

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Irrigation Australia Limited, held nationally by Zoom on Wednesday 27 October 2021 at 12.00 AEST.

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**PRESENT:**

**Directors:** Andrew Ogden (Chair), Colin Bendall, Peter Brueck, Peter Durand, Simon Treptow, Momir Vranes, Rob Nadebaum & Greig Graham.

**Life Members:** Simon Cowland-Cooper; Sid Dyer; Des Horton

**Members:** Jeremy Cape (CapeAbility Consultants); Clive Croxford (Croxford Irrigation Design); Jack Farrell & Steven Whitehead (Vermeer Equipment Holdings); Steven Ford (Pioneer Valley Water); Tony France (Think Water Pty Ltd); Ian Moorhouse; Brett Peel; Jock Ferguson (Vinidex); Gurpreet Piplani; Peter Smith (Sapphire Irrigation Consulting).

**Proxies:** Waterwork Australia; Project Pumps & Irrigation; Total Water Services; SS Irrigation and Greene Eden Watering Systems. All five proxies were directed to the Chair.

**In attendance:**

Bryan Ward (Chief Executive Officer); Chris Delphin (Company Secretary); Tracy Martin (National Membership & Regions Manager) Geoff Harvey (National Training, Certification & Marketing Manager) and Bec New (WA Projects Officer).

**Apologies:**

Apologies were received from Directors Carl Walters and John Pivac

**Opening**

The Chair, Andrew Ogden advised that a quorum had been achieved and declared the meeting open at 12.03 pm AEST and welcomed members and guests. He provided a general overview of the format of proceedings for the meeting.

The Notice of Meeting and Explanatory Note were taken as read.

**Minutes of the previous annual general meeting**

It was noted that the minutes of the Irrigation Australia Limited Annual General Meeting of members held Thursday 29 October 2020 had been signed by the Chair as a true and correct record of that meeting at the next meeting of the board held on 11 December 2020, and had been circulated with the Notice of Meeting to members.

**Chair's address**

The Chair spoke to his presentation and highlighted the following items:

- The impact of COVID19 over the past year and the support of our industry in assisting Irrigation Australia to continue to fulfill its mission of providing value and service to its members; to be the first point of contact and prime source of knowledge for industry stakeholders, and to provide professional development for our industry
- The advocacy work by Irrigation Australia and the elevation of our visibility in the eyes of the general public.
- The achievement of a trade level qualification for our industry AHC32419 Certificate of Irrigation Technology.
- The ANZSCO (the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations) in which several areas of the irrigation sector are proposed to be listed as occupations, including Irrigation Designer (311116); Irrigation Technician (362712) and Irrigation Assistant (843912)
- Previously irrigation has been classified under "Technicians and Trades Works Not Elsewhere Classified" so while this is a proposed change and not yet formerly ratified, the fact that it has reached final proposed

change level is a testament to the efforts being made on behalf of our industry and the level of recognition, we as an industry, are achieving.

- Training has continued to be well supported by our members and industry although much of this has had to be done online as a result of uncertainties around travel, however it is expected we will see significant numbers of newly trained personnel participating in our industry.
- Membership could have been reasonably expected to fall in the past year as a result of COVID impacts across Australia, however thanks must go to members for their ongoing support and continuing membership to the point where we have actually experienced growth during the past year.
- The coming year will see the Board continue their efforts to provide real value and service to Irrigation Australia members; to continue to raise the profile of the industry and to enhance the continued professional growth of the industry by supporting training, liaising on behalf of industry with all levels of government and growing the role of regional branches of Irrigation Australia in local communities.
- The National conference and exhibition aligned with the international ICID Congress scheduled in October 2022 will be an important international event for Irrigation Australia.

The Chair thanked all Irrigation Australia members, sponsors and supporters of our Centre of Irrigation Excellence and publications, industry stakeholders as well as the management team led by CEO Bryan Ward and the Board of Directors. He concluded saying that Irrigation Australia is headed in the right direction and the commitment by all in our industry is commendable.

The Chair invited the CEO to make a presentation on the company's position and growth prospects.

### **Chief Executive Officer's Report**

The CEO Bryan Ward presented his report. Key points contributing to the result for the year included:

- A good result was achieved for the year despite the challenges presented and although the assistance of the government Job Keeper payments provided relief, it is notable that we would have achieved an acceptable outcome without this support however JobKeeper enabled us to keep all staff employed during these difficult months.
- He noted the great work and support from the Chair and Board of Directors, all on a voluntary basis, but they still carry the legal responsibilities and potential liabilities that go with being a director of an organisation.
- The committees including the ICID Australian Committee (IACID); Rainwater Harvesting and the Certification Board all performed by volunteers and their passion and commitment is noteworthy. The contribution by Chairs of those committees Momir Vranes (IACID); Mike Thompson (RWH) and Gennaro Vellotti (Certification Board) and their committees has been outstanding.
- Regional committees who commonly share a passion for a better irrigation industry, continue to work hard in their areas of interest and we are hopeful to include more committees in other locations in time. Clinton Hort until recently Chair of the WA Regional Committee and Life Member Des Horton from the Melbourne Regional Committee deserve recognition for their commitment and input. These committees are the voice of local representation.
- The ability for Irrigation Australia staff to adapt and take on more and different responsibilities throughout the uncertain early stages of the pandemic has been notable with the adjustment to virtual learning, conversion to digital publications and learning to manage without travel and meeting people in what almost seems now, like an outdated concept.
- The trainers who entered an online world unfamiliar to them with hours upon hours of delivering training via Zoom and their ability to adapt with enthusiasm and without complaint.
- The members who represent the diversity of the irrigation industry and often have competing interests which challenge Irrigation Australia to navigate a path in balancing the needs of all membership types. The one thing members have in common is the shared objective to have a better and more effective irrigation industry and this esprit de corps is the glue that binds us all together.

