



Minutes of the Gippsland Bowls Region Annual General Meeting Paynesville Bowls Club, Monday 7 June 2021

Jan Morton opened the meeting at 11.15am. She acknowledged NGBD Life Members Jeff Amos and Deirdre Relph OAM and EGBD Life Member Jim Johnston.

Present

Shane Higgins (West Sale), Bruce Melrose (Sale), Graeme Hemming (Maffra), Nev Irish (Rosedale), Marg Brandhoj (Lakes Entrance), Jeff Amos (Yarram), Sue Jenkins (Paynesville), Dorothy Schroeder (Metung), John Crawford (Bairnsdale Golf), Gwen Hatcher (Orbost), Ron Hatcher (Orbost), Margaret Hicks (Lindenow), Colin Smith (Paynesville), Veronica Deery (Lindenow), Nanette Hamilton (Bairnsdale), Trevor Selwyn (Bairnsdale), Merrilynne Hayes (Golden Beach), John Hayes (Golden Beach), David Butterworth (Lakes Entrance), Chris Wain (Metung), Chris Kyle (Howitt Park), Jim Johnston (EGBD Life Member), Peter Beesley (Paynesville), Judy Beesley (Paynesville), Deirdre Relph (Maffra), Marj Menner (Maffra), Colleen Such (Paynesville), Nigel Plunkett (Bairnsdale), Bert Middelhuis (Heyfield), Peter Leslie (Heyfield), Alison Harrower (Bruthen), Lori Smith (Paynesville), David McGrath (Paynesville), Pam Carter (Sale), Ray Kennedy (Sale)

Apologies

Jenny Blair (Loch Sport), Karen Chenney (Orbost), Kerry Binotto (West Sale), Nola Wheeler (Stratford), Neil Hutchinson (Bairnsdale)

Previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2020 were previously circulated. Moved by Jeff Amos (Yarram) and seconded by Bert Middelhuis (Heyfield), the minutes were confirmed. There was no business arising.

Chairman's Report

Jan Morton presented her report for 2020/21, stating the coming year would be the first as a combined region.

Overview

Jan noted the following:

- There have been some changes, some of which caused spirited discussion at meetings. At all times, the Board has taken account of comments and concerns from member clubs on various issues and made decisions in the best interests of advancing the sport of bowls in the Region.

- Much has been achieved this past year with the Region's new constitution, regulations, rules of competition, and logo already implemented and shortly a new region uniform.
- The governance steering committee of Jeff Amos, Nigel Plunkett, Chris Sherrin, Peter Huntley, and Bronwyn Thwaites as the chair did an outstanding job and the constitution and regulations were endorsed by Bowls Victoria in February. The Gippsland documentation is being used by two other regions as their foundation, such is the quality of the work.
- The Rules committee consisted of Pam Carter, Peter Leslie, Peter Hardy Brad Lancaster with me as the chair. For all decisions there was a lot of thought, consultation and discussion, the job got done and the Rules were endorsed by Bowls Victoria.
- Communications has been a priority, with the Region's website and Facebook page key sources of information for all bowlers. Clubs will continue to receive summaries of all Board meetings, an initiative introduced in July last year; additional communications possibilities will be examined. It was disappointing however that despite the amount of information sent to clubs, it had not always reached the members causing disinformation to circulate.

Events

Jan acknowledged the performance of Gippsland bowlers at various State events:

- the 2020 State Championships at Warrnambool in January where Gippsland excelled, specifically:
 - Karen Cheney and Robyn Kellow, with their gold medal in the 60 plus pairs
 - Gail McKenzie with 2 silver medals in the 60 plus singles and open pairs
 - Brad Lancaster silver in the Champion of Champions
 - Lindenow with an equal third in the fours Martin quarter finals of the singles.
- Bairnsdale and Lakes Entrance represented the Region at Moama in the Saturday and Midweek pennant finals.
- At Region Sides in Shepparton, the women won four out of seven games and the men two. Next year will see the implementation of a new selection process; the representative sides will also be wearing the new Region uniform.
- 2020-21 State Champions Week at Bendigo:
 - Jo Martin, Marg Brandhoj and Lena Rosati equal third in the triples
 - Brad Lancaster and Peter Hardy a third in the pairs
 - Gail McKenzie added yet another silver in the ladies' 60 plus singles with Shane Holmes being equal third
 - Rohan Kelly played an outstanding quarter final game against NZ international Ali Forsyth in a game that could have gone either way
 - the men's fours and triples also made it through to the quarter finals.
 - Brad Lancaster was named in the Men's Country team for state selection trials held over the last weekend in Bendigo.

