



## Annual General Meeting

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2025 2:00 pm

Weetangera Primary School and Zoom

### Draft Minutes

#### Present:

##### In person:

**Members:** John Brannan (Convenor), Anne Aisbett, Wendy Whitham, Bob Hodgson, Barbara Allan, Len Taylor, Warren Bond, Vaughn Pax, Norma Vernon, Scott Wilkinson, Allana Crisp

**Non-members:** Tara Cheyne MLA

##### On-line:

**Members:** Denise Hall, Mike Hall

#### 1. Welcome by the convenor

John acknowledged that we volunteer and are meeting on Ngunnawal land and asked that we remember the debt we owe the Ngunnawal for their stewardship of the land. He welcomed the guest speaker, Tara Cheyne MLA.

**2. Apologies:** Gerard Newman, Lesley Harland, John Fitz Gerald, Mark Hallam, Katy Skinner, Chantal Jackson, Alana Wilkes, Peter Cain MLA, Colleen St George, Gilbert Hughes, Nola McKeon.

#### 3. Guest Speaker: Tara Cheyne ACT Legislative Assembly, Member for Ginninderra and Minister for City and Government Services

The Minister shared her reflections on her first six months in the role as Minister for City and Government Services. She also holds other portfolios, including Attorney-General, but focused on City Services and Land Management. She invited questions and feedback from the meeting during her talk.

The Minister described the ACT Government's current financial position as quite challenging. She noted that there are many paid advisory committees and ministerial councils (over 100) in the City Services portfolio and she questions their value for money. She spoke very positively about the work done by volunteer groups, especially those in the environmental space and specifically acknowledged ParkCare and other groups in the Urban Parks network as examples of well-organised, collaborative, and respectful groups that are widely appreciated by rangers and departmental staff.

The Minister noted she wants to explore ways to better support volunteer networks and reduce unnecessary barriers, and acknowledged how much volunteers already give. She described the current grants system as burdensome and time-consuming for everyone involved. Instead, she is keen to look at a more simple funding system for the well-run groups with clear goals and good governance and reporting, perhaps with small stable annual funding, as well as special purpose grants for specific projects. She welcomes any ideas on this.

The Minister also talked about proposed internal reforms. Parks and Conservation is now being merged with City Services to improve coordination to ensure environmental work like habitat restoration, pest control, and mowing are planned together, rather than in silos. She is also working to untangle some of the cultural differences between these departments. One example was the pay gap between different types of rangers, even though their work is equally challenging and important.

The minister also mentioned some legislative reforms in progress. Amendments to the Urban Forest Act are being made to make it easier to execute practical decisions, such as removing trees that have ended up in the wrong place like in important grasslands. She's also working on overhauling the outdated Public Unleased Land Act to make it more flexible and supportive of public and community use, with the goal of making it easier to use some public land for events, recreation, and cultural activities, while also protecting areas with ecological value. At the same time, those using land for private purposes might be asked to pay more or meet tougher requirements.

The Minister confirmed that kangaroo culling will go ahead and that further information about the selected reserve locations will be shared soon. Deer, goats, and pigs were also mentioned as rising threats to biodiversity, and she agreed that these are priority issues for control efforts.

She welcomed feedback and encouraged everyone to share practical ideas, especially about how to better support volunteer work, simplify processes, and improve collaboration across agencies.

Questions from the meeting concerned communications between the planning level and the people who implement their decisions, including rangers or volunteers; the constant movement of rangers; and the lack of sufficient rangers. The Minister acknowledged these concerns and will consider them in her planning for reforming the portfolio.

Another issue raised by the meeting was the state of the dam on the Pinnacle Reserve. FrogWatch coordinator Anke Maria Hoefer (not present) had previously voiced serious concerns about this, and suggested it needed dredging out, refilling with rainwater and work done on the banks and surrounds to return it to ecological health. The Minister noted this sounded like a good project for a special grant, and that consideration should be given to what the primary objective of the dam should be. Other concerns raised were issues with an unlocked gate and badly aligned fence on the Reserve; the complicated process re weeding grants; and a track in poor condition on the Reserve.

The meeting thanked the Minister for her interesting and candid contribution.

#### **4. Confirmation of [Minutes of the 2024 AGM](#)**

Moved Bob Hodgson, seconded Warren Bond. Agreed unanimously.

#### **5. Convenor's Report**

John presented a written report and a brief verbal summary. He noted that the Interpretive Signs project is now complete, but there is room for more; reiterated that the dam project will be a priority this year; that weeding had been quiet this last year due to consistently low rainfall, but that the teams had done a fabulous job; that a fire reduction burn had recently been conducted in the Reserve and its aftermath will be monitored; and that the revegetation of the pipeline and the land adjacent to the Icon tank compound was progressing well, thanks in part to two volunteers (Mitchell Kelly and Cybele McNeil) who had put in a lot of watering and care after the last planting. He also acknowledged the efforts put in by Len Taylor and his team in the revegetation of the Weetangera Paddock, and mentioned that we are currently looking for a volunteer to take over the raising of tube stock for this project.

John thanked Weetangera Primary School for the use of their staff room for the meeting, and those who had contributed to the afternoon tea.

#### **6. Treasurer's Report**

Warren Bond presented the [audited financial statement for 2024-2025](#).

John thanked Wendy Whitham, who had provided funding for the Kama Link Interpretive Sign, and Warren noted it was the sign that appeared to be used the most.

Len Taylor moved that the Treasurer's Report be accepted, seconded by Alanna Crisp. Agreed.

#### **7. Report on the Conflict-Of-Interest Register**

Anne reported that there had been no conflicts-of-interest registered by committee members in 2024-25.

#### **8. Standdown of the Coordinating Committee**

Members of the 2024-25 Coordinating Committee stood down in accordance with meeting rules and all positions were declared vacant.

#### **9. Nominations from the floor (by members only)**

Tara Cheyne agreed to act as Returns Officer and called for nominations.

#### **10. Election of new Coordinating Committee**

The following office bearers and ordinary members were nominated and elected unopposed:

**Convenor:** John Brannan

Nominated: Anne Aisbett; Seconded: Warren Bond

**Secretary:** Anne Aisbett

Nominated: Warren Bond; Seconded: Len Taylor

**Treasurer:** Warren Bond

Nominated: John Brannan; Seconded: Bob Hodgson

**Ordinary Members:**

Alana Wilkes

Nominated: Anne Aisbett; Seconded: Denise Hall

Denise Hall

Nominated: John Brannan; Seconded: Len Taylor

Len Taylor

Nominated: Warren Bond; Seconded: Bob Hodgson

**11. Other Business**

None.

**Meeting closed:** at 3:20 and was followed by afternoon tea.

Anne Aisbett  
Fotpin Secretary  
19 May 2025