

DRAFT Bower Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 11 September 2013

**The Bower meeting room
6.45pm – 10.30pm**

Meeting started: 6.45pm

Present: Amanda Buckland, Bruce Diekman, David Harris (from 8.45pm), Thuy Le, Robin Mead, Wolfgang Spranz (from 6.50pm)

Apologies: Oliver Bradshaw, Steve Clarke

In Attendance: Guido Verbist (Co-operative Manager), David Mansfield (until 9.30pm)

Minutes: Bruce Diekman

Welcome and apologies

Declaration of interest (conflict of interest): None

Confirmation of Minutes August 13 Board Meeting

Clarifications to July 16 minutes noted; August 13 minutes confirmed.

ACTION: Final copies to be sent to Manager for publication.

Matters arising - Minutes July 16

The membership/renewal form has been reviewed and text changed in relation to mentions of our active membership requirements, so that the form now matches our rules. Specifically, the one hour voluntary requirement on the form has been removed. In researching this Guido became aware of earlier versions of the rules which stipulated volunteer time as a criteria for active membership.

ACTION: Guido to confirm this aspect of our rules with the Department of Fair Trading.

Matters arising - Minutes August 13

WH&S: Handrail on front steps to be followed up at end of meeting.

Men's Shed: Formal memorandum of understanding with co-ordinator in pipeline.

OPERATIONS REPORT (summary)

Guido tabled his Operations Report to the Board.

New Members

Eleven (11) new members noted; six (6) members have recently renewed.

ACTION: GV to circulate full details by email for approval.

Since Guido has started he has focused on:

- ◆ assisting with finalising the financial report for the auditor;
- ◆ preparing the RRS evaluation report, including changing the way RRS is reported;
- ◆ setting staff priorities for the short term; and
- ◆ introducing new and improved ways to promote and display goods.

For the coming month he intends to prioritise:

- ◆ reviewing the Budget for 2013-14 and forecast for the next 3 years;
- ◆ initiating programs to increase revenue;
- ◆ reviewing the Bower's relationships with community groups (e.g. the Men's Shed, Curb Collective, etc.); and
- ◆ contacting councils to introduce and discuss the RRS evaluation report.

Finances

The P&L statement was presented to the finance committee on September 4 and to the Board tonight.

The daily takings will be presented to the Board on a monthly basis. For the first two months of the current financial year the average daily takings were \$870, a substantial increase on the same period in 2012.

In the coming weeks Guido intends to explore ways to boost revenue streams to compensate for increased expenses in the short term and to promote growth in the long term.

Guido has requested that Steve prepare a grants calendar to help identify potential grants and consider fundraising and eBay opportunities.

Guido has also requested that the S&M Co-ordinator prepare a campaign and marketing plan to reach out to new donors and to increase the quantity and quality of goods received with a view to increasing revenue.

Other initiatives have been introduced to increase revenue in the store, such as:

- ◆ using the parking space in front of the store to display furniture; and
- ◆ using the eco-library mezzanine to sell kitchen ware and books in addition to continuing to use it as a library.

More ideas are being considered and will be prepared with costed estimates before proceeding.

Reuse & Referral (RRS)

The RRS evaluation report for 2012-13 is almost finalised and will be distributed in the coming weeks. It will be followed up by requests for meetings with Councils and for financial contributions. The hope is to substantially increase the service's total financial support. Guido has also met with City of Sydney Council staff to see how The Bower and the City can increase their co-operation.

Office

As previously identified, upgrading the Bower's IT network is vital to improve our accounting system, internal communications, reporting to councils, collections, bookings and other activities.

ACTION: Guido to obtain quotes and prepare costed proposal. Board members to forward relevant IT contacts and other suggestions. Free avenues need to be chased first. Banks (NAB) mentioned as potential pro-bono help.

Community Engagement

Guido will write a Memo of Understanding for the Men's Shed and Curb Collective to clarify how we work together and who is responsible for what.

The Addison Road Community Centre manager has asked Guido to join their Board.

AGREED: Board supports this and sees as beneficial to the Bower.

Financial Report

Accountant David Mansfield presented and spoke to the 'near final' draft 2012-2013 financial statements which will require sign-off by the Board. These have already been run by management staff (Guido and Steve), the Finance Committee and the Auditor. Further amendments and clarifications were noted and will be included in the final version.

ACTION: DM to amend and circulate; AB to confirm insurance cover 107 Redfern St workshop.

Budget

Guido presented a draft 2013-14 budget, including a forecast for the next 3 years. The board asked Guido to make sure contingencies are in place in case we do not meet the forecasted income.

AGM 19 October - preparations

Guido to seek expressions of interest for new Board nominees via a notice to members inviting expressions of interest in setting up a committee to canvass interest and identify areas of expertise required.

ACTION: In addition to the above, the following preparations are still needed: confirmation of venue; final notices and reports; appointment of Returning Officer. Thuy volunteered to organise catering.

Meeting closed: 10:45pm

NEXT BOARD MEETING (subject to confirmation):

Tuesday 15th October, 6.30pm