

## Canberra Montessori Society Inc

### Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 5 April 2022 by Videoconference

Present:

Tim Bourke	Board Chair
Christine Harrison	Board Member
Martin Drinkwater	
Sean West Money	Board Member
Rael Matthews	School Principal
Jason Alferink	
Petrea Simeon	
Anupam Malhotra	Board Member

#### 1. Welcome

Tim Bourke opened the meeting at 7.08pm and welcomed members.

Tim stated that although the meeting was virtual most people would be meeting on the lands of the Ngunnawal people and acknowledged and paid respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of Canberra and the region. Tim also welcomed and acknowledged any other First Nations people present.

#### 2. Apologies

No apologies, RSVPs or proxies were received for this meeting, so a decision was made to keep things simple and conduct the meeting through an online platform.

#### 3. Adoption of Minutes from CMS 2021 AGM

The minutes from CMS 2021 AGM were presented and one change noted (Sean West Money's name to be corrected).

Tim recommended that the AGM minutes for 2021 be adopted. Seconded: Sean. Agreed.

#### 4. 2021 Annual Report

Rael introduced the 2021 Annual Report and made reference to the Non-Government School Registration and quantifiable growth of students and teaching cohort. A short discussion followed regarding the 2021 NAPLAN results. Rael provided a brief update regarding renewal of Non-Government School Registration, quantifiable growth of students and teaching cohort. Rael then provided a brief introduction to five-year plan for growth and prosperity of CMS.

There were no questions regarding the Annual Report.

## **5. Presentation and Adoption of the Audited Financial Statements 2021**

Tim opened the presentation and adoption of the audited financial statements. He acknowledged that financial statements are audited by Laterals (Tim Allen).

There was a short discussion of income and expenses. Martin Drinkwater asked a question related to the challenges of enrolling students during the pandemic. Rael responded mentioning Wednesday morning group recruitments driving Cycle 1 enrolments. Opening of snow gum has attracted the bulk of enquiries, to be filtered into C1. Additionally, tours running after school and into the day are proposed to drive up enrolments. There was also some discussion of the Snow Gum pipeline. Martin asked about opportunities post pandemic as schools open, to recruit students in the 3–4-year-old age group?

Tim commented that the P & L difference is due to the inability to charge students who are not apart of EED. Rael stated that gap fee was supported for schools and families were not charged for EED, Snow Gum and before and OSHC. He went on to mention that this was recently rectified for 2022 and lost revenue is to be reclaimed from the government.

Tim commented that there is an intent to write to the government regarding the money withheld from families and consequently CMS.

Sean asked whether the deficit is expected to continue into the new financial year or was it simply a gap in funding and Tim responded that this was inherently the case.

Following a question by Martin concerning insurances, Rael confirmed that 2020 and 2021 insurances were pre-paid as a lump sum. Insurances for 2022 have been entered into monthly payment plan, with a pre-paid element consistent with 2021.

Tim stated that the Society is in good financial health and that fees are to remain consistent in 2022, including claiming lost revenue from the government.

Tim proposed that the Annual Financial Statements be endorsed. Seconded: Martin. Agreed.

## **6. Membership Fees for CMS for coming 12-month period.**

Tim proposed that membership fees remain the same at \$120 annually. Seconded: Christine. Agreed.

## **7. Appointment of Auditor**

Tim proposed that the current auditor (Laterals) be re-appointed. Seconded: Sean. Agreed.

## **8. Election of Board Members**

Tim invited nominees to introduce themselves to the board. Sean and Christine introduced themselves to the meeting.

Tim proposed that Sean West Money and Christine Harrison be accepted on the Board. Seconded: Martin. Agreed.

## **9. Sub-Committees Expression of Interest**

There were no additional nominations presented for subcommittees.

## **10. Board Chair Report & Principal Q & A**

Tim expressed appreciation for board members and reiterated the purpose of the Board and introduced time for questioning. Christine thanked Tim on behalf of the Board and the school community for his on-going commitment to the board and the potential of the school. Tim invited Rael to lead the Principal's Q & A.

Sean posed a question regarding ongoing commitment to the PTP and Rael expressed his frustration at the temporary closure of this important programme and presented a plan to re-introduce the PTP program in full capacity. Christine commented that the PTP programme is an essential part of the school, involving parents in the Montessori philosophy. Rael concurred.

Jason raised a question regarding the prospect for Montessori to expand into secondary education. Rael responded reinstating that the primary focus is on Cycle 2 and Cycle 3 expansion. He discussed the 2024 enrolment projections and proprietary requirements to accommodate these predictions and stated his view that a high school would be at least 5-10 years down the line, reiterating the need to expand Cycles 2 and 3.

Sean posed a question regarding staffing, retention rates and growth in the staff as it pertains to prospective Cycle 2 and Cycle 3 growth. Rael stated that the school is committed to supporting the professional development of existing staff. This is achieved through investments in targeted learning development for teachers to promote staffing sustainability and career development.

Jason asked a question regarding any synergies between the Eucalyptus Montessori Centre and our school. Rael mentioned the historically compromised relationship between Eucalyptus and Canberra Montessori School and stated that staff have since collaborated through in-house educational programs. Rael mentioned that there is an aim to strengthen relationships with other centres to promote the continuity of students in the Montessori pedagogy. Christine

reiterated Rael's point with reference to empirical observations of the low rate of continuation from other Montessori strands to CMS.

Tim proposed an acknowledgement and thanks to members of the P & F Association for their contribution to the school

## **11. Meeting Close**

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.35pm