

2022 Annual General Meeting

Sunday 23rd October, 4.00pm AEDT, on Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88539828984>

Minutes

Attendees: Aaron Hammond, Alex [?], Alexander Jago, Andrea Finno, Andrea Leong (Minutes), Ashleigh Tullis, Austin Mackell, Bryn Busai, Bryony Edwards, Caitlin Tullis, David Carman, David Lughermo, Eve Slavich, Geoff Barnes, I-Chen Cheng, John August, Kammy Cordner, Liam Pomfret (Co-Chair), Ling Duong, Luke James, Mark Glickman, Markus Pfister, Michael Maroske, Michael Mounteney, Miles Whiticker, Peter Johnson, Roger Whatling (Co-Chair), Ryan Smillie, Sahar Khalili, Sam (Webley), Samuel Kelvin, Stephanie Matthews, Thomas O'Neil, Tyrone D'Lisle, Wade Johnson, Will Humphreys

Apologies: Meg Platte

Meeting opened: 16:02 AEDT (recording started as entrants were being confirmed)

See recording for full reports: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KK4bgZdr820>

Welcome

Roger acknowledged country.

Noted that we are recording the meeting.

Roger explained quorum, and that we do not have it. We will run through the agenda and discuss motions, and reconvene at a later date. As we have given 3 weeks' notice of the Special Resolution we don't need to postpone for another 3 weeks. Suggested 2 weeks (Sunday 6th November) as executive committee votes will have just closed and can be announced.

Motions to be put at the follow-up meeting, Sunday 6th November.

Annual Report of the Committee

Roger thanked current and recent executive committee members for their work.

Andrea Leong presented the first part of the report: the formation of Fusion and 2022 federal election.

Roger presented the second part of the report: if we're to grow, we need greater engagement with members. Current pillars of operation are: Communications, Engagements, Campaigns, Policy. Workshops to define values. Process to consider a name change forthcoming. Membership by state. Fusion has a chance to be more than a rebellion – to become a beacon for good politics based on long-term thinking.

Report of Financial Statements

Michael Maroske presented the Financial Report for Financial Year 2021–2022. Tricky to fit our financial structure into the Australian Electoral Commission's requirements – seeking advice on compliance. Note that the totals in this report are different to those submitted to the AEC, as the one submitted to the AEC includes the branches' figures.

Net assets: \$13,826.11. Income: \$44,229.29. Operating expenses: \$30,292.09. Net profit: 13,937.77

Roger noted that a quick analysis suggested candidates spent a combined \$60,000 not including nomination fees (which is not unusual for a major party to spend in one electorate).

Officer Reports and Speeches

Convenor: Petar Johnson

It's been productive, want to reflect on our purpose and role in politics. Sees a trend of disruption of current systems – opportunity to win hearts and minds of Australians turning away from the mainstream as it fails to provide. Consolidating our position from values through principles to policies. Members can get involved with committees – not necessarily a big time commitment, fun to contribute. In an effort to gain the attention of Australians we are undertaking a name assessment process with a possibility of changing the name.

Petar circulated the proposed process – Fusion to share widely.

Engagement Officer: Sahar Khalili

Sahar: was appointed Engagement Officer/Chair in July 2022 due to a personal drive to engage members and external organisations. Campaigning in Reid revealed a need for a team to be behind our candidates. Who gets involved gets to make the decisions – want to proactively engage the public to make it easy to participate in democracy. Volunteers contacted as many as possible of our 300 new members who signed up since the election. Our long term vision and attention to implementation (grounding in reality?!) were popular. Many ideas including face-to-face meetups. Need volunteers – for everything!

Chair reiterated that as we have not got quorum, we will not be able to approve Office Bearer's reports, Constitutional Amendments, or Membership fee

Constitutional Amendment Proposals

Many small changes but a few constitutional changes. Quick run-through of the changes.

Review Membership Application/Subscription Fee

Discussion deferred until later in the meeting.

Committee Nominations and Speeches

Roger handed the chair to Liam Pomfret – DRC officer and Returning Officer for Fusion.

Liam explained the voting process including the option “Seek further candidates” which will be available even for uncontested positions.