- From our founding members who first met in 1983, including Life Member Sid Dyer here today, to form what is now Irrigation Australia they shared the same general objectives as we have today – they noted that one of the basic aims of the Association is to provide a forum for the irrigation industry and create a flow of ideas between all levels – this remains the case today, nearly 40 years later.
- We have managed to lose the outdated concept that our association has competitors, and we now work closely with organisations such as the National Irrigators Council on a regular basis – we don't have competitors, we have collaborators.
- The year ahead remains challenging, the economic shock waves from almost two years of pandemic may yet be fully felt and impacts from possible rising interest rates, inflation, exchange rates and business closures presents further challenges in the years ahead.
- Irrigation Australia supported the recommendation of the Productivity Commission for a new National Water Initiative which will provide more commitment from jurisdictions and we also supported the review of the Meteorological Assurance Framework (MAF2) as without adequate measurement of water we cannot be water efficient.
- We expect that the 500 plus Certified Meter Installers and Validators may need to double in the next few years as states other than NSW embrace the need for better measurement of water.
- The Board have recently approved the purchase of a new Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) and website and the implementation of this project will significantly improve the accessibility and functionality of our engagement with Members. The new system will be industry best practice and address many of the deficits that our current system has and is scheduled to be completed in April 2022.
- Irrigation Australia's conference and exhibition, postponed in 2020 and now scheduled in Adelaide in October 2022 will bring many international delegates to Australia to intermingle with Australian delegates and provides a showcase for our irrigated agriculture to the world.
- Irrigation Australia has also been awarded the holding of the 2024 Asian Regional Conference in Sydney in 2024 putting our irrigation industry firmly on the world stage twice over the next three years.
- The Waterwise program supported by the Western Australia Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and the Water Corporation is acknowledged. The support extends well beyond financial support and they are actively engaged with us on all aspects of the Waterwise Program and the efficient use of water in WA.
- He acknowledged the Centre of Irrigation Excellence Sponsors Brown Bros; Toro; Netafim; Vinidex; Philmac; Isuzu; Advanced Industrial Products; Hunter Industries; Nelson Irrigation; Iplex and Valmont.
- Irrigation Australia's Journal editor Anne Currey who retires at the end of 2021 has been a valuable contributor over many years, going well beyond the Journal and includes serving on committees, writing and editing various technical publications and assisting with conferences, regional events and much more. He thanked Anne on behalf of Irrigation Australia.
- He advised that the Board will begin the process in 2022 to select a new Chief Executive Officer following his retirement as CEO at the end of his employment agreement in 2022.

Members were invited to ask questions regarding the Chair and CEO presentations and there were no matters raised.

### **ITEM 1: Financial Report, Directors' Report and Independent Auditor's Report**

The Chair formally tabled Irrigation Australia's Financial Report which included the Financial Statements, Directors Report, Directors' Declaration and Auditor's Report for the year ended 30 June 2021. He invited the CEO to deliver the financial report to members.

There were no questions on the financial report and the Chair declared the Financial Statements, Directors' Report and Declaration and Auditor's Report for the year ended 30 June 2021 duly received and considered.

### **ITEM 2: Election of Directors**

The Chair confirmed that, as the number of candidates in the election of directors was more than the number of positions to be filled, a formal ballot was conducted in accordance with the constitution. He asked the Company Secretary to inform the meeting of the result of the ballot.

The Company Secretary announced that all renominating directors: Andrew Ogden, Simon Treptow, Peter Brueck and Momir Vranes were duly elected.

The Chair congratulated returning Directors. He thanked the other nominee Brett Peel, in attendance, for nominating for a board position and for his offer to assist the association in any practical way to become more involved.

### **ITEM 3: Ordinary Resolution - Appointment of Auditors**

The company refers the appointment of the company's auditor to members for special resolution.

The CEO advised members that there were no material items mentioned in the audit report and the Auditor considered the process of high standard. He reiterated the importance of building our net assets up and building a strong balance sheet to provide future financial security. He said the result for 2021 was satisfactory and we look forward to bringing home an acceptable result in the 22/23 financial year.

The Chair asked if there were any questions on the resolution and there were none.

It was noted that the Board has accepted a recommendation from the Audit & Risk Management Committee that FSA Partners be appointed as the company's auditor for 2021/21.

The Chair moved that FSA Partners be appointed as the company's auditors for the 2020/21 financial year.

The Company Secretary called for members to vote and the motion was **carried unanimously**.

### **ITEM 4: QUESTION TIME**

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

- Member Peter Smith asked if there was a possibility in the future to have the Journal published in hard copy again and the CEO responded that apart from a special conference edition, it is not financially viable however we have ensured it can be downloaded to a pdf and printed if required..
- Life Member Sid Dyer expressed his appreciation to Bryan for the work he has done in moving milestones and Andrew supported the comment adding he has done an outstanding job leading a team of other people also doing an outstanding job.

In conclusion the Chair said it was a great pleasure to have a ballot held for the directors election, noting the challenge to get people to put their hand up to develop, enhance and guide their association through time.

There were no further questions and the Chair thanked all members and proxies and said he looked forward to their participation and contributions in the year ahead.

### **CLOSE**

There being no further business, the chair declared the meeting closed at 12.40 m AEST.

Confirmed as a true and correct record:



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Andrew Ogden  
Chair  
Date: 10 December 2021