

Sustainable Living Armidale Inc.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 3 July 2014 at 7pm at Kent House, 141 Faulkner Street, Armidale

Present: Iain MacKay (Chair): Hamid Abd Oun, Kerri Clarke, Brian Connor, Priscilla Connor, Joc Coventry, Alan Cunningham, Elizabeth Ellis, Jim Ellis, Bar Finch, Tom Fisher, Mahalath Halperin, Jo Leoni, Tom Livanos, Terry Manley, Robyn Newberry, Sylvia Ransom, Richelle Roberts, Margaret Sharpe, Kade Smith, Hani Soliman, Helen Stokes, Angela Symonds, Kath Wray, Helen Webb; Sarah Johnstone (Secretary).

Apologies: Patsy Asch, Bea Bleile, Andrew Lawson, Val Sherwell, Lauren Zell.

Welcome

Iain welcomed everyone, and noted that no proxies had been received.

1.0 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the previous AGM on 4 July 2013, which had been circulated in advance, were confirmed.
Moved Tom Livanos, seconded Jo Leoni.

2.0 Business Arising

There was no business arising from the minutes.

3.0 Convenor's Report

The Convenor, Iain MacKay, presented a visual report of the past year, which included details of the past Monthly Forums and the award of first prize for the best Float in the Autumn Festival parade. He then asked delegates from each Group to report on the past year, including the highlights and challenges as set out below.

Community Garden

Jo Leoni commented that the Community Garden had a good year, all involved had learnt a lot and the highlights were as follows.

- Chickens were now in residence, with some donated and others purchased.
- A sandpit had been built, which was good to occupy children while their parents gardened.
- The approaches to the Garden have been renovated with flowering shrubs at the southern entrance and a new northern entrance being developed.
- The name has now been completed on the northern fence using recycled materials.
- Bunnings had made a very welcome donation of equipment.
- A Tool shelter had been constructed from recycled material.
- Neram Harvest and the Goldfish Bowl had provided good sponsorship.
- \$1800 had been taken from sales at the Farmers Market which was an increase over previous years and \$600 from other sales, which was consistent with previous years.
- More volunteers have been participating, and in the last six months there has been an average of 42 hours of help a week.

Iain thanked Jo on behalf of SLA for all her work with the Garden.

Armidale Action on Coal Seam Gas and Mining (AACSGaM)

Kerri Clarke commented that it had been a very busy year for the Group with the main activities relating to supporting actions at the Pilliga and Leard State Forests, Maules Creek and Bentley. Individual activities included the following.

- A stall at the Tamworth Country Music Festival.
- Information session at the Bowling Club in February with updates from the Pilliga and Leard Forests, including discussion of the 'offset' areas proposed by Whitehaven. The Wilderness Society and Greenpeace are now also involved with this issue.
- A Newsletter is produced to keep people up to date.
- Running Tours in the Pilliga and Leard Forests.
- Civil disobedience by Pat Schultz and the funding of a publication by her on the Pilliga.

- Numerous Knit Ins to support Forest protesters, mostly around Court dates, with the next one scheduled for 11 July when Jonathon Moylan will be sentenced for his actions related to Maules Creek.
- Involvement with the Wilderness Society Photography Fundraising Exhibition, which raised \$1300.
- Winter clearing in the Leard Forest had been suspended until September.
- Attendance at Planning Assessment Commission hearings in Narrabri.

The major challenge for the Group was the need to get politicians on side, and to get information out to the community to combat the spin from the industry. The remoteness of the Pilliga and Leard Forests also made it difficult to conduct campaigns.

Energy

Mahalath Halperin reported that the highlight in the past year had been the conclusion of the 'I can do it campaign', which had been very successful. Looking forward the Group was running two main projects: the bulk buying of insulation for rental houses and the House tour planned for November.

Transport

Tom Fisher reported that Bike Week events were the main ones that occupied the Group in the last year. A commuter challenge was added in 2013, trying to emphasise that the bike can be used as a mode of commuter transport, not only for recreation. A presentation was held at the Armidale Club and surveys of bike and pedestrian activity had been conducted and would continue. This year the commuter challenge would be held again, and a new Bike to Brewery ride. The ride would be about 35 kms using back roads from Armidale to Uralla. Sponsorship from Roads and Maritime Services for Bike Week was continuing this year, and a Facebook site had also been set up for local cyclists. Tom thanked Bar Finch for all her work during the past year.