Voting will be held on the OpaVote platform – emails to go out at midnight tonight, starting a 2-week voting period. Suggest using a secondary browser without too many privacy controls on it, in case it interferes with the voting process.

President

Sahar Khalili gave a speech. Miles Whitticker gave a speech.

As Luke needs to leave soon, their speech was heard and questions taken.

National Campaigns Coordinator

Luke James gave a speech. (Miles was not invited to give a second speech)

Convenor

Petar Johnson gave a speech. Wade Johnson gave a speech.

Secretary

Andrea Leong gave a speech.

Treasurer

Michael Maroske gave a speech.

Registered Officer

Owen Miller was not present. (Wade was not invited to give a second speech)

Questions were taken for all candidates.

Liam handed the chair back to Roger Whatling.

General Business & Strategy Conversation

Discussed Membership Application/Subscription Fee

Petar spoke in favour of no membership fee, to encourage maximum membership. The alternative is to frequently ask for donations (noted that this might be unpopular with some members, but this could be achieved by running small campaigns to justify the ask).

Miles: We are unlikely to get registered in VIC, need more members.

Andrea L: note that the VIC members didn't have a lot of comms. Also have discussed having free signup (for AEC membership purposes) but paid (or waived) fee for voting rights.

Sahar: Do we want a database of inactive members?

Alex: Feels distasteful to have paid membership for voting rights given our emphasis on equity.

Andrea: Define the purpose of the fee: is it to build the bank account or to ensure a sense of investment?

Roger: Keen for better and earlier planning so we know how much we can spend for a campaign – justify it with comms re: what we'll spend it on

Andrea: Need to ask for money more than you think.

Petar: Money is the least of our needs right now. Can plan well ahead and put fundraising in the plans.

Meeting closed: 19:35 AEDT

2022 Annual General Meeting RESCHEDULED/ADJOURNED

Sunday 6th November, 4.00pm AEDT, on Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88539828984>

Minutes

Attendees: Liam Pomfret (Co-Chair), Roger Whatling (Co-Chair), Bryn Busai, Justine Wilkinson, Andrea Leong (Minutes), Sahar Khalili (Co-Chair), Luke James, Tyrone D'lisle, Ling Duong, Miles Whiticker, Andrea Finno, Owen Miller, Aaron Hammond, Michael Maroske, David Kennedy, Matthew Charles, I-Chen Cheng, Geoff Barnes, Markus Pfister, Toby, Vince, Petar Johnson, Sam, Bryony Edwards, Alex Jago, Michael Brinkworth, David Lughermo, Kammy

Apologies:

Meeting opened: 16:31 AEDT

Full discussion available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3-TgmknMuw>

Welcome

Roger acknowledged country.

Noted that we are recording the meeting.

It is 30 minutes after the advertised start time, so the meeting can proceed as though it were quorate

Motions

Approval of previous minutes from SGM:

Motion: *“That the minutes of the previous Special General Meeting of Fusion Political Party held on 10 April 2022 as made available to all members, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting.”*

Moved: Roger Whatling

Seconded: Andrea Leong

Outcome: Carried by majority vote (raised hands)

Two weeks ago treasurer Michael Maroske presented the 2021–2022 financial report (available in the recording on YouTube).

Motion: *“That the Statement of Accounts for the financial year ending 31 July 2022 be approved.”*

Moved: Roger Whatling

Seconded: Andrea Leong

Outcome: Carried by majority vote (raised hands)

Special Resolution to change the Association’s constitution has been circulated since the original

Motion: That the amendments proposed to the RULES OF ASSOCIATION for Fusion Political Party Constitution v1.1 be accepted in their entirety.

Moved: Roger Whatling

Seconded: Andrea Leong

Outcome: Carried by majority vote (raised hands)

Annual subscription fee (currently there is no membership fee). Members spoke to this motion:

Owen M (against): risk of membership dropoff. Noted that we currently rely on few members donating generously.

Liam P: subscriptions might increase people’s commitment – but again, might cause many to quit. Prefer encouraging donations frequently, along with an explanation of what the money will be used for. Seconded by Michael M.

