

# **DOWNER COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

## **Minutes of Annual General Meeting Monday 27 November 2023**

The formal meeting opened at 7.35pm. The Convenor Robyn Rennie welcomed members and friends.

### **BBQ in the Square**

Prior to the formal part of the AGM, DCA put on a BBQ thankfully in dry and warmish weather. Amit Barkay was thanked for his efforts in making this happen. Thanks too to the those who assisted with cooking. Amit also did the cleaning up!

### **ATTENDANCE**

The record of attendance is attached to the hard copy of the Minutes.

Some 26 people attended the meeting.

Formal apology received from: Kerry-Ann Hugo, Patrika Sheehan, Rob Vines, Fran Parker, Michael Flynn, Pam Behncke, Sue Dyer and John Godwin.

### **1. MINUTES**

The minutes of the AGM of Monday 28 November 2022 were adopted. Nominated – Robyn Rennie, Seconded - Suzanne Pitson. The 2022 Minutes have been loaded onto the DCA website.

### **2. CONVENOR'S REPORT**

Robyn Rennie provided a report - copy below-

Once again the DCA has been kept very busy this year and I would like to thank the committee for all the work they have done, especially Jacqui, Miles, Suzanne, Amit and Stephen.

One of our major issues this year is that we have not had our 5 year peppercorn Lease on the centre renewed. There have been numerous emails and phone calls to the government concerning this but no success to date. Because of this we have been reluctant to spend too much money on improvements at the Centre in case DCA will not be the managers in future.

Some of our major events and achievements this year include -

- The Inner North and City District Strategy was released and DCA, thanks to Miles and Suzanne, wrote a very comprehensive response which can be viewed on the DCA website.
- Clean up Australia day organised by Jacqui and Miles involving about 20 other volunteers.
- Thanks to a community grant of \$15 000 from the Dickson Tradies we have replaced all the gas heaters in the centre with electric air conditioners so tenants should be much more comfortable in both Summer and Winter.
- Once again we participated in suburban Floriade, thanks to our Downer gardeners,
- Created guidelines for our own DCA community grants program offering up to \$10 000 for Downer residents to develop any projects that would benefit the Downer community.

You can still apply but your project (eg. park improvement, community even etc) has to be competed by end of financial year 2024.

- In October we held another 'Party at the Square', thanks to Amit. Beautiful weather but as it was in school holidays a little quieter than last years.
- Involvement with the Wellstation scout group, which is now operating from the old Downer Scout hall, particularly when the hall had a tree limb fall through the roof! There are quite a few Downer children now attending this group.
- The Pump Track next to the Scout Hall has been opened.
- The DCA support for the Cole St Park group and the Berry/Legge St Park group has continued Band both groups have been busy all year maintaining and improving their recently rejuvenated parks.
- Quite a few meetings with various politicians with varied success. Reinstatement of the decommissioned toilets has been much aired.
- Meetings with SpaceLab - one of the smaller developers in relation to what is preferred in Downer re medium density development.
- Installed WiFi in the Centre for the benefit of the clients.
- Despite numerous attempts all year to employ a Centre Coordinator we have been unable to fill the position. Thanks go to Stephen for managing the Centre during the year particularly as a volunteer.

There have been the usual maintenance issues with toilets, gardens, library boxes and frog pond but these have been very well managed by Amit, Stephen, Jacqui and Miles with assistance from Denis and Jim. Thank you to the Scoobie Doodle kids (Centre clients) for the cheerful painting on the kids library.

Thanks to Jacqui who keeps our clunky but informative website up to date and sends regular newsletters to anyone on our DCA list - so if we do not have your email address please sign up. Our committee minutes over the years are now in the ACT History Archives thanks to Denys Garden.

Thanks also go to Kerry-Ann Hugo who has kept our Facebook page up to date with new events and happenings around Downer.

Finally I would like to wish everyone a lovely Christmas and a happy 2024.

### 3. TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer, Stephen Sedgwick, presented the report from the auditor, Graeme Linder. The auditor reported that the accounts were properly drawn up to fairly present the affairs of the DCA for the year ended 30 June 2023. This report will be submitted to the ACT Government as required under the Associations Incorporation Act.

Full details of the accounts are in the attached auditor's report (hard copy version only).

The total income (principally from room hire and two auspiced grants of \$15,500 and \$28,000) for the financial year was \$88,428 and total expenses (largely utilities, wages and

grants disbursement) was \$77,027, resulting in a surplus of \$11,401. Note the grants are held by DCA to be administered and distributed by the DCA and not actually part of the DCA's funds. These grants were disbursed in 2023. The Association Member's Equity to 30 June 2023 was \$73,859.

Noted that the Community Centre halls are being hired more frequently than in the previous year. It was also noted that the DCC hall hire is one of the cheapest in the ACT and accounts for 94% of the DCA's annual income.

Motion to accept the Auditor's Report- Stephen Sedgwick. Seconded – Denys Garden Accepted.

Motion to appoint Graeme Linder to be Auditor for 2023/2024- Stephen Sedgwick Seconded- Miles Boak. Carried.

Aniko Carey gave a vote of thanks to Stephen Sedgwick for his role as Treasurer.

There were no questions arising from the Treasurer's Report. Robyn Rennie reiterated that as we have a healthy financial situation, community grants are available for Downer residents to propose community and environment enhancing projects. It was also noted our reluctance to do any major improvements to the building as we do not have an ongoing lease. Our lease is currently renewed on a monthly basis.

#### 4. ELECTION OF THE 2024 COMMITTEE

Patrika Sheehan and Simone Gray did not wish to seek renomination. Stephen Sedgwick was acknowledged for not only being the Treasurer but also taking on the role of Centre Manager for the last two years, but has stepped down from the Committee.

The following 8 nominations were received for the 2024 DCA Committee:

Robyn Rennie	Suzanne Pitson
Jacqui Pinkava	Miles Boak
Amit Barkay	Leon Arundell
Jane Teasey	John Godwin
Robyn Sirr	

As the Constitution allows for up to 10 members, there is a vacancy.

Jacqui Pinkava has agreed to be the Public Officer and will be reporting the Office Bearer's to the ACT Government after the new committee convenes in December 2023.

#### 5. OTHER BUSINESS

##### 1) Centre Coordinator vacancy – Stephen Sedgwick

The paid Centre Coordinator position has been vacant since 2019. The position was advertised through the DCA E-Newsletter, on the DCA noticeboard and through the venue users network. A selection process was undertaken and the successful person was hired in September. Sadly she resigned after a month citing that the job was too small. The job

entails about 6-7 hours per week at \$36 per hour. Another person accepted the position, but they too did not take up the position for other reasons. For the agenda again in 2024.

## 2) Developments around Downer

Public Toilets - Amit Barkay who liaises with the ACT Property Group, reiterated that sadly the decommissioned toilets will not be open or rebuilt to meet current codes, it's just too expensive.

Jacqui Pinkava mentioned that there is a delay on the commencement of the Goodwin independent Living development on the last section of the old primary school site. Details on the DCA website.

Aniko Carey raised concerns about the lack of lighting in the Cole St Park, making it a scary area to cross at night.

The DCA was reminded of the Canberra Metro Light Rail consortium's undertaking to improve the pathways connecting the stop to the suburb. This was in light of very poor path maintenance in Downer.

The meeting closed 8.35 pm.

Robyn Rennie, 2023 Convenor

Jacqui Pinkava, 2023 Secretary

To be approved: AGM 2024