



Rural Australians for Refugees

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

5pm: 27 July 2019

Uniting Church Queanbeyan
Corner of Rutledge and Crawford Streets

MINUTES

Meeting Opened: 5.15pm

1. Welcome and introductions

Present:

Guest Speakers:

- David Manne: Refugee Legal
- Emmanuel Musoni: RAR Patron
- Kim Houghton: Co-CEO Regional Australia Institute

Other Attendees:

- Marie Sellstrom: RAR Mansfield
- Maree Byrne: RAR Southern Highlands
- Geoff Byrne: RAR Southern Highlands
- Louise Redmond: Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group
- Anthony Lupi: Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group
- Gerry Gillespie: RAR Queanbeyan
- Carolyn Brooks: RAR Queanbeyan
- Pamela Orr: RAR Queanbeyan
- Gerardina Melssen: RAR Queanbeyan
- Phil Buttner: RAR Albury-Wodonga
- Chris Buttner: RAR Albury-Wodonga
- Penny Vine: RAR Albury-Wodonga
- Jonathan Strauss: Cairns for Refugees
- Dawn Davis: RAR Strathbogie Ranges
- Mary Bourke RAR Strathbogie Ranges
- Jennifer Cody RAR Strathbogie Ranges
- Jan Govett: RAR Bendigo
- Anne Jones: Casey-Cardinia for Refugees

- Jenny Kondylas: Justice and Compassion for Refugees
- Bernie Richards: RAC Eurobodalla
- Mary Bremner: RAR Aireys Inlet
- Keith Bremner: RAR Aireys Inlet
- Geoff Langford: Bungendore
- Carol Thorton: Bungendore

Present via Zoom

- Stanley Yea: Ballina for Refugees
- Mike Griffin: Bellingen RAR
- Peter Sobey: Bellingen RAR
- Margot Clark: Macedon Ranges RAR
- Rod Hysted: Healesville RAR
- Jeff Siegel: Armidale RAR
- Linda McNeill: Castlemaine RAR
- Margaret Rasa: Castlemaine RAR
- Wendy Parsons: Redlands for Refugees
- Ruth Fluhr: RAR Strathbogie Ranges

Apologies:

1. BMRSG - Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group – Kathie Herbert
2. SJAC - Social Justice Advocates of the Sapphire Coast
3. Yass for Refugees
4. Corowa Refugee Support Group (Who Is My Neighbour)
5. Light the Dark Alice Springs
6. RAR Wangaratta
7. RAR Mid North Coast
8. RAR South Gippsland
9. RAR Benalla
10. RAR Maryborough
11. RAR Ballarat
12. RAR Apollo Bay

2. Minutes of the Previous AGM, 8 April 2018: Penny Vine

Moved: Penny Vine, RAR Albury-Wodonga

Seconded: Jan Govett, RAR Bendigo

Carried

3. President's Annual Report: Marie Sellstrom

Moved: Marie Sellstrom, RAR Mansfield

Seconded: Gerry Gillespie, RAR Queanbeyan

Carried

4. Financial report: Phil Buttner

Moved: Phil Buttner, RAR Albury-Wodonga

Seconded: Jonathan Strauss, Cairns for Refugees

Carried

5. Questions to National Committee - Nil

6. All positions declared vacant - Marie Sellstrom

Returning Officer, Maree Byrne, took the chair.

7. Election of New National RAR Office Bearers: Maree Byrne

- President: **Louise Redmond**, Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group
- Vice President: **Kathie Herbert**, Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group
- Secretary: **Jonathan Strauss**, Cairns for Refugees
- Assistant Secretary: **Jan Govett**, RAR Bendigo
- Treasurer: **Phil and Chris Buttner**, RAR Albury-Wodonga
- Communications Convener, **Linda McNeill**, RAR Castlemaine

New National RAR President, Louise Redmond, took the chair

8. Motion: National RAR committee

That the National RAR committee consist of 9 people in total

Moved: RAR Albury-Wodonga

Seconded: RAR Strathbogie Ranges

Carried

9. Election of National RAR Committee Members

- **Marie Sellstrom**, RAR Mansfield
- **Gerry Gillespie**, RAR Queanbeyan
- **Dawn Davis**, RAR Strathbogie Ranges

10. Motion: RAR Constitution

That:

The current *Model Rules for an Incorporated Association* (Constitution) as adapted and adopted by Rural Australians for Refugees Australia Inc. be modified to:

- Remove existing anomalies and properly reflect the group, rather than individual membership structure of RAR Australia Inc.
- Remove existing anomalies in the rules for the election of Committee members
- Make other changes as deemed necessary.

