



VICTORIAN FARMERS FEDERATION

42nd VFF AGM

MINUTES

23 February 2020 @ 11:49-12:15

Zoom

VFF Board Attendees: Emma Germano * Chair / VFF President
Danyel Cucinotta * VFF Vice President
Andrew Dix Independent Director / Chair of Finance & Audit Committee
Zena Burgess Independent Director
Ashley Fraser * Director / Grains President
Tim Kingma * Director / Pig Group President
Paul Mumford * Director / UDV President
Nathan Free * Director / Horticulture President

Guest Attendees: Tony Pititto Audit Partner @ Grant Thornton
Hai Hoang Audit Manager @ Grant Thornton

VFF Staff Attendees: Jane Lovell CEO
Gary Bottomer Financial Governance Manager & Company Secretary
Jessica Evens Executive Assistant – Minute Taker
John Darcy Senior Farm Safety Advisor
Ryan Moloney Stakeholder, Media & Communications Officer
Ashlee Hammond UDV Manager
Laurie Mannix Intensive Industries Manager
Patrick MacDonald Stakeholder, Policy & Advocacy Project Officer
Kath Dunn Project Officer
Jacinta Pretty Livestock Manager
Luke Hooke Stakeholder, Policy & Advocacy Manager
Annabel Mactier Senior Stakeholder, Policy & Advocacy Advisor
Karen Thomas Workplace Relations & HR Advisor
Patrick Kluver Senior Livestock Project Specialist
Kellie Quayle Senior Stakeholder, Policy & Advocacy Advisor

Members/Guests: Rob Arvier * Al Gabb * Ryan Hooke * Peter Miller *
Alex Arbuthnot * Maria Germano * Karl Hooke * Christine Plant *
Mark Billing * Matt Gleeson * Brett Hosking * Lina Sfetcopoulos
Mark Calvert-Jones * David Gibb * Bruce Knowles * Peter Small *
Judy Clements * Georgina Gubbins * Hannah Lewis * Mary Smeriglio *
Andrew Cohen Craig Henderson * Ryan Milgate * James Terry *

Proxies Received: Appoint Chair David Jochinke* Elaine Jochinke*
Appoint Paul Mumford John Keely*
Appoint Leonard Vallance John Powell* - Francis Powell* -

-As Leonard Vallance was not in attendance, these proxies were automatically allocated to the Chair

*Voting Members = 34 (inc 5 Proxies)

01. Welcome, Present & Apologies

- 01.1 The Chair opened the 42nd Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) Annual General Meeting at 11:49, after waiting on a quorum to join the AGM
- 01.2 The Chair welcomed all members, directors and staff, along with Audit Partner, Tony Pititto and Audit Manager Hai Hoang from Grant Thornton.
- 01.3 No apologies were received.

02. Quorum

- 02.1 It was **agreed** that the 42nd VFF AGM could proceed as there was a quorum present of 29 members either at Farrer House, via zoom and via phone in addition to 5 valid proxies received.

03.1 Minutes of the 41st VFF Annual General Meeting held on 24 February 2020

- 03.1.1 The Minutes from the 41st VFF AGM, held on 24 February 2020, were **accepted** as an accurate reflection of the meeting, pending the following changes:
 - Error made on the minutes – it was the 40th VFF AGM minutes that were approved.
 - Paul Mumford to be added as an attendee as he was present at the previous AGM.

Moved by Ashley Fraser / Seconded by Paul Mumford / Carried

04 President's Report

- 04.1 The President's report was taken as read.
- 04.2 The Chair gave thanks to loyal VFF members and introduced the newly employed VFF CEO, Jane Lovell.
- 04.3 Jane Lovell said she is looking forward to meeting and working with members and thanked the VFF Executive Board for the opportunity to be the VFF CEO.
- 04.4 The Chair told members that Strategic Planning will now restart now that Jane is on board.
- 04.5 The Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee took the Chair and addressed members.

05 Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee's Report

- 05.1 The Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee took his report as read, he then spoke to members about the financials of the VFF:
 - There have been issues in what was a difficult 2020; The Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show was cancelled and Farrer House income declined with rental relief due to the global pandemic.
 - As the VFF met all requirements of the JobKeeper program, the VFF received benefits of the program up to the end of 30 September. This will not carry forward into 2021.
 - Farrer House is a great legacy asset and will see us through the current period. Refurbishments are underway on various floors in the building, this will provide larger floor space and a more attractive option to organisations looking to downsize after the pandemic.
 - The VFF is looking to grow membership for long term financial sustainability, this will be worked on both by staff and the board.

06 Receive and Consider the Financial Report for the Year Ended 30 September 2020

- 06.1 The VFF and its controlled entities Financial Report for the year ended 30 September 2020 was tabled.

07 Appointment of Auditor 2021

07.1 The following resolution was moved:

That Grant Thornton be appointed as auditor of VFF and its controlled entities for the financial year ending 30 September 2021

Moved by Nathan Free / Seconded by Georgina Gubbins / Carried

08 Questions and Close

08.1 The Chair opened for questions from members:

Q: VFF Member Georgina Gubbins asked what the proposal was to increase membership:

A: The Chair told members that Strategic Planning needs to be completed. Work would be done with regard to auditing the organisation and membership processes to get an understanding of the value of VFF membership and why people are not VFF members, along with looking at better communication and transparency.

08.2 **Q:** VFF Member Peter Small – made a statement about frustrations for members with regards to being able to partake in policy formation, that current branch system is not adequate engagement to contribute meaningfully to VFF positions.

A: The Chair agreed that this is an issue and told members that she would like to see the organisation remaining grass roots along with looking into how we can better communicate with members and a part of that was looking at what technology is available. We will also be looking at ways to reinvigorating the branch system.

08.3 The VFF AGM was closed by the Chair at 12:15