

2023 Annual General Meeting of the Australian Society of Viticulture and Oenology Inc.

held on the 6th of November 2023

Attendance

The Chair noted that a quorum was present in accordance with the constitution and declared the Annual General Meeting open at 4:03 pm

Twenty-five (25) members, were present in the room as recorded on the registration sheets

Eveline Bartowsky	Nick Dry	Patrick Iland	Neil Scrimgeour
Keren Bindon	Paul Grbin	Russell Johnstone	Alana Seabrook
Rob Bramley	Steve Guy	Mardi Longbottom	Rob Walker
Andy Clarke	Richard Hamilton	Paul Petrie	Kerry Wilkinson
Peter Clingeffer	Peter Hayes	Renata Ristic	
Jeremy Dineen	Markus Herderich	Alex Sas	
Katie Dunne	Anna Hooper	Samantha Scarratt	

Eight (8) members, were present as reported by webinar ID 986 8445 5147

Michaela Barton	Richard Fennessy	Brooke Howell	Alana Seabrook
Wendy Cameron	Julian Grodzicky	Pia Merrick	David Wollan

Ten (10) members submitted proxy forms

Sarah Crowe	Ben Gibson	Niranjan Phuyal	Christopher Steel
Gregory Dedman	Duncan Hamm	Darren Rathbone	
Lucy Etheridge	Cath Oates	Anthony Robinson	

Apologies

Apologies (37) members' apologies were recorded

Jason Amos	Liam Doherty	Brett McClen	Krys Smith
Amelia Anspach	Kathy Evans	Murray Paterson	Nigel Sneyd
Peter Barry	Steven Faulkner	Niranjan Phuyal	Christopher Steel
Gary Baldwin	Bruce Gregory	Grace Prayogo	Lorrae StVincent
Marlize Bekker	Mike Hayes	Tony Proffitt	Amanda Tanga
Nick Bulleid MW	Sue Hodder	Darren Rathbone.	Mike Trought
Greg Clack	David Jordan	Liz Riley	Brian Walsh
Dianne Davidson AM	Mark Krstic	Anthony Robinson	Liz Waters
Leon Deans	Philip Laffer	Louisa Rose	Robert White

1. Confirmation of Minutes

The Chair asked if there were any amendments to the published minutes of the 42nd Annual General Meeting held on the 14th of November 2022. No amendments were noted.

MOTION: *That the minutes of the 42nd AGM are recorded as a true and correct record*

Moved Andy Clarke

Seconded Katie Dunne

The motion was carried.

2. Reports

President's report.

The Chair presented the report to the members noting that the 2023 financial year had been a period of significant challenges for the wine sector.

The Chair shared the Board's vision for the future noting that shifting communication tools, knowledge transfer methods and demographics of the wine sector led to consultation with members before a review of the ASVO's strategic plan. An external consultant was engaged to assist with this process. This review simplified the Board's strategy into 3 pillars:

- Connection and Community
- Personal development
- Knowledge

The Chair told members that the Board recognised the need to upskill members and provide a tangible value proposition to attract and retain new members. The Chair noted that membership had been relatively static for the past 3 years and well below previous peaks, so the Board has made a renewed focus on attracting new entrants to the sector including students. The Chair stated that the Board was actively developing products in line with our 3 pillars to create a compelling value proposition for our members.

The Chair told members that, after a decade in the role of the Editor in Chief Dr Terry Lee OAM had stepped down from the role. The Chair thanked Terry for his dedication to the Journal and the broader ASVO community making mention of his keen eye for detail and strong science which ensured that the papers published in the Journal were of the highest quality.

The Chair explained that following a call of expressions of interest from the editorial team, the Board had accepted Dr Stefano Poni as an interim Editor in Chief role in September 2023 for a 6-month term. The Chair advised members that the Board would seek to appoint a full-time Editor in Chief in the new year.

The Chair told members that during FY23 the Australian Journal of Grape and Wine Research had changed publishing partners from Wiley to Hindawi. This transition was a source of pain and frustration for the Journal's editors, authors, and Board alike. The anticipated benefits of reduced publishing costs and improved speed of publishing have been achieved, though it has come at the cost of lower quality, inconsistent workflows and inflexible policies from Hindawi. Copywriting issues, intractable COI policies and reassignments throughout the editorial process have been consistent issues.

The Chair said that the Board had been kept abreast of these issues throughout the year and had been in constant dialogue with Hindawi. The Chair expressed the Board's disappointment in the performance of the Journal's publishing partner.

The Chair outlined some of the major outputs over the previous 12 months including offering two scholarships, awarding prizes at the 2022 Crush for papers displaying best industry impact and best innovation and science, and subsidising students to attend ASVO events.

In June 23, the ASVO delivered the country's first Climate mitigation conference (CO₂₃) for the wine sector. Over 2 days and 6 sessions, the conference covered the challenges and opportunities to reduce emissions across the sector through scopes 1 to 3. Partner Wine Australia also provided the first look at the Emissions road map.

The Chair noted that CO₂₃ was the first post-COVID in-person event for the ASVO, with the content delivered via a hub and spoke model to 17 locations across the country and online. The model provided members with an opportunity to connect and engage with peers which is a cornerstone of our offerings and reduced unnecessary travel.

The Chair shared the success of new channels for knowledge sharing noting that 9 podcasts had been published through the year with over 4000 downloads to date, and an online session for growers in early February 23 enabled members to share lessons learned from the extremely high disease pressure growing season of the 2023 vintage.

The Chair thanked members who had volunteered their time and expertise to help deliver our events, awards and journal, and to Chris Waters as EO, who has carried the workload for the ASVO for many years.

The Chair thanked the Board of Directors for their energy, enthusiasm and willingness to guide the ASVO for the benefit of its members.