Armidale Local Food

Angela Symonds reported that the highlights for the Group in the last year included the following.

- Open Garden Tour;
- Seed saving Workshop; and
- Increased profile at promoting local food at the Farmers Market and sustaining the Local Food stall through the winter at the markets for the first time.

Angela indicated that she would no longer be Convenor, but as someone had expressed interest in the role the Group would continue.

Iain thanked all the Groups for their reports, and commented that the Coordinating Committee was considering funding one off projects that would help raise the profile of SLA and the Groups in the coming year. He sought members' reactions, and in general the idea was well supported with the following individual ideas put forward for consideration.

- Installation of Bike Lockups
- High profile speaker being brought to Armidale eg Richard Denniss
- Offering of prizes for involvement of local schools in climate projects
- Connecting local vegetable growers with people that need the produce
- Workshops on how to use Local Food, although this could also be run as a Forum.

Iain thanked members for their feedback and commented that the Committee would consider this at its next meeting.

4.0 Treasurer's Report for the year end 30 June 2014

The Treasurer, Robyn Newberry, advised the meeting that the Financial Report had been circulated by email to all members, but presented the report on screen to talk to it. Robyn commented that it had been another good year of operation for SLA and highlighted the following points.

- Completion of the 'I Can Do It' Project funded by a grant from The Environmental Trust, and the receipt of another grant from Roads & Maritime Services to celebrate Bike Week.
- Another successful Home Grown Garden Tour.
- Continuing establishment and successful operation of the Community Garden.
- The Coal Seam Gas group continued to raise monies toward increasing public awareness of the effects of this industry on the environment and communities.

- At the end of the financial year, the combined SLA account balances held at New England Community Mutual came to a total of \$20,612.49, of which \$5,600 are held in a separate account in the name of The Community Garden. The figures shown on the SLA Financial Statement reflect the net position of the Community Garden account. There is a separate detailed financial statement for the Garden available.
- The net position for the year reflects a deficit of \$462, due to approximately \$5,600 worth of expenditure this year related to the expected lag in expensing grant monies received over the previous two financial years. This was also reflected in the large surplus declared in 2011/2012.
- As of the end of financial year, SLA had 67 financial members. Membership subscriptions become due and payable at the AGM on 3rd July, 2014.
- She was not aware of any significant outstanding payments to be made or received, other than those included in Sundry Debtors.

A member queried how much had been received from New England Community Mutual Community Partnership, and the meeting was advised that \$1200 had been received which was a large increase over previous years. The Convenor, Iain MacKay, commented that this was an excellent scheme and reminded members to participate.

The meeting resolved to adopt the Financial statement for the period ending 30 June, 2014.

Moved Mahalath Halperin, seconded Jo Leoni.

5.0 Election of Office Bearers

Joc Coventry took the chair, declared all positions vacant, and invited nominations for the following positions.

- Convenor: Iain MacKay nominated by Mahalath Halperin. No further nominations, Iain elected unopposed.
- Secretary: Sarah Johnstone nominated by Bar Finch. No further nominations, Sarah elected unopposed.
- Treasurer: Robyn Newberry nominated by Iain MacKay. No further nominations, Robyn elected unopposed.

Iain resumed the chair, and advised that the following delegates had been recommended by their Action Groups, and following endorsement by the meeting, become members of the Coordinating Committee.

Patsy Asch (Energy);
 Tom Fisher (Transport);
 Mahalath Halperin (ALF);
 Jo Leoni (Community Garden);
 Kerri Clarke (AACSGaM); and
 Colin Hargreaves (Climate).

It was noted that Paul Reader (Heart & Soul) had indicated that he did not want to continue as the Group delegate, and with no further interest, it was agreed that this Group would be suspended pending further interest.

Iain reminded all present that the SLA structure encourages members (at least 3) to set up action groups to pursue a goal or activity consistent with SLA's vision, mission and values.

6.0 Close of meeting

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7:50pm, and was followed by the Thursday Forum, with a showing of a video on the sustainability agenda of Canning in Western Australia.