

THE BOWER REPAIR & REUSE CO-OPERATIVE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 21 NOVEMBER 2020, 2.15pm

VENUE: 107 Projects, Conference Room and Rooftop Garden, 107 Redfern Street, Redfern NSW 2016

PRESENT: Suzan Campbell, Steve Clarke, Helen Cooper, Michelle Sheather, Guido Verbist, Margy Vary, Chris Lisha, Bruce Diekman, Bot Potter, Brian Driver, Stuart Grigg, Judy Foster, Linda O'Malley, Tony Turri, Steve Clarke

OBSERVER/S: none

APOLOGIES: Terry O'Donnell, Glen Alby, Michael Sereff, Grace Lecc, Mel Lake

Proxies & Proxy Holders: None

Chair: Michelle Sheather

Minutes: Helen Cooper

Returning Officer: Steve Clarke

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies and proxies noted.

2. Adoption of minutes of the 2019 AGM

Motion: That the 2019 AGM minutes be adopted with amendment to Linda O'Malley as attending.

Moved: Start Grigg

Seconded: Brian Driver

CARRIED unanimously

3. The Bower Annual Report 2020

The Annual Report was tabled and distributed to attendees.

3.1 Chairperson's Report – Michelle Sheather

A very good year and in a healthy financial position going into the new year. We have had both stability and growth. We are looking forward to relocate from Marrickville and expand our specialist areas, floor space and shop. We are due to move from end of 2021.

Our strategy during COVID has been to go online and increase e-sales exponentially. Parramatta shop closed but Marrickville remained open. We met the conditions for COVID head on.

We have been a good example to local, state and Federal government on minimising waste and cutting greenhouse gases and environmental destruction. A challenge for 2021 is to make more substantial headway and change at the legislative level.

House to home, right to repair, repair cafes are all highlight programs for 2020.

The board has been 7 individuals over the past year for 9 board meetings, with all committed and a good mix of skills: legal, marketing, fundraising and accounting.

3.2 Treasurer's Report – Tony Turri

2019-2020 was a difficult year, sales were subdued versus prior year but only down by 4%. Does not account for closure of Parramatta and closed workshops, pause on Work for the Dole programme. Those factors into consideration, 4% down is a good result. Overall income was up to \$1.2m, which is unprecedented. We are 10% up on budget despite COVID and up 24% on the prior year. Government schemes helped as did donations. Operating expenses reached \$1m, up on last year. Net surplus is \$120,000. This is six times higher than previous year and in 2018 we had a loss of \$48,000. We are up to \$200,000 in our bank which is a great result.

Accounting rules related to AASB 16 Lease Accounting have changed this year, removing the distinction between operating and finance leases and requires the recognition of a right-of-use (ROU) asset and lease liability on the balance sheet for most leasing arrangements. This was introduced to address concerns with the lack of transparency relating to lease rights and obligations. It is applicable for reporting periods commencing on or after 1 January 2019.

3.3 Manager's Report – Guido Verbist

The circular economy: we have been a pioneer of many programs in this space. Josh Frydenberg announced a review of the right to repair legislation, we are invited to join on a panel to provide advice on what legislation should look like. We will run a campaign this year 2021. We are invited to participate in 'citizen workshops' to develop the circular economy. We will develop our ability to quantify our contribution, for example in 2020 we completed 160 workshops and 1200 people in attendance. Overall it is a positive example of the impact we can demonstrate.

Staff: We now have 18 people on the payroll. Including casuals, volunteers, we have a pool of 100 people that work with the organisation. We recruited 4-5 new people over the past year of a high calibre with potential to grow with the organisation. Our 'Bowerbirds' are important contributors to creative workshops and sharing their expertise.

Sales and income: Continue to grow year on year since 2013. We increased our income stream, but workshops down due to COVID.

Collection and rehoming service: We collected 2 tonnes less than last year. We have more people attending the store to donate directly rather than requesting the truck.

House to home: continues to grow and is a big program for us. We received \$60,000 from several foundations to support the program. We will continue to allocate funds from that program. We aspire to campaign the government in 2021 to grant funds to us for the furnishing of accommodation.

Art from trash: a new program which we held in Redfern, Parramatta and online. 500 people attended in person and 1000 visited our site online. We sold 20% of artwork.

New community initiatives: bush fire relief truck, food pantry during COVID, Parramatta women's shed.

Bespoke: furniture and repairs continue.

Online store: we are averaging \$3000 per month which is an increase on last year.

Fundraising: results from crowdfunding campaigns have been spectacular, we begin our next campaign on Tuesday 24 November 2020.

Communication: our Instagram and Facebook members have grown, and an increase on our new website. We are well placed now with the new team to grow this department.

Location: Parramatta store has closed due to limited capacity to continue 2 stores due to loss of Work for The Dole and Community Service Order programs. The Bower continues to operate out of Marrickville, Redfern, Zetland. Parramatta is a sales point for the House to Home program and second workshop space. Evening and weekend workshops are popular and continue to grow.

Education: Guido won the "Community Educator of the Year" from the Australian Association of Environmental Education.

Tiny House: The next Tiny House course is on track and will run March 2021.

Repair Cafes: is one of our most popular programs, we run 4 cafes per week (200 per year).

Accommodation: 1 December 2021 is the last day of lease at Marrickville. We are pursuing alternative accommodation options through local city councils. This is a big project for 2021.

Congratulations and round of applause for Guido, Louise, staff and volunteers for their strong results and continued commitment to The Bower in a difficult year.

Motion: That the Annual Report 2020 be adopted, with two amendments:

Page 6 section 2.2 - Chris Lisha included as a casual member.

Page 9 - the X axis to be changed to years from 2007.

Moved: Chris Lisha

Seconded: Tony Turri

CARRIED unanimously

Motion: That the Financial report - 30 June 2020 be adopted

Moved: Brian Diver

Second: Margy Vary

CARRIED unanimously

4. Appointment of Financial Auditor for 2021

Motion: That Stewart Brown Chartered Accounts be confirmed as our auditors for the next year.

Moved: Michelle Sheather

Seconded: Bruce Diekman

CARRIED unanimously

5. Election of Board Members

Member directors:

- Michelle Sheather: nominated by Guido Verbist, seconded by Johanna Ylatalo
- Judy Foster: nominated by Guido Verbist, seconded by Michelle Sheather

Michelle and Judy are uncontested and appointed.

Independent director:

- Tony Turri: nominated by the Board

Elected by the board and endorsed at this meeting

MEETING OFFICIALLY CLOSED AT 3.30PM.