

Board of Directors
**ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**

Date: Monday, 30 April, 2012

Mode: Face to Face

Chairperson: Robert Sutton (President)

Present: *Directors:* Louise Bennett, Keith Foster, Henry Haavisto, Craig Hallam, Kyle Hill, Craig Hinton, Allen Lim, Hugh Taylor.

Apologies: *Directors:* None.

Staff: Merle Sutton and Sharyn Lockwood.

Tabled Documents: Minutes of the Annual General Meeting dated 25 July 2011.
Audit of Financial Year 2010-2011.

Meeting Commenced: 4:50pm

1. Welcome and Apologies.

2. Minutes from Previous Meeting.

Motion: That the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Arboriculture Australia, dated 25 July 2011 be accepted.

Moved: Hugh Taylor

2nd: Kyle Hill

3. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

No matters were raised.

4. Agenda Items

A) Presidents Report

Presented by Robert Sutton

- Stated to the meeting that most of the last year had been spent consolidating Arboriculture Australia. Reported that the 2012 National Trade Directory was on schedule for publication and that Stage 1 of the development of a new website had been completed. Informed the meeting that a number of committees were now in operation with some others it was hoped to become active in the upcoming year. Highlighted the instigation of the National Urban Forest Association, which was overseeing the development of i-Tree Eco Australia, coming in as a Committee of Arboriculture Australia. Stated that feedback he had received so far about the Conference appeared positive and sought any questions from the floor. No questions were forthcoming.

B) Treasurers Report

Presented by Craig Hinton

- Informed the meeting that the audit of the previous financial year had been received today (Monday, 30 April 2012) and as a result it had not been circulated however, several copies were available to any member who wished to see them. Stated that the previous year had been financially tough and that Arboriculture Australia had incurred a substantial loss of approximately \$57 000.00. He stated that the loss could be partially explained by a combination of factors including; that many of the ninety (90) Hong Kong members had chosen to pay for more than one (1) years membership at a time and this had required approximately \$25 000.00 being moved from income to liabilities to account for these payments. Also stated that the ISA Conference had taken a loss of approximately \$20 000.00 and that some staff back pay issues which required rectification had also contributed to the deficit. He stated that Arboriculture Australia currently had approximately \$160 000 in equity and over \$150, 000 in cash. He noted that membership continues to grow and that he believes the organisation will get back to turning a modest profit this year. He also informed the meeting that options for expanding the sponsorship categories were being investigated and would possibly be available by next calendar year. The Treasurer then declared himself open for questions from the membership, none were received.

C) Issues between ISA and Arboriculture Australia

- Robert Sutton: Introduced each issue and Chaired discussion, including answering of questions from the membership regarding each matter.

i) Collection of unauthorised membership and certification fees.

- Informed the meeting of how Arboriculture Australia had been charging an administration fee to members taking up ISA Membership and how it was designed to cover some of the costs associated with the processing of that ISA membership, including exchange rate

fluctuations and associated fees, sending representation to the ISA usually in the USA along with sending Climbers to compete in the ITCC. He explained that whilst this had been a practice previously accepted by the ISA, provided that the fee was clearly disclosed to the members, the ISA had now altered their view and raised issue with the practice. He said that the ISA had instructed Arboriculture Australia to cease charging this fee, which it had done as a show of good faith. He further stated that there were serious concerns about the disparity between the actual cost of processing the memberships and the compensatory amount provided by the ISA to Arboriculture Australia. He said that it was the Board's view that the compensation provided by the ISA to Arboriculture Australia to provide this service needed to be reviewed urgently and that a request for such had been forwarded to the ISA. Discussion ensued regarding this matter including questions from the Membership.

ii) Establishment of the Hong Kong Office

- Robert Sutton explained that the Hong Kong office was a Committee under Arboriculture Australia and detailed that the directive issued by the ISA is that it should cease operation immediately. He detailed that the Board held the view that no ISA by-laws were being breached as the committee do not profess to represent the ISA in any way nor conduct any ISA business nor would they ever conduct any ISA business and that having such a committee in existence was within the rights of Arboriculture Australia to form such a Committee. He explained the history of how this Committee came to exist and its functions and operation to the meeting. Allen Lim, Chair of the Hong Kong Committee addressed the meeting to provide the Hong Kong Members perspective for consideration. Discussion of the matter followed including questions from the Membership.

