

Minutes of the ARSB branch AGM
Date 19th September 2020 by Zoom 1700-1800 AEST

The AGM was preceded with a presentation by Dr Laetitia Gunton from the Australia Museum on Deep-sea sampling in the Tasmanian Seamounts

In attendance

Lloyd Reeve-Johnson (Chair), Rob Eley (Secretary), Eliot Attridge, Nigel Brown (RSB), Vaile Dawson, Jennifer Dickson, June Freeland, Iain Gordon, Ross Graham, Laetitia Gunton, Kaixin He, David Leece, Paul McMenamin, Karen Patel (RSB)

Apologies

Stefanie Bonat, Adhityo Wicaksono

The AGM was identified as quorate.

Introduction and welcome

The Chair welcomed those present. He briefly outlined the history of the branch and identified the difficulties in generating impetus to the Branch.

Review of committee roles

The mandatory committee roles of Chair, Treasurer and Secretary were identified. A suggestion had been submitted for the creation of regional representatives. Iain Gordon proposed that at the current time a unified approach was preferable and no disagreement to this was heard from the floor.

Elect new committee members.

Lloyd Reeve-Johnson and Rob Eley nominated for Chair and Secretary, respectively. Rob Eley noted existing committee members had nominated for general committee membership: Eliot Attridge, Stef Bonat, Iain Gordon, Laetitia Gunton, Anne Hamilton-Bruce, Martin Pal, Adhityo Wicaksono. By a show of hands

all those nominated were elected to be committee members for the 2020-2021 financial year.

In addition, Carolyn Reynolds had also nominated to be a regional representative and would be asked if she wished to join the committee.

Chair's report

Karen Patel advised the Chair that following each election of new members a 'welcome from your branch' email was sent to new members. She offered to send examples from other branches and requested the Chair to send one for distribution.

During a brief discussion the UK privacy laws were recognised as being a limitation to accessing information.

Rob Eley stated that the ARSB only had direct contact with about one third of the regional RSB. He also noted that results from a recent Branch survey identified that many members joined the RSB for professional recognition, chartered status and receipt of The Biologist, but were not interested in engagement with a local branch. Karen Patel noted that this was true in all regions.

Opportunities to promote engagement was discussed and Eliot Attridge briefly summarised the communications strategy led by himself and Stef Bonat. He encouraged submissions by members for posting on the web page and on the social media platforms of Facebook and Twitter.

The opportunity for access to on-line presentations by ARSB members and those from other regions would be explored. Karen Patel noted that the All Branch Meeting online series videos was now on YouTube.

Treasurer's report

Lloyd R-J in his acting capacity of Treasurer reported no change to the account although re-application for charitable status in Queensland was imminent and would cost a couple of hundred dollars.

He noted the lack of second year of start-up grant despite approval by the RSB for the Branch to accumulate years 1 and 2 without application and despite no expenditure. This was in order to have adequate capital to support marketing and events over our large geographical area.

He also noted that a percentage for each local membership was to be remitted back from RSB to support our local branch growth which ultimately benefits RSB. These remittances had not been occurring.

Karen Patel promised to investigate the lack of financial transfers to the ARSB.

An invitation was extended for an ARSB Committee member to assume the role of treasurer.

Event reports

Nothing to report

Future events

On-line events were identified as an opportunity – see AOB below.

AOB

Nigel Brown, RSB Chair of College of Individual Members, identified challenges of Covid-19 to RSB staff and members with the former working from home and many events being cancelled or postponed. However, he also noted that on-line “meet the committee” and quizzes had proven successful for branches. These activities plus the sharing on-line of presentations were ways to engage with members.

The importance of the Policy newsletters was stressed and although this was recognised to be UK and European-centric relevant Australasian policy could be included.

Nigel also noted that the Chartered Biologist certification was under-review with focus on the criteria and alignment of accreditation with other chartered post-nominals. Nigel concluded by inviting members to contact him directly and shared his email nigel.brown@ed.ac.uk

The Chair closed the meeting by stating that he was very upbeat about the Branch with momentum now becoming evident. He thanked all those present for attending.