



Australian Institute of International Affairs (ACT Branch)

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Held at Stephen House – 18 November 2021

Attendance

Denis Blight	Elmo Jacob	John Moses
Phil Diak	John Kerin	Lauren Oakey
Brian Ely	Amanda Lynch	Huon Parkes
Michael Flynn	William Maley	Paul Robilliard
Peter Hamburger	Alastair McKenzie	Chris Tinning
Garth Hunt	Heath McMichael	June Verrier
Phillip Huntley	Stephan Monage	Ernst Willheim
Bradley Innes	Ingrid Moses	Mary Louise Willheim

Apologies and Proxies

Desmond Woods
Ian Dudgeon
Penelope Wensley
Dianne Cornell
Robert Tyson
Paul Gallagher
Hanna Jaireth

There being a quorum, the President opened the meeting at 5:35pm

Endorsement of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

That the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 19 November 2020 be accepted as a true and accurate record.

Moved: Heath McMichael

Seconded: Elmo Jacob

CARRIED

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the Minutes

Correspondence

No outstanding correspondence was reported

President's Report

Branch President, Heath McMichael,

Remarked on the continued challenges the Branch has faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular the return to virtual events during the ACT state lockdown. However, as restrictions ease, the Branch is moving back to the now standard 'hybrid' mode of event delivery. The Branch hosted



events on a range of topics, including the implications of the Biden Administration for Australia, Afghanistan, the Irish Government's perspective on Brexit, China's perspective on the South China Sea, soft power diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific, women's empowerment in the US, AUKUS and the outlook for Myanmar. Heath noted that the highlight of the year was the annual dinner, which guest speaker former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. The Branch now posts event recordings to YouTube, which has increased our audience and outreach.

Heath also notes that membership numbers have remained strong, with increased interest from student members. The Branch is also keen on fostering links with young professionals, beginning with an International Careers Panel planned for the beginning of 2022.

Heath notes that the Branch is in a sound financial position and the upcoming introduction on ACT Branch merchandise to bolster the Branch's bottom line.

Heath notes the upcoming overhaul of the Institutes online presence and current operating systems, and cooperation occurring between the AIIA Branches in order to achieve this.

Heath thanks the Branch Council and notes that Vice-President Natalie Mobini left the Council in May to attend to other responsibilities and commitments. Branch Administrator Caitlin Plesek left in July to pursue a legal career. Caitlin was replaced by Cassie Goodie with Phoebe Humphrey's and Tom Garratt now assisting during the Branch's hybrid events.

The Branch continues to strive to put on a diverse and relevant program of events and are willing and eager to take suggestions and feedback from Branch Members for improvements.

Heath notes the current Council is standing for re-election, with the addition of Lauren Oakey. He asks the nominated Councillors to stand before expressing their appreciation of the Member's support.

There are no questions. Heath and the Council are commended by a member for maintaining engagement during the COVID-19 lockdown.

That the President's report be accepted.

Moved: William Maley

Seconded: Allison

CARRIED

Treasurer's Report

Branch Treasurer, Phil Huntley noted the sound financial position of the Branch, with an operating surplus of \$5,000. The small decline in membership numbers was offset by the recent increase in fees. The Branch has benefitted from COVID-19 government cashflow assistance, as well as the move to hybrid events, which has seen income rise and expenses fall. He noted that the Branch used the increased income to replace aging technology and retained the rest for the future.

Moved: Brian Ely

Seconded: Garth Hunt

CARRIED

Appointment of the Returning Officer

The President nominated Peter Hamburger to act as Returning Officer for the election of the ACT Branch Council for the 2021-2022 period.



Election of the 2021-2022 Council

The Returning Officer announced the names of financial members who had been nominated and seconded by financial members of the ACT Branch for positions on Council. The Returning Officer called for any nominations from the floor or for members to approach the Branch President or Council Members after the AGM to suggest nominees for Council. After determining there were no nominees from the floor, the Returning Officer declared the following persons elected to the vacant positions:

Heath McMichael	President
Amanda Lynch	Vice President
Philip Huntley	Treasurer
Phil Diak	Councillor
Brian Ely	Councillor
Bradley Innes	Councillor
Elmo Jacob	Councillor
Lauren Okey	Councillor
Desmond Woods	Councillor
William Maley	Councillor

Appointment of Auditor

Mr John Beard was re-appointed ACT Branch Auditor for the 2021-2022 financial year.

Moved: William Maley

Seconded: Denis Blight

CARRIED

Appointment of Public Officer

Heath McMichael indicated his willingness to continue in the position of Public Officer for the 2021-2022 financial year.

Lodgement of the Annual Return

The President advised the Branch would lodge an Annual Return following the AGM

General Business

Denis Blight notes the interest of the group former diplomats for climate action in partnership with the AIIA. However, he notes that despite his efforts, they are not taking a balanced enough approach for the AIIA. Heath notes the issue of the AIIA not being in the lobbying business but rather functions to provide a platform for discussion. Heath also notes once compromise may be writing a piece for AJIA or Australian Outlook, or perhaps looking into having a speaker on the issue.

Ernst Willheim questions the relationship between the ACT Branch and the National Office. Heath notes that while the two occupy the same office space, they are separate entities when it comes to event programs.

The President declared the meeting closed at 5:55 pm



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