iii) The APTCC

- Robert Sutton explained that this Championship had been instigated, and supported by Arboriculture Australia, for many years. This included the raising of funds to hold the championships, provision of a venue and staffing of the event. He explained that last year, 2011, the ISA had decided that this event would feed into their program well and as a result, decided to sanction it as an official ISA ITCC event. He stated that the issue with the ISA had arisen partially due to a misunderstanding about the joint role of Doug Sharp being the Chair of the Arboriculture Australia Tree Climbing Committee and the newly created Chair of the ISA Asia-Pacific Tree Climbing Committee. He informed the meeting that since this matter was initially raised; Arboriculture Australia has acknowledged that the APTCC is now and ISA ITCC sanctioned and run event of which Arboriculture Australia was happy to play a support role and that this issue was no longer relevant. He explained that the ISA's Asia-Pacific Tree Climbing Committee had awarded the 2012 event to the ISA's Hong Kong Station but that it had soon become clear that they would not be able

to hold the event. As a result, the ISA had approached Arboriculture Australia to again host the event in Hobart. An agreement had been reached for this to occur and the event was successfully held in Hobart on Sunday, 29 April 2012 as part of this Conference's proceedings. Questions from the Membership were sought with none forthcoming.

iv) Professional Membership Categories

- Robert Sutton explained to the meeting that the Board believed that this issue appeared to be the result of a misunderstanding by the ISA about the Australian Qualification Framework. The ISA had raised issue with the Professional Membership categories under the mistaken belief that these were qualifications issued by Arboriculture Australia in direct competition with the ISA's certification program. He stated that, despite a number of explanations, it appeared that the ISA did not understand that all qualifications had to be issued by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), which Arboriculture Australia was not, and be in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF), which is managed by the Australian Government. He stated that ISA certification was not recognised under the AQF system. He informed the meeting that, in an attempt to resolve this issue, a suggestion had been put forward to have the ISA certification program mapped against the AQF. He said that the offer to work with the ISA to bring its certification in line with the requirements of the AQF had also been made a year earlier but that both of these offers had, to date, been refused by the ISA. Discussion, including questions, of the matter between the Membership and the Board followed.
- The Membership was informed that these matters had now been escalated to the full Board of the ISA following several months of unsuccessful negotiations between Arboriculture Australia and the executive representatives of the ISA. He stated that the process now required Arboriculture Australia to make a formal representation to the ISA Board regarding these matters. The Membership was requested to provide direction to the Board of Arboriculture Australia on how they wished to proceed with these matters.
- Discussion, between the President and the Members present, on the implications of these matters and the possible courses of action followed.

Motion: *That the membership endorses the actions of the Board to date and its capacity to negotiate with the ISA in regard the matters raised.*

The basis of these negotiation are to continue negotiation on the fee structure, to maintain the Hong Kong Committee and to uphold the Australian qualifications and Registered membership categories.

Moved: John Cobbett

2nd: Jeff Latter

Vote: 1 abstention. Unanimous. **Approved.**

D) Questions on Notice

There were no questions on notice.

E) Motions on Notice

There were no motions on notice.

F) Election of Directors

- The incumbent Secretary retired as her Directorial term was complete and due for election by the Membership. All further minutes were taken by a volunteer, Ms Helen Papathanasiou (Member).
- In accordance with the Constitution of Arboriculture Australia, the tenure of four (4) Directors expired at this Annual General Meeting. One (1) of these positions was currently vacant whilst the other three (3) were held by Louise Bennett, Keith Foster and Kyle Hill. The President thanked the retiring Directors for their work and declared the positions vacant.
- A written nomination for Kyle Hill had been received and was noted. It was moved by Mark Kokot and 2nd by (?). Kyle Hill accepted the nomination.
- Nominations from the floor were sought.
- A nomination for Keith Foster was received from (?), and 2nd by Marcus Lodge. The nomination was accepted.
- A nomination for Robert Stavrou was received from Mark Hartley, and 2nd by Rodney Page. The nomination was accepted.
- A nomination for Louise Bennett was received from Kyle Hill, and 2nd by Robert Stavrou. The nomination was accepted.
- A nomination for Mark Hartley was received from (?), and 2nd by Scott Wilkie. The nomination was accepted.
- The President declared that, as the Constitution of Arboriculture Australia allows for a maximum of twelve (12) Directors and, including all nominees, there were currently eleven (11) proposed, a vote was

not required and all nominees were accepted as Directors. By general agreement, four (4) Directors, being Louise Bennett, Keith Foster, Mark Hartley and Kyle Hill would hold tenure until 2015, Robert Stavrou would fall due for re-election in 2014.

Meeting Closed: 6:07pm.
