



Minutes of the Gippsland Bowls Region Annual General Meeting Paynesville Bowls Club, Sunday 21 May 2023

Jan Morton opened the meeting at 10am.

Present

Shane Higgins (West Sale), Graeme Hemming (Maffra), Marg Brandhoj (Lakes Entrance), Jeff Amos (Yarram), Val Hardy (Paynesville), Colin Smith (Paynesville), Nannette Hamilton (Bairnsdale), Nigel Plunkett (Lindenow), Chris Sherrin (Heyfield), Alison Harrower (Bruthen), Bronwyn Thwaites (Paynesville), Jan Morton (Sale), Kel Brandhoj (Lakes Entrance), Maureen Kelly (Heyfield), Graham Bromwich (Bairnsdale), Helen Everett (Bairnsdale Golf), Kerry Binotto (West Sale), Maureen Petty (Stratford), Dave Butterworth (Lakes Entrance), Marge Nathan (Paynesville), John Crawford (Bairnsdale Golf), Keith Pritchard (Sale), Gary Stewart (Paynesville), Wendy Warren (Stratford), Dave Redden (Orbost), Rhonda Wright (Golden Paradise Beach), Scott Farnell (Orbost), Don Cameron (Bruthen), Alan McDonald (Loch Sport), Jenny Blair (Loch Sport), Peter Huntley (Paynesville)

Apologies

Karen Cheney (Orbost), Chris Kyle (Howitt Park), Marg Robbins (Stratford), John Budge (Paynesville), Ray Barry (Lindenow), Simon Alleaume (Lindenow). Chris Wain (Metung), Leigh Bryant (Sale), Jill Dennison (Bairnsdale Golf)

Previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2022 were previously circulated. Moved by Jeff Amos (Yarram) and seconded by Chris Sherrin (Heyfield), the minutes were confirmed. There was no business arising.

President's Report

Jan Morton presented her report for 2022/23, made available to delegates and taken as read.

Moved by Shane Higgins (West Sale) and seconded by Maureen Kelly (Heyfield), receipt of the report was carried.

Treasurer's Report

Colin Smith presented the Region's accounts for the period ending 30 April 2023, noting it was the second year of operating under the new structure. The top line financial results for 2022/23:

- income - \$15.3k comprising capitation fees, State event entry fees and sponsorship
- expenses – \$19k including
 - \$2.6k for medallions and trophies
 - \$4.3k on GBR-branded apparel (shirts, hoodies, caps and beanies) for the Geckos and Region Sides
 - \$1.6k catering (Region Sides, delegates information sessions)
 - \$3.2k cash prizes partly offset by entry fees.

Colin reported a major expenditure item in the current financial year (from 1 May) is \$5.5k accommodation for the Region Sides and an additional order of hoodies, caps, beanies and bucket hats totalling \$2.5k. The accommodation cost will be largely offset by a contribution from Bowls Victoria (BV) expected to be around \$2.8k and a State Government grant of \$2k recently approved. The apparel costs will be mostly offset by sales.

Colin reported a net loss of \$3.7k, and an end of year cash bank balance of \$14.1k as of 30 April 2023. He reported that the Board had approved a modest increase in GBR capitation fees from \$6 to \$10 per full active bowling member. The increase will generate an additional estimated \$4.5k in income and cover trading losses incurred during the past two years.

Colin asked that his financial report be received. Moved by Val Hardy (Paynesville), seconded by Jeff Amos (Yarram), receipt of the report was carried.

Committee reports

All delegates received written reports from the Competitions Committee (Jan Morton) and Junior Development and Coaching (Nigel Plunkett). Nigel Plunkett reiterated that while success was coming slowly but surely, it was important the junior program be further supported and promoted by clubs.

Jan Morton asked that the reports be received. Moved by Maureen Petty (Stratford), seconded by Nannette Hamilton (Bairnsdale), receipt of the reports was carried.

Election of office bearers

Jan Morton handed over this part of the meeting to appointed Returning Officer Jeff Amos, who before declaring the election thanked the Board for its work and suggested that instead of complaining about decisions, members consider nominating when positions become available.

As there was only one nomination each for the vacant office bearer and director positions, Jeff declared the following duly elected for a period of 3 years as stipulated in the Constitution:

- Secretary Bronwyn Thwaites
- Directors Marg Brandhoj and Nigel Plunkett.

Other business of which notice has been given

There was no other business.

Next Annual General Meeting

Sunday 26 May 2024, 10am, Maffra Bowls Club (to be confirmed).

The meeting closed at 10.17am

General meeting

Jan Morton opened the general meeting at 10.20am.

Update from President

Jan Morton reported the following:

- Following feedback from the clubs and considering the survey results, the Competitions Committee has decided that in 2023/24 Midweek Pennant will comprise six teams in each division, playing two rounds and three finals.
- Clubs are overwhelmingly in favour of the Region Division 1 option for Weekend Pennant. The Competitions Committee will meet soon to discuss the format, ensuring that no club which submits a team will be denied the opportunity to take part.
- New bowls laws have been implemented at the direction of World Bowls, a key change being a penalty for picking up a bowl before it goes in the ditch. Under this change, if an opposition player calls the umpire to report such an incident, the umpire must disqualify the entire side.
- Bowls Victoria has been very concerned about inappropriate posts on its Facebook page, many from club members and officials. Jan stressed that under the GBR social media policy, it is inappropriate to disparage your club, Region, Bowls Victoria or other players.

Junior membership

Voting rights

Bronwyn Thwaites strongly recommended that all clubs review their Constitutions in respect to voting rights following an issue at one club where juniors submitted absentee votes for a match committee as part of the bowls section annual elections. She clarified the situation with Bowls Victoria President Pat Schramm who advised that:

- the votes had to be included as there was nothing in the club's Constitution to preclude juniors from voting
- the club would need to call a special general meeting before the next AGM to seek members' approval to include a clause on a minimum voting age of 18 as is required under the Victorian Electoral Act.

Membership fees

Bronwyn reported that on behalf of clubs, the GBR had written to BV requesting that capitation fees for juniors be either waived or significantly reduced in 2023/24. In response, BV rejected the request on the basis that there is no difference between adult and junior members in terms of the service that BV provide, if anything, there are more events for juniors who can play in all open age competitions also.

Nigel told the meeting the BV response totally missed the point and that while clubs had either waived or reduced their fees for juniors BV charged the adult rate for entry in the Vic Open and other events.

The GBR will continue to lobby on this important issue.

Other matters

Nannette Hamilton (Bairnsdale) asked whether it was possible to get delegates together before the start of the season to determine venues for State events on the basis that there may be more entries if players knew well in advance where events were being held. In response, Jan advised that all clubs are entitled to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to host State and/or pennant finals. She urged clubs to consider taking part when the EOI is distributed.

Jan advised that the bowls calendar will be freed up because of BV's decision to drop the 60+ Singles and Pairs and Novice Singles as State events at region level. Instead, there may be a 60+ carnival in May next year, to be confirmed, but there is no decision about the Novice at this stage.

In response to a question from Jeff Amos about the start of pennant, Jan said that while there was no decision yet, the Midweek and Saturday competitions will likely be quite different from each other.

Close of meeting

Jan closed the meeting at 10.48am, thanking everyone for their attendance and contribution. She then presented framed certificates to clubs which hosted Vic Open games (Heyfield, Maffra, West Sale and Sale) and plaques to Region Pennant Premiers (Bairnsdale, Sale, Stratford, Maffra and Lakes Entrance).