That:

- A Working Committee be formed to address the points above
- The modified Constitution be circulated for adoption at the 2020 AGM.

Point 2.2 amended to read: The modified Constitution be circulated for adoption at a to Special General Meeting prior the 2020 AGM

Amendment was:

- Moved by RAR Southern Highlands
- Seconded by RAR Maryborough
- **Carried**

Moved: RAR Southern Highlands

Seconded: RAR Maryborough

Carried

11. Motion: RAR Constitution

That the RAR National AGM agree to the changes to the Constitution as attached.

Background

- The proposed changes to the Constitution are largely a tidying exercise to regularise some inconsistencies in the text relating to member groups/branches and other editorial discrepancies.
- One substantive change seeks to extend the term of National Committee members for an additional year where they so nominate
- This change is suggested to assist in providing some continuity between successive Committees and avoiding reinventing wheels.

Moved: Previous National Executive

Seconded: no seconder

This motion lapsed as the previous motion called for a working party to review the Constitution and was carried.

12. Motion: Financial Policies and Procedures

That the Financial Policy and proposed amendments to the Financial Policy, now to be known as the *Financial Procedures*, be adopted.

Moved: Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group

Seconded: Cairns for Refugees

Carried

13. Motion: Membership Fees

That as per the constitution, the membership fee be

- set at the AGM
- that the fee be set at \$50.00 per branch with a lesser fee of \$30.00 for groups with less than 10 members.

Moved: RAR Albury-Wodonga

Seconded: RAR Queanbeyan

This motion lapsed as it will be considered by the Working Group on the Constitution.

14. Motion: Policy for a Training/ Skills Fund

This meeting authorises the National RAR Committee to explore how RAR can contribute to the provision of education, training and skills support for refugees.

Moved: RAR Albury-Wodonga

Seconded: RAR Queanbeyan

Carried

15. Motion: Resettlement Sub Committee

That RAR National now forms a Resettlement Sub Committee (RSC) to:

- i. Work with member groups involved and interested in (increased) resettlement of refugees and asylum seekers
- ii. Build local links in priority/designated areas to inform settlement and advocacy
- iii. Provide input into ongoing advocacy and implementation of sponsorship and resettlement policy
- iv. Develop and implement a RAR strategy on regional alternative pathways

The **Resettlement Sub Committee** (RSC) would involve representatives from member groups in designated resettlement priority areas, and those with ongoing involvement, individuals with skill/experience and a member of the National Committee.

Members of the **Resettlement Sub Committee** (RSC) could also participate in relevant sector strategy consultations.

Moved: RAR Albury-Wodonga
Seconded: RAR Strathbogie Ranges
Carried

16. Motion: Working Groups and/or Sub Committees

1. That
 - i. The National RAR committee can, at its discretion, form Working Group and/or Sub Committee as appropriate to distribute the workload and to benefit from skills of RAR people beyond the National RAR Committee
 - ii. Each working group or subcommittee of Nationals RAR be convened by a member of National RAR committee
 - iii. The Members of a Working Group or Subcommittee be members of a RAR branch
 - iv. The convenor of each working group or subcommittee submit a monthly (or otherwise appropriate) written report to National RAR.
 - v. National RAR reports regularly on the activities of these working groups or subcommittees to the wider RAR membership via RAR updates, Website or Newsletters
2. That
 - i. Similarly, National RAR may co-opt individuals (people who are members of a RAR branch) when required for specific roles.
 - ii. The reporting by such-cop-opted individuals be as above

Moved: RAR Bendigo
Seconded: RAR Ballarat
Carried

17. Motion: RAR Patron

That Julian Burnside be invited to resume his previous position as a patron of Rural Australians for Refugees along with current patrons Emmanuel Masoni and Gillian Triggs.

Moved: RAR Bendigo

Seconded: RAR Mansfield

Carried: with abstention by RAR Macedon Ranges

18. Motion: National Homestay Register

That, based on a recommendation at the Home-Stay workshop during the 21018 RAR conference, National RAR develops a National Homestay Register with the aim of building mutual support, information sharing and collaboration for RAR branches currently providing homestay or those considering setting up such a support.

Moved: Ballina for Refugees

Seconded: RAR Strathbogie Ranges

Carried

19. No Other Business

20. Meeting Close 6.10pm