Jan said that competing meant a long journey and days away from home for players, mostly at their own expense. She thanked them for the effort they put in representing their clubs and the Region.

Acknowledgements

Jan expressed her sincere thanks to the following:

- to the Board - Bronwyn Thwaites, Col Smith, Shane Higgins, Jeff Amos, Deirdre Relph, Judy Beesley, Marg Brandhoj and Nigel Plunkett for putting in so much work to get the Region to this point, with once again lots of traveling and meetings
- Brad Lancaster who assisted the Region with BowlsLink
- retiring Board members Jeff, Deirdre, Shane, and Judy
- Deirdre and Jeff for their amazing record of service for the NGBD and the Region over many years
- Secretary Bronwyn Thwaites for the hours of work she did behind the scenes plus her personal support
- husband Ross whose unwavering support made it possible for her to take on this role.

The future

In closing, Jan said that for the coming season, some things will be quite different:

- from an administration perspective, the Board and committees will be fully responsible for running bowls in the Region
- from a bowls perspective, all clubs will all be playing under the same rules in pennant and state/regional events.

However, while there may be some teething problems from time to time as everyone adjusts to the change, she is confident about the Region's future and believes there can be no progress without change. She urged all clubs and bowlers to be positive and look forward to the new season.

Moved by Deirdre Relph (Maffra) and seconded by Jeff Amos (Yarram), receipt of the report was carried.

Treasurer's Report

Bronwyn Thwaites presented the Region's accounts for the period to 3 June 2021.

Bronwyn advised that as there was no official report available for 2019/20 due to the departure earlier in the year of previous office bearers, John and Faye Lewis, she had prepared a statement of transactions from 1 July 2019 to 3 June 2021 to show where the Region's funds had come from and how the money has been spent in the past two years.

Key initial tasks in 2020/21 were implementing:

- a simple but effective online accounting program to record and report on all the Region's financial transactions
- online banking with Bendigo Bank.

These initiatives led to:

- a clear picture of the costs incurred and income received in the past two years, information that will greatly assist the Board when determining the 2021/22 budget
- the virtual elimination of writing cheques to pay creditors
- the introduction of funds transfer for all prize winners at the Region State events earlier this year. This initiative was generally very well received by recipients and all prize money has now been distributed.

The top line financial results for 2020/21:

- income - \$5,475 comprising grants totalling \$3,000 from the State Government, and payments from the two divisions for state events
- expenses - \$12,377, including
 - \$2620 prize money for State events
 - \$5178 accommodation for Region sides at Shepparton, partly offset by the Bowls Victoria travel subsidy of \$2,800 received in February 2020
 - \$1936 to Gippsport for the new logo and style guide
 - \$914 for insurance.

The Region received no income from capitation fees in 2020/21, the Board having decided not to impose them in recognition of the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on all clubs' operations. Income from fees in the previous year was \$7355. The setting of 2021/22 fees would take account of the latest information from Bowls Victoria on its capitation fee model and the funds distributed to the Region from each of the EGBD and NGBD accounts following the divisions' dissolution.

In conclusion, Bronwyn wished incoming Treasurer Colin Smith well in his new role and asked that the GBR 2020/21 financial report be received. Moved by Bruce Melrose (Sale), seconded by Dave Butterworth (Lakes Entrance), receipt of the report was carried.

Election of office bearers

Jan Morton declared all office bearer and director positions vacant and handed over this part of the meeting to Jeff Amos. As there was only one nomination for each position, Jeff declared the following as having been elected:

- Jan Morton, President (three-year term per the new Region Constitution)
- Bronwyn Thwaites, Secretary (two years)
- Colin Smith Treasurer (one year)
- Directors Nigel Plunkett, Marg Brandhoj and Peter Beesley (terms to be determined by the Board).

