**2ND BATTALION, THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INC.**

**MINUTES OF THE 2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**HELD AT**

**COWBOYS LEAGUE CLUB TOWNSVILLE**

**ON SATURDAY 26th OCTOBER 2024**

The meeting commenced at 11.14 am, 26 Oct 24.

**The ODE**

**PRESENT**:

Attendance book: 7 - Robert Althofer, Martyn Struhs, Justin Harrison, Merv Dicton, Terry Reid, Steve Reynolds, Robert Parker. Non-Financial: 3 - Maree Struhs, AW Kelly-Parker and Jason Martin.

Online: 6 – Michael Kruger, Mick Slater, Justin Hugget MG, Robert Pickersgill, Rick Avery LM, Anthony Duroux),

SEQ: (27 x financial, 23 x non-financial as per attendance book).

The Secretary advised there was a quorum.

**APOLOGIES**: Rod Hooper, Martin Wettenhall, Maxwell Farrow, Bruce Williams, Brendan Martin, Mal Gray, Troy Mcgill, Jock Cassidy, Robert Goodacre, Patrick Cairns and Pat Savage (10 x apologies in SEQLD)

**WELCOME**

The Chairperson (secretary) welcomed all those in attendance including Life and Honorary Members and confirmed that there were 5 x proxies held with additional voting rights to vote on the members behalf (4 x given to chairman, 1 x given to secretary)

**MINUTES OF THE 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Moved: Robert Althofer, Seconded: Merv Dicton, that the Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting has been tabled and that this document is a true and accurate record of proceedings held on 28th Oct 2023 be taken as read. The minutes from the 2023 AGM is carried.

**CARRIED**

**MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The Association has amended one of our Financial Term Deposits by adding additional funding to the sum of $40,000 from our current savings account and have increased the term deposit by this amount. This Term deposit will now mature at 12 months in Aug 2025. There are no other matters arising from previous minutes.

**CHAIRPERSON REPORT**

The President apologies that he is not here in person but has provided the following President’s Report – Welcome all to this the 2024 2RAR Association AGM. As we move into 2025 this will be the last year of the Association’s current five year planning cycle where our strategic direction has focused on our agreed to goals of support. These goals being all centred on our main focus of Being Relevant in everything that we do as an Association: Our goals include Veteran Welfare, Transition support, Succession plan and preserve the unit’s history.

The Association continues to work hard to meet our nine key Objectives which is achieved through our Veteran welfare program and I would like to thank Troy & Merv for their efforts this year in raising attendance at our Coffee catch ups that occur regular in Townsville which saw the Association give back with a free coffee catch up and Axe throwing activity as part of Veterans Health week. The East Timor Reunion for 25years was a huge success with some 100 x veterans and their families in attendance, a big thank you to Brendan Martin for his efforts in getting this up and running, with positive remarks coming back from the event. We were honoured to have not only our Patron MAJ Gen Mick Slater (rtd), who gave an inspiring and uplifting speech but also the current Chief of the Army, LTGEN Simon Stuart (ex 2 RAR) in attendance.

Our current Objectives are not being considered to be changed at this stage and remain our core front in everything that we do.

This year we have been successful with a DVA grant for Veterans Health Week which the Association received $1000 to go towards running a Keeping Connected Activity. We encourage anyone with knowledge and understanding of submitting Grants to reach out to the Association to help submit future grant opportunities.

Our Strategic direction was completed and presented to the committee in Jan 24 with our proposed plan for the next 5 year cycle. This is available for all our financial members to read and will be sent out after the AGM to all Financial Members for their feedback.

This year the Association is pleased to announce that two memorial plaques have been presented by the Association. Firstly, a Canungra Memorial Plaque was unveiled to commemorate the opening of the Canungra Memorial dedicated to all Vietnam veterans which has been relocated to the front of Kokoda Barracks in Canungra. The President was privileged to have been in attendance with some 300 hundred veterans and their families. The second plaque was dedicated at the Navy Fleet Air Arm Memorial in Nowra for our own Pte Patrick Halley who was an Air Gunner in Vietnam and finally was presented with his Gunner Wings. Big thanks to Mr Ray Godfrey in his efforts in making this possible for Patrick.

Another notable event where it would be remise of me not thank, Shaun Hughes our Victorian State Rep and the Trafalgar-Thorpdale RSL for their efforts in supporting and attending the internment service for Pte Halliday, a Malaya veteran where our efforts to find a NOK was in vain however a poignant service was held for Pte Halliday in April with an internment service taking place.

I would also like to portray a big hearty congratulation to Mr Alf Vockler who has now become our 21st Life member to the Association. Well done, an incredible man who greatly deserves this honour and I hope all the members up in Tweed are looking after you today.

The Royal Commission Final report was released this Sept, we encourage all veterans to reach out for support, a lot of information has been provided with this final report and we await to see if the Government/Defence and DVA start to make change that is positive and reflective of the needs for all veterans and their families. The Association is here to assist, support and to help towards a positive change moving forward.

Finally I want to thank our departing committee members, Justin Huggett, our Vice President, Mr David White our treasurer and Mr Rick Avery our Membership Member. Three outstanding gentlemen who have served the 2RAR Association well and provided me with guidance and support but more so their work ethic in supporting our members was second to none. Thank you. That concludes the Presidents report.

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

The Treasurer presented the Audited Review Financial report of Accounts as at 30 September 2024.

Moved: David White, Seconded: Martyn Struhs, that the Accounts have been tabled and received. Treasurer report is carried.

**CARRIED**

Questions on the Financial Report:

1. Jason Harrison – Is the Association paying for zoom as it shouldn’t be a timed meeting.
   1. Chair – Yes we are and it is not timed.
2. Jason Harrison – I have brought this up the last three years and have been attacked for it, why are we not getting more of a return from the interest rates for our accounts
   1. Summary on responses: Chair advised Jason that he was not attacked at the last two meetings. The Treasurer, David White thanked Rick Avery for his support in providing timely financial returns but his reply to Jason’s question was not satisfactory to his liking as Jason felt that this did not answer his question. Jason produced a Suncorp Banking sheet with interest rates stating that we should be receiving more of a return of some $4,000. Jason also advised on the special interest accounts if the Association deposited $200 per month. Chair advised that this was previously looked at and wasn’t considered at the time as there was no guarantee that we would achieve this amount in incoming earnings to cover the required monthly requirement. Chair also agreed with Jason that the committee required to do better with our accounts in getting the best interest possible and would be looked at again with the new incoming Treasurer. Michael Kruger – agreed with Jason and advised that the Association should spend some proper money on a financial advisor to better work on our financial situation. Michael also advised about working capital and depositing monies. Bob Parker also agreed in that we needed to add money to accounts and asked about how money from term deposits was reinvested. Jason Harrison then advised that Suncorp Bank was not working and talked about NAB interest rates available and that we should be getting between 4 and 5%.
3. Mick Slater – Advised the chair that we will require to check any restriction on our current trust for D Coy funds on how this can be invested so as to not breach any conditions
4. Merv Dicton – Advised that at no stage was Jason Harrison attacked at the last AGM and wanted it known that this did not occur.

To Action - Association requires addressing Working capital of all financial accounts and seeking out information from other financial institutions to ensure we have a spending and savings account that is earning interest which should return 4-5%. This is required to be actioned and a proposal brought to the committee at the earliest convenience.

**Note:** Email sent out after AGM to all financial member to advise of the following:

1. The 2RAR Association provided zero remuneration or other benefits to management committee members, senior staff or relatives.

2. The 2RAR Association also reviewed its current Liability insurance policