc having been appointed a Director in November 2019.

Mrs L Brown was a Director for the whole of the year, ie, June 2019 to June 2020, Mr J Sheppard was a Director from June 2019 to November 2019, with Dr K Hedberg BVSc being an Alternate Director for the October 2019 Board meeting and as a Director for the Special Board Meeting specified above.

New Affiliates

The following new Affiliates were approved for the year ended 30 June 2020:-

- The Boston Terrier Club of Metropolitan NSW Inc – September 2019
- Kangal Shepherd Dog Club of NSW Inc – February 2020
- NSW Country British Bulldog Club – April 2020
- Northern United Cocker Club of NSW – July 2020

Inquiries, Investigations and Appeals

During the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020, the RNSWCC received 42 new complaints which proceeded to the Chair of the DOGS NSW Disputes Assessment Panel, with the following outcomes:-

- 19 Declined
- 12 Proceeded to Inquiry
- NIL Appeals
- 3 Still Under Investigation
- NIL Proceeded to Mediation
- 8 Withdrawn
- 0 Dismissed

Judges Training Schemes

Judges Training Schemes were conducted/are in progress for the following disciplines:-

- Conformation
- Obedience & Tracking (suspended as @ 11 April 2020)
- Retrieving & Field Trial
- Sled Sports

Company Secretary

The name, qualifications and experience of the person who has occupied the position of Secretary of the Company during the year are:-

- Mrs Virginia Gagan-Wilson (since 2014): Company Secretary RNSWCC (trading as DOGS NSW).
Previous experience in high level PA/Executive Assistant and Secretarial positions with State & Local Governments, DOGS NSW CEO from 2014 to 2019.

MOVED K Griffin

SECONDED D Smith

THAT the report of the Company Secretary, as published in the 2019/2020 RNSWCC Ltd Annual Report, be received.

CARRIED

4. CONSIDERATION OF DIRECTORS' REPORTS

MOVED S Donaldson

SECONDED R Duffy

THAT the reports of the Directors, as published in the 2019/2020 RNSWCC Ltd Annual Report, be received.

CARRIED

5. CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL REPORT – FOR THE YEAR-END 30 JUNE 2020

The Financial Report for the year end 30 June 2020, as published in the 2019/2020 RNSWCC Ltd Annual Report, was considered by the meeting.

MOVED H Gent OAM

SECONDED D Harbin

THAT the Financial Report for the year end 30 June 2020, as published in the 2019/2020 RNSWCC Ltd Annual Report, be received.

CARRIED

6. NOTICES OF MOTION - NIL

9. MEETING CLOSED

8.00
