

# 46th Annual General Meeting

# Saturday, 4th December 2021 12:00pm-1:30pm AEDT

# Held Virtually, via Zoom

# Chaired by John Simpson AM, President

# Welcome

BCA President, John Simpson welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting, and acknowledged that yesterday was International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD) and celebrating the contributions and achievements of people with disability.

# Acknowledgement of Country

Provided by Stephen Belbin, Director, BCA

# Roll Call

Read by Naomi Barber

## Members Present

John Simpson, Emma Bennison, Vaughn Bennison, Peter Rickards, Scott Erichson, Ben Clare, Julie Sutherland, Bruce McAllister, Vanessa Ransley, Sarah Empey, Maree Fenech, Adrian Watson, Kristy Fitzgerald, Annette Purton, Helen Freris, Bill Jolley, Carmel Jolley, Katrina Taylor, Doug McGinn, Stephen Jolley, Pam Spelling, Mick Baker, Christine Simpson, Kristy Stichter, Marie Shang, Bernadette Jolley, Maryanne Diamond, Fiona Woods, Brendan Donohue, Robyn Bousie, Mark Wilder, Neale Huth, Andrew Webster, Debra Simons, Ramona Mandy, Susan Thompson, Barry Chapman, John Danesh Krishnan, Joyce Jones, Prue Watt, Susan Thompson, Janene Sadhu, Cynthia Gregory, Jamie Kelly, Graeme Innes, Francois Jacobs, Kevin Murfitt, Matthew Goodacre, Robyn McKenzie, Stephen Belbin, Lynne Davis, Sondra Wibberley, Joanne Chua, Melea O’Connell, Rocco Cutri, Annette Holden, Erika Webb, Michael Janes, Katie Butler, Lauren McGowan-Slee, Alan Hall, Samantha Marsh, Sally Aurisch, Jennifer Parry, Jane Britt, Martin Stewart, Conor Smith, Tim Haggis.

## Associate Members and Guests (not eligible to vote):

Ron Boller (guest), Marie Boller (guest), Eileen Jolley (associate member), Tony Grant (staff), Naomi Barber (staff), Jackson Reynolds-Ryan (staff), Angela Jaeschke (staff), Peta Hogan (staff), Nicole Willing (staff), Cheryl Gration (staff), Joelene Scot (staff), Dale Simpson (listening in remotely), Tammy Simpson (listening in remotely), James Simpson (listening in remotely).

## Apologies:

Kerrie Duff, Karen Passmore, Thomas Rowe, Helen Simon, Duncan Meerding, Julee-Anne Bell, Robert Altamore.

# Declaration of proxies held:

No proxies received.

### Note:

President, John Simpson advised that as the meeting is being conducted online, which will make the normal voting process difficult to manage, he will invite objections to each resolution and declare the resolution carried where no objection is registered.

# Receipt and approval of minutes of the 45th Annual General Meeting held 28th November 2020:

### Questions:

There were no questions.

### Resolution

Motion: That the minutes of the 45th Annual General Meeting held on the 28th November 2020, be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting, noting that there was an inaccuracy in the AGM 2020 Minutes where Bill Jolley was acknowledged for stepping down from the Finance Audit & Risk Management (FARM) committee, not the Jeffrey Blyth Foundation.

Moved: Julie Sutherland

Seconded: Susan Thompson

Objections: None

Resolution carried.

# Annual Review 2020-2021

It was noted that both the Annual Review and Audited Financial reports are available on the BCA website and can be provided in a preferred format if requested.

## Chief Executive Officer Summary

BCA CEO, Emma Bennison provided a summary of the Annual Review, which is available from the BCA website or can be provided in alternate formats upon request.

John also thanked Emma Bennison for her contributions to these AGMs since 2016, and acknowledged that this is the sixth occasion that she has presented the Annual Review to members.

### Questions:

There were no questions.

Susan Thompson congratulated all the staff for their hard work throughout the year.

### Resolution

That the Annual Review 2020-2021 be received.

Moved: John Danesh Krishnan

Seconder: Susan Thompson

Objections: None

Resolution carried.

# Receipt of Audited Financial Statements and Auditor's Report.

In introducing this item Doug McGinn thanked the efforts of his fellow members of the Finance Audit & Risk Management (FARM) Committee, especially Rocco Cutri and Mick Baker who continue to give their time and their valued opinions. A special note of thanks was given to Tony Grant who has provided support to this committee over the past 5 years. A special vote of thanks was given to Andrew Webster who has joined the FARM this year, but took the lead in developing BCA’s Investment Policy.

Emma Bennison read the financial report, on Doug's behalf. It was reported that as per last year, BCA is in a very sound financial position, mainly due to the great work of its staff in gaining project funds through NDIS Information Linkages and Capacity building funding and careful investment of funds from the merger between BCA & BC NSW. BCA has employed the services of an investment adviser Shaw & Partners who have continued to provide both the FARM and the Board sound advice regarding these investments, and as many would be aware, Shaw and Partners provide advice to the Jeffrey Blyth Foundation. The Board has only chosen blue chip top 100 companies on the Australian market, all of which are ethical investments. The investments can be quickly liquidated as needed to meet BCA day to day operating costs. The aim of the investment program is to help us fund our advocacy and other activities that are not directly funded by government or semi-government sources. This has allowed us to invest into 2 portfolios – a growth portfolio with a selection of top 100 companies based on Shaw’s research work, and an income portfolio with a selection of bank hybrid securities (very similar to preference shares). Unrealised gains in these investments are reasonably healthy, and especially healthy as compared to any term deposit options. We continue to have reserve funds and project funds that can be drawn down when required. As our organisation has grown, our need for further Executive Management has also increased. A greater number of staff has required more supervision, and this should always be noted as a positive within our ever-growing organisation.