Other business

There was no other business for which notice had been given.

Next Annual General Meeting

Monday 29 May 2022, 10am, venue to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 11.35am.

General meeting

Jan Morton opened the general meeting at 11.46am.

Dissolution of Divisions

Nigel Plunkett reported that at the East Gippsland Bowls Division AGM held earlier that day, two special resolutions were passed dissolving the Division.

All outstanding matters were expected to be finalised by 30 June, including the transfer of assets and funds to the Region. Nigel said the past 12 months had been a terrific year for the EGBD, with much achieved despite COVID-19.

Colin Smith reported that a little under \$10k in Division funds would be transferred to the Region.

Regarding NGBD, Jeff Amos reported that gross assets of \$9.3k would be transferred to the Region, with cheques for two additional amounts as follows:

- \$750 from the NGBD state pennant subsidy fund to be used to assist with future club sides competing in statewide pennant titles
- \$2425 to be used as an offset for affiliation fees for north section clubs in 2021/22.

Update from President

Jan Morton reported the following:

- Three clubs from each of the east and north playing areas had submitted teams for 2021/22 pennant. This included Rosedale joining the midweek competition and Loch Sport Saturday pennant.
- Several clubs had requested that there be one team per club in Division 1 Saturday pennant.
- There were three vacancies on the Region Board, three vacancies on the Competitions Committee, and several positions to be filled on the Junior Development and Representative Sides committees
- Nominations had been received for the Pennant and State Events Recorder and Umpiring Coordinator positions.
- Simon Alleaume had agreed to take on the website manager role and would be further developing the Region website in coming months. The EGBD and NGBD websites will be closed once all historical and other relevant information has been removed for future publication.
- The Region rules for club champion pairs and fours will be amended in relation to substitutions being allowed from the same club once revised Rules from Bowls Victoria are received.

Jan invited questions from the floor.

Heat rule

Nev Irish (Rosedale) asked for clarification on the West and South Gippsland fire ban zones in the Conditions of Play. Jeff Amos explained that the boundaries for these zones were set by the State Government and covered the Region.

Pennant

Trevor Selwyn (Bairnsdale) asked how long it would take the Competitions Committee to establish the 2021/22 pennant program. In response, Jan advised that the Committee will hit the ground running, with much work to be done once all the teams were in by 30 June. The Region would be bound by Bowls Victoria which had not yet released 2021/22 dates other than for the Vic Open.

Registration of uniforms

In response to a question from Trevor Selwyn, Jan said the dissolution of the divisions had not affected the uniform registration process, which remained a club responsibility.

Constitution change

Chris Wain (Metung) expressed concern that clubs were required to pay when lodging a revised Constitution with Consumer Affairs, despite being assured at a delegates meeting on 30 November that Bowls Victoria would cover the cost. Bronwyn Thwaites advised she had sought clarification from Bowls Victoria about the matter and was told that Regions would be covered for lodging their new Constitutions, but not clubs. She committed to take up the issue again with Bowls Victoria on the clubs' behalf.

Protected days

In response to a question from Trevor Selwyn about protected days, Nigel Plunkett said it appeared there were no so-called protected days as such, but clubs needed to be aware of major club tournaments, e.g., Paynesville's Week of Bowls, when setting their dates.

Rule changes

Nev Irish commented that the Rosedale executive was concerned about the lack of consultation with the club about the change to 21 ends and the earlier start for Saturday pennant. Bringing the time forward from 1.30 to 1pm could result in Rosedale not having enough players for a team as some worked on Saturday mornings. In response, Jan said the Board would examine the issue.

Division zero

In response to a question from Nev Irish about the possibility of introducing a competition where the best players from each club play each other, Jan said the Rules and Conditions of Play Steering Committee had considered a range of new competition ideas, but felt that in year one, the focus remain on existing pennant and other events.

One team per club

Chris Wain commented that any decision about introducing one team per club in Division 1 Saturday pennant should be put to a vote among the clubs. In response, Jan explained that the Competitions Committee had been empowered by the Board to make decisions in consultation with the clubs.

Close of meeting

Jan closed the meeting at 12.05pm, thanking everyone for their attendance and contribution.