Treasurer's report

The Treasurer told members that the ASVO had delivered a positive financial performance for 2023 maintaining strong reserves which will allow the Board to support members and strengthen member offerings.

The Treasurer noted that online events and webinars had continued to perform well-offering diverse and accessible engagements and had contributed \$4,000 to the bottom line. The move to Open Access reduced publishing expenses which will continue to reduce further for this coming financial year.

The Treasurer noted that the ASVO received royalties of \$4500 from sales of three texts through Patrick Iland Wine Promotions. The royalties from "The Grapevine: from the Science to the Practice of Growing Vines for Wine", "Techniques and methods for chemical, physical and sensory analyses and tests of grapes and wine", and "Theory and concepts of chemical, physical and sensory analyses and tests of grapes and wine" were generously donated by the authors.

The Treasurer thanked sponsors who had contributed \$31,000 in revenue.

Question

A member asked for the source and outcomes of clarification on the Special projects revenue line

Answer

The Chair advised that the Special projects related to revenue from Wine Australia. The funding is part of a three-year agreement.

Comment

Patrick Iland provided clarification of the donation of royalties, The Royalties have been donated by the following authors: Cassie Collins, Peter Dry, Patrick Iland, Vinay Pagay, Tony Proffitt, Steve Tyerman, and Chris Steel.

3. Journal

The Chair told members that a question has been submitted as follows.

Question: To the chair of the Journal Subcommittee: Anecdotal evidence suggests that many of the perceived benefits of changing publishers from Wiley to Hindawi described at the 2022 AGM have not been realised and that authors and reviewers are becoming frustrated by Hindawi's policies, manuscript management and publication systems. Submissions have declined dramatically and many authors that have traditionally supported the AJGWR are publishing elsewhere. These concerns have been raised with the ASVO over the last 12 months - could you please describe how they have been addressed as I am concerned this decline could easily become terminal.

The Chair told members that he would respond on behalf of the chair of the Journal Subcommittee.

The Chair thanked the member for their concerns and told members that the Board was just as frustrated as members. Each and every one of the concerns raised had been elevated to Hindawi and the Board had pushed for a positive outcome in each case.

The Chair said that the Board had been active in pursuing improvements and resolutions with Hindawi, ASVO's publishing partner and would continue to pursue all avenues to improve the performance of the journal from the perspective of an author, as an editor and lastly as an owner of the Journal.

Many of the challenges that have occurred this year with the Journal have been outside of our control. We have no control or visibility with their internal phenom platform, and as a small journal within their stable of 240+ journals we can vent our frustrations, however, we realistically have limited sway to elicit change. The Board are extremely frustrated by their lack of communication and flexibility when implementing new policies, that affect the performance of this platform. This was particularly impactful upon special issues – such as this year's AWITC special issue.

In July the Board undertook a review of the performance of the publisher on the basis that the relationship between researchers and Hindawi was damaged.

Following lobbying with Hindawi the Journal management was shifted to the parent company Wiley, based in Melbourne.

The appointment of Professor Stefano Poni as Editor in Chief has been beneficial as he has brought new energy and rigour to the relationship with Hindawi.

In October, the Board, seeing no improvements in Hindawi's journal management, resolved to seek all possible avenues for improvement in the Journal. The Chair advised that the publishing contract had a term of three years with approximately 18 months remaining.

The publishing landscape is competitive, with many journals available to publish in and the Board is determined to make the appeal of the Journal as compelling as possible.

Question

Rob Bramley expressed his dissatisfaction with Hindawi's apparent inaction and unwillingness to change on and asked the Chair to expand on the nature and scope of the review.

Answer

The Chair told members that the review included a survey of the editorial team, standard publishing metrics and a review of the repository of issues.

The Chair apologised for the frustrations felt by the Editorial team, thanked members for their feedback and assured members that the Board was continuing to seek the best possible outcome for all members.

4. Auditor

The Chair moved the proposed resolution that the auditor for next financial year continue to be DW Johns.

MOTION: That the auditor for next financial year remain the same (D W Johns)

Moved Andy Clarke

Seconded Paul Grbin

The motion was carried.

5. Board elections

The Chair announced changes for the 2022-23 Board of Directors.

The election saw the return of Eveline Bartowsky, Katie Dunne and Vanessa Stockdale for another term. The chair announced the incoming Directors Dr Samantha Scarratt and Nick Dry and welcomed them to the Board.

The Chair told members that Nadja Wallington had decided to focus her energies on her business and growing family creating a vacancy in the New South Wales regional Director. The Chair said that the Board had unanimously decided to co-opt Monica Gray to fill the place until the regional elections next year.

The Chair thanked the outgoing Directors, Queensland's most passionate ASVO member Mike Hayes, and former ASVO president Brooke Howell.

The Chair acknowledged the work that Brooke put into the Board during her tenure, including guiding the ASVO through the COVID challenges.

6. Admission of Fellows of the Society

The Chair stated the ASVO Board of Directors had decided that two members be granted honorary membership as Fellows of the Society.

The Chair announced that the Fellow Selection Advisory Committee had recommended Stephen Guy and Paul Petrie be invited to become Fellows of the ASVO.

The Chair invited Stephen and Paul to address members.

7. Other business

The Chair invited all those present to raise any further matters that have not been dealt with on the agenda.

Question

Rob Bramley raised the suggestion that the constitution be revised to include a requirement that at least one Director be an active Researcher/publisher and that the person could be co-opted by the Board if not elected via the usual process.

Answer

The Chair thanked Rob for the suggestion and replied that the suggestion would be

considered as part of the current review of the constitution.

Question

Markus asked if the ASVO had made a submission to the one sector plan.

Answer

The Chair replied that the ASVO had not made a submission, but many members had made their own submissions.

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 5:04 PM