For the reporting period up to 30 June 2021:

We finished with a bank balance of $276,771

The major noted incomes were Jeffrey Blythe / Shirley Fund $145,060

Government Funding, $972,750 (A sizeable increase from $670,000 in the previous financial year)

Grants & Contributions (Vision Australia, Guide Dogs, VisAbility) $226,955

Overall Operating Revenue was $1,409,715

Unrealised capital gains on investments $81,223

ATO Cash Boost $70,623

Total Income $1,561,561

It should be noted that in this COVID year, many expenses were markedly decreased including face to face Board Meetings and staff travel and accommodation.

Major expenses included

Rent & Services $22,995 (Which is actually a decrease as we become more virtual and regional)

Wages $1,009,936 (This is an increase of some 30% on the previous financial year)

Super $93,908

Total Expenses for the year was $1,492,073

Surplus of $69,488

### Questions:

There were no questions.

### Resolution:

That the Audited Financial Statements be received.

Moved: Doug McGinn

Second: Stephen Belbin

Objections: None

Resolution carried

# Confirmation/appointment of Auditor

Doug McGinn noted that Brent Murphy, from MCA Accountants has been our auditor for several years, and that in the past month, Brent Murphy has advised BCA that he is soon to retire. Unfortunately, this means that he can no longer audit BCA's accounts. As this has only just occurred, we are now in the process of finding a new auditor. The Board will soon make an appointment, and this will be ratified at our next AGM.

President, John Simpson supported Doug McGinn and said that with the recent resignation of Brent Murphy, the BCA Board will need to appoint a replacement auditor, and confirmed that the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) regulations provide that the Board can make an appointment between AGMs which is subject to ratification at the next Annual Meeting of members.

### Questions:

Susan Thompson - asked if we need a motion of any kind to give the Board authority to appoint an auditor outside of the AGM.

John Simpson confirmed that the Board has received advice from its legal advisor, Darren Fittler and that he has confirmed that the BCA Board has authority to do this and that no vote is necessary. The membership will be advised when the Board do appoint a new auditor, which is expected to happen early in the new year.

# Reports

## Jeffrey Blyth Foundation Update, incorporating the Shirley Fund

Bill Jolley provided an overview of the Jeffrey Blyth Foundation and took the opportunity to thank the other JBF Directors; David and Ashley Blyth, Maryanne Diamond, Graeme Innes, and Donna Purcell. Bill also thanked Michael Simpson who retired as a Director of the Foundation during the reporting period.

President, John Simpson reiterated Bill’s comments about BCA members and friends supporting the Foundation, and noted that in our Annual Financial Report, contributions from the Foundation are most important for BCAs sustainability and independence.

Members noted that this was an update from Bill Jolley, and that the full report is available on the BCA Website.

### Questions

Susan Thompson - asked how the Foundation goes about seeking donations from the public.

Bill Jolley - responded that the Foundation has mostly sought donations through BCA's channels, such as BC News and the radio program New Horizons. However, we now have a fundraising licence in NSW & Victoria and we are looking to step up our public solicitation of funds.

## Election Report – Company Secretary

Provided by Emma Bennison, Company Secretary BCA

Board of Directors

Fiona Woods elected as President unopposed

Joanne Chua and Stephen Belbin were reappointed to the Board

Julee-Anne Bell and Francois Jacobs elected to the Board unopposed.

Lauren Henley resigned from the Board in October 2021.

No election was required to be held.

National Policy Council

South Australia – no nomination received

Queensland - no nomination received

Australian Capital Territory - Robert Altamore elected unopposed

Victoria - Michael Janes elected unopposed

Sean Tyrrell (Vic), David Squirrel (SA), and Paul Price (Qld) were thanked for their contributions to the NPC.

NSW/ACT State Division

ACT Representative - Robert Altamore elected unopposed

There were three (3) nominations received for the six (6) available NSW Representative positions - Kristy Fitzgerald, Mathew Goodacre, and Susan Thompson all were elected to fill two (2) year positions.

Emma advised members that following closure of the nominations period, the Board issued a call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) to fill the resulting casual vacancies on the NPC and State Division Committee, and that one EOI was received for the position of Qld Representative- Neale Huth will fill this position. No other EOIs were received for the NPC SA Representative position, so the position remains vacant.

EOIs were received from Ben Clare, Suzanne Hudson and Mark Schofield so these members will fill one year positions on the NSW/ACT State Division Committee.

The Board has now approved all of these casual appointments so all will be able to take up their roles from the start of the new BCA year.

### Questions:

There were no questions.

### Resolution:

That the Election Report be received.

Moved: Stephen Belbin

Seconded: Joanne Chua

Objections: None

Resolution carried

## Incoming President’s comments

John Simpson welcomed Fiona Woods as the incoming President, and mentioned that Fiona first joined the Council of the National Federation of Blind Citizens Australia (NFBCA) in 1993 and served through until the early 2000s. Fiona then rejoined the Board in January 2017, and has since served as Chair of the NPC, as well as BCA Vice President. John thanked Fiona for her great support, and for taking up the challenge of Board Chair for the last few months.

Incoming President, Fiona Woods spoke to the members of the AGM.

## Acknowledgement of Outgoing President

CEO, Emma Bennison thanked John Simpson for his time, his knowledge, and his wisdom as President over the years. Emma acknowledged John's passion and commitment to BCA, and said that he will always be a BCA leader, regardless of his title/position at BCA.

## Closing Comments

President, John Simpson advised members that the BCA Board will meet on Saturday 11th December to elect office bearers and make other appointments, and that information about these appointments will be included in the Member Update before Christmas.

# Meeting Close

The meeting closed at 1:43pm