

Alfalfa House Members Council Meeting - Minutes  
Date: Tuesday 24 January 2017  
Time: 7pm  
Location: Meeting Space, 8-10 Brown Street, Newtown

Facilitator: Katherine  
Minutes: Matt  
Timekeeper: Jonny

**Meeting opened at: 7:08pm**

**Acknowledgement of Country:** Before we begin the meeting, I would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners, both past and present, of the land we occupy and upon which we meet — the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. It is also upon their ancestral lands that Alfalfa House is built.

**Additional acknowledgement:** I would like to acknowledge the significant contribution made by David Begg, former Members' Council member, and to express my sadness at his recent death.

**1. Attendance and Apologies**

Attendance: Victoria Taylor (MC), Jonny Green (MC), Katherine Lustig (MC), David Winterton (MC), Catherine O'Keefe (MC), Emma Lees (member), Maurice Cabrara (Manager), Renata Field (MC)

Apologies: Stevie Bee (member), Bruce Diekmann (member), Julia Gove (staff)

Absent: NIL

**2. Approval of Agenda**

**Proposed:** That the agenda be approved.

Moved: Jonny Seconded: Catherine. CARRIED by consensus

**3. Consent Agenda**

**3.1. Adoption of Previous Minutes**

That the minutes of the December 2016 meeting be adopted.

**3.2. New members and cancellations**

That members with the following membership numbers: 11958 11959 11960 11961 11962 11963 11964 11966 11968 11969 11970 11972 11973 11974 11976 11977 11978 11979 11980 11981 11982 11983 11984 11985 11986 11987 11988 11991 11992 11993 11994 11995 11996 11997 be approved as new members.

That members with the following membership numbers be cancelled: 2410 2526 2787 3716 4326 4346 4941 4987 5010 5057 5249 5404 5576 5643 6091 6116 6208 6277 6893 6941 7057 7301 7429 7497 7616 7663 7679 7682 7695 7821 7915 8033 8213 8272 8276 8386 8465 8483 8549 8893 8904 8930 9085 9102 9125 9190 9192

9384 9470 9577 9639 9691 9692 9740 9743 9765 9769 9791 9831 9832 9835 9840  
9894 9902 9949 9956 9989 10018 10021 10074 10086 10102 10140 10184 10224  
10232 10233 10236 10245 10248 10249 10251 10256 10261 10273 10277 10279  
10280 10288 10290 10292 10294 10296 10300 10304 10307 10308

### **3.3. Out-of-Session Decisions / Proposals**

The implementation of an Annual Subscription Fee as proposed [here](#).  
Moved: Victoria. Seconded: Catherine. CARRIED by consensus.

### **3.4. Reports from Working Groups**

- 3.4.1. Governance (Victoria) - NIL**
- 3.4.2. Premises Solutions - NIL**
- 3.4.3. Building Website and Other IT (Stevie) - NIL**
- 3.4.4. Marketing (Celine) - NIL**
- 3.4.5. Affordability (Maurice) - NIL**
- 3.4.6. Sustainability - NIL**
- 3.4.7. Volunteer Engagement - NIL**
- 3.4.8. Community outreach - NIL**
- 3.4.9. Staff Liaison (Jonny, Renata) - NIL**

### **3.5. Manager's Report**

Please see report for December [HERE](#).

### **3.6. Staffing (appointments and resignations) - NIL**

### **3.7. Deferred Matters / Business Arising - NIL**

### **3.8. Food Grants - NIL**

### **3.9. Workplace Health and Safety - see [Manager's Report](#)**

**Proposed:** That the Consent Agenda Items be approved.  
Moved: Renata Seconded: Jonny CARRIED by consensus.

## **4. Finance Working Group Report**

[December 2016 Treasurer's Report](#)

[December 2016 Dashboard](#)

Jonny explained the details of the \$5,000 deferred tax payment to the ATO, in which we are paying \$100 per week. He further explained that the Members' Council individuals would be personally liable in the event of insolvency, but the likelihood of that is very slight.

Victoria expressed concern about the directors' personal liability. David noted that the potential risk for directors in future business dealings in the case that debt is incurred following insolvency, and pointed out the importance of keeping the PAYG debt down to a fraction of the co-op's cash flow buffer.

Catherine noted that the limit on the PAYG debt is part of the overall cash flow monitoring, and that this is a common business practice.

Katherine asked if anyone felt strongly that the debt should be paid immediately. Victoria said that, in principle, we should pay it to keep MC members' personal liability to a minimum. Jonny said we would pay it as soon as we have settled the Jenny Leong grant. Renata was satisfied to keep deferring it. MC agreed to continue with the current course of payments for the time being.

**ACTION ITEM: Finance Working Group to investigate whether we have directors' insurance at present.**

## **5. Fundraising Events (Maurice)**

**Proposal:** That we change our annual fundraising event from an evening event with raffles and movie night to a day event that showcases our suppliers and provides entertainment for the whole family, with raffles, mini-workshops etc. Comments sought.

Katherine described the type of fundraiser being held most recently involving food made from donated ingredients, silent auction, raffle, and movie night. Catherine suggested we could have multiple types of fundraiser in a single year. General consensus is that the fundraising events are fun, community-building occasions.

Maurice has a volunteer event manager planned, but that one of the stalls would be manned by staff. Alfalfa House, however, would close for the day to enable all staff to participate. The details are yet to be worked out, including location (Summer Hill Community Centre is being considered but others will be explored) and they type of workshops. Five suppliers so far are positive to the idea of having a stand.

Given the amount of organisation required (4 months) it would be held late in the year. Maurice was advised to approach Jenny Leong and Inner West Council for grants to assist.

Katherine expressed concern about closing the shop for the entire day. Maurice said it considered more before finalising detailed proposals.

**ACTION ITEM: Maurice to bring a detailed proposal to MC by March 2017.**

**6. MC Availability** (Katherine; 10 minutes)

A quick report-back from MC individuals on when they are / aren't available over the year, with a view to ensuring that we will have sufficient coverage at all times. For discussion if necessary - what to do to ensure we have the full complement of MC.

Jonny will be away for part of June but available on Skype.

Victoria will be studying until late February and more available after that. Travels will occur after current MC cycle is over.

Matt and Katherine have no plans to go away.

Renata will not be away, but will be going back to work in July.

David will need to step aside for three months due to medical issues, though may be able to attend the February meeting. MC formally gave David leave to be absent from MC meetings for that period (in compliance with the repealed Cooperative Act 1992 s218.2.b; and also in force Co-operatives (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012 s179.2.b). Victoria advised that we can choose to fill this as a casual vacancy (11.6 AH Rules), or install a deputy director (11.11 AH Rules), but MC decided not to take either course of action. David will keep us advised of his progress and be available for some matters.

Catherine will be away for a couple of weeks at the end of March, but will be available on Skype.

**7. Feedback from staff regarding introduction of Annual Subscription Fee**

286 members have paid the fee (netting just over \$5,000). There is still an outstanding issue implementing the policing of the fee in the POS, but Maurice suggests it is best handled by the new Filemaker volunteer.

Of the 286, eight people have expressed negative views. There have been some negative comments, but they have generally been from non-members.

Staff, MC and volunteers involved with implementing the Annual Subscription Fee were thanked for their efforts.

**8. Strategic and Annual Plan Review** (Katherine; 40 minutes)

Noted that the Vision and Mission Statements are still outstanding.

**ACTION ITEM: Renata and Catherine to take editorial suggestions and work them into a new version of the Strategic Plan for the February MC meeting. Everybody else to submit said suggestions.**

**ACTION ITEM:** Maurice to report (as part of the Manager's Report) next month on plans for future workshops and other events such as tastings.

**ACTION ITEM:** Each MC member to identify one item on the Annual Plan (or item that ought to be on the Annual Plan) that they would like to volunteer on.

Existing Working Groups were discussed and the following was agreed:

- Governance - to be convened by Victoria starting from April, Renata and Catherine to be members and to take carriage of the Strategic Plan in the short term.
- I.T. - Katherine to confirm that Stevie Bee is still the convenor, and to determine the responsibilities of the group.
- Marketing - to be convened by Celine, Suzie and Catherine to be members.
- Finance - convened by Jonny as Treasurer. Matt is a member.
- Staff Liaison - convened by Jonny with Renata as a member.
- Sustainability - convened by David Winterton with Katherine assisting.
- Volunteer Engagement - convened by Julia Gove
- Community Outreach - convened by Maurice
- Premises Solutions, Shop Development and Affordability - convened by Maurice
- Grants - convened by Renata

**ACTION ITEM:** Katherine to confirm convenor for I.T. Working Group and responsibilities.

#### **9. Manager's Discretionary Spending**

**Proposal:** That the MC approve Maurice spend of up to \$200 for a staff day out on 26th January as thanks for their work over the past few difficult months.

Moved: Jonny. Seconded: Katherine. CARRIED by consensus.

Jonny noted that it would be good to have a joint MC and staff event on a day when the shop is not open.

**ACTION ITEM:** Katherine to check policies, to confirm limit of Manager's discretionary spending.

#### **Attendee Check-In - main points**

- All MC and Manager need to have done require readings before meetings.
- More patience required, especially where people are still learning the ropes.
- Strategic Plan needs work.

**Meeting closed at 9:28pm**