Points from the text chat:

- How does it work with branches? Complicated
- Could make it optional by check-box opt-out rather than having to ask (potentially stigmatising)
- \$20, or even \$5 can be little or a lot, depending on people’s situation
- Giving credit card details is another barrier for some people

Petar J (against): More so than risk of drop off, a membership fee would introduce a barrier to signing up new members, when we need to grow.

Miles W (against): Administrative burden as well as financial. We had enough funding for the election and our greater concern is increasing membership numbers.

Sahar K (for): We were short of funds for the election. People can opt out if they can't afford a fee. We do a lot of work on a volunteer basis and no one is obliged to join if the barrier is too high. A fee should ensure members are committed.

Alex J (against): our member numbers are marginal for AEC registration and we have admin hurdles, particularly with PPAU. Would need to resolve these points and have a concrete proposal before voting in favour.

Roger noted that implementation should be discussed separately if a fee is passed

Andrea L (against): was originally slightly for, due to the engagement angle, but now slightly against, given the unclear administrative path and possible stigma of asking for financial relief.

Andrea F (against-ish?): Future/Science used to have a fee with ability to opt out, but settled on asking for donation at signup, with three options: monthly, one-off, or "I'll donate later". A core group tends to donate pre-election when asked. Can see if people are willing to donate through a fundraising drive before enforcing it.

David K: initially thought it wouldn't be much of an imposition, but given our membership numbers and don't want to ostracise anyone, prefer a suggested donation as a default – pay what you can.

Miles W: reiterated concerns on membership numbers

Motion: *"That the joining and annual membership renewal fee be increased to \$20, allowing for exceptions to be granted by the Secretary or Executive Committee."*

Moved: Roger Whatling

Seconded: Sahar Khalili

Outcome: 3 for. Motion failed.

Roger called for suggested amendments.

Miles asked if there is a barrier to the executive committee implementing a fee without it being passed at a general meeting.

Roger recited section 13, which suggests that only a general meeting can implement it.

Bryony would be happy to put forward a counter-proposal of \$5.

Miles noted that the business of general meetings is to set or vary the annual subscription fee.

Liam noted that the executive could add a recommended donation.

Announcement of elected committee members

Roger handed the chair to Returning Officer, Liam Pomfret.

1,917 email voters eligible. 87 emails were rejected (25 bounced, 1 was marked spam by email provider, 61 opted out). 1,830 emails were delivered. Two reminder emails were sent. In all, 325 votes were cast. At least one vote was blank according to the voter who emailed vote@, but unfortunately the Returning Officer can't view individual votes to verify that, so any blank votes must stand.

An oddity with the vote for Registered Officer: one candidate got exactly 50% of the vote, with 44% for the other candidate and 6% voting for "Seek further candidates". OpaVote redistributed those 6% of votes, but that's not how it's supposed to work, so the candidate with 50% of the vote was elected.

Liam announced the elected committee members:

- Registered Officer: Owen Miller
- National Campaigns Coordinator: Luke James
- Treasurer: Michael Maroske (unopposed)
- Secretary: Andrea Leong (unopposed)
- Convenor: Petar Johnson (Convenor)
- President Sahar Khalili (President)

Liam passed the chair to new president Sahar.

Sahar thanked everyone who participated in the vote. Have been thinking about new ideas for Fusion, keen to meet with the new executive. Opened the floor to new exec members.

Andrea L: will update the mailing lists immediately after this meeting – an interesting year has gone and we have an interesting year ahead.

Petar: We have great potential, my commitment is to grow and exercise stewardship in our investments. Reminder that we are in the process of considering a new

Luke excited to see where we go next, bright future ahead, congratulations to all elected and thank you to all who nominated.

Michael noted that this party rests on all the support and activity of members – it rests on members being confident that we can achieve something, please make your voice heard and get involved in any way you can.

Owen noted that Australia has been stumbling towards irrelevance but we have the ability to make a harmonious successful nation. Thanked people for having faith in him and in the party.

Sahar wants to make sure we seek feedback and don't progress in a silo.

Meeting closed: 5:35pm

Further informal discussion on the name change process, potential Mastodon server.