

Connecting Country (Mount Alexander Region) Inc

Annual general meeting 2024 and 'Growing our Future Together' event

Minutes



Time and date: 1:15 - 4pm on Saturday 23 November 2024

Venue: Campbells Creek Community Centre, Campbells Creek

Attendance	
Committee	Brendan Sydes (President, chair), Marie Jones (Secretary), Deborah Wardle, Stephen Oxley
Members:	Marge Townrow, Jen Pryce, Euan Moore, Jenny Rolland, Alexanne Don, Ian Higgins, Frances Howe, Bon Coapy, Lee Mead, Anne-marie Monda, Cate Sinclair, Chris Timewell, Christine Kilmartin, Phillip Walker, Bronwyn Silver, Brian Rebbechi, Jane Rusden, Cath Jolly, Lois Denham, Bev Phillips, Carla Meurs, Jillian Collins
Guests:	Andrew Edwards, Terry Willis, John Smith,
Staff:	Hadley Cole, Bonnie Humphreys, Lori Arthur, Anna Senior
Apologies:	Maree Edwards MP, Chris Brooke, Max Kay (Treasurer), Loulou Gebbie, Beth Melick, Sadie Gray, Gary Gibson, Malcom Trainor

Timing	Item		Person	Activity	Decisions
Welcome					
2pm	1	Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country	Brendan Sydes	Brendan opened the AGM and acknowledged Djaara as the traditional land managers of our region and noted apologies.	-
	2	Minutes of the previous AGM	Brendan Sydes	Minutes from Connecting Country's last AGM (held on 19 November 2022) were circulated and made publicly available.	To accept the minutes of Connecting Country's 2023 AGM. <i>Moved: Brendan Sydes</i> <i>Seconded: Marie Jones</i> <i>Carried</i>
	3	President's report	Brendan Sydes	Brendan acknowledged the work of everyone who made 2023-24 a success for Connecting Country, acknowledging the difficult climate of unstable funding. He thanked staff and fellow Committee members for their contributions during the year.	
	4	Finance report	Stephen Oxley	Copies of the CC financial audit were provided at the meeting. Stephen stepped in as Treasurer in Max's absence to present the 2023-24 financial report. In 2023-24, Connecting Country recorded income of \$441,193 and expenses of \$449,249 resulting in a loss of \$8,056. On 30 June 2024 Connecting Country held assets of \$515,267 and liabilities \$362,648; net assets of \$152,619 and a working capital ratio 1:4.	To accept Connecting Country's audited financial statements for 2023-24 financial year. <i>Moved: Stephen Oxley</i> <i>Seconded: Deb Wardle</i> <i>Carried</i>

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	5	Directors report	Lori Arthur	Lori presented key highlights from Connecting Country's 2023-24 annual report and upcoming projects, and thanked staff, committee, funders, volunteers and donors. A copy of the annual report was made available to members online prior to the meeting and in hard copy at the meeting.	
	6	Election of Connecting Country committee of management	Brendan Sydes	<p>Brendan thanked current committee members, Deb Wardle and Louisa (Loulou) Gebbie for their contributions as they were not standing for re-election.</p> <p>All other committee members nominated for their existing roles and one additional nomination was received from Cate Sinclair. No additional nominations were received from the floor.</p> <p>As a single candidate was nominated for the executive member and four ordinary member positions, each candidate was elected unopposed. The Vice President role remains vacant. Brendan invited anyone interested in joining the committee of management to get in touch.</p>	<p>The Connecting Country 2024-25 committee of management is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President: Brendan Sydes • Vice President: (vacant) • Treasurer: Max Kay • Secretary: Marie Jones • Christine Brooke • Cate Sinclair • Stephen Oxley
	8	Connecting Country fees	Brendan Sydes	Connecting Country determined again to not charge fees to join as a new member or renew annual membership.	<p>To determine Connecting Country joining fee and annual subscription fee for 2024-25 (\$0).</p> <p><i>Moved: Brendan Sydes</i> <i>Seconded: Stephen Oxley</i> <i>Carried</i></p>
	9	Audit of Connecting Country for next financial year	Brendan Sydes	Connecting Country's current auditor is Sean Denham and Associates.	<p>To appoint Sean Denham and Associates as auditor for 2025.</p> <p><i>Moved: Brendan Sydes</i> <i>Seconded: Deb Wardle</i> <i>Carried</i></p>
	10	Special resolution		<p>Motion to adopt changes to the Connecting Country Constitution in alignment with changes made by Consumer Affairs to the Model Rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated language to support the flexible use of technology (Rule 9, 35 and 62). • New processes for disciplinary appeals where members have been suspended or expelled by a disciplinary subcommittee (Rule 23). • Changes to grievance procedures regarding mediation (Rule 27 and 28). • Stronger disclosure requirements for a conflict of interest (Rule 65). 	<p>Motion to endorse the updated Connecting Country Constitution as presented.</p> <p><i>Moved: Brendan Sydes</i> <i>Seconded: Marie Jones</i> <i>Carried</i></p>
	10	AGM close		Brendan thanked everyone for attending and declared the AGM formalities closed.	

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Growing our Future Together: Panel discussion and workshop					
2-4pm	12	Lunch and event close	Sharon Fraser	Sharon from Castlemaine Institute facilitated a panel discussion and workshop to help shape future direction for Connecting Country. See separate AGM reflections document for a summary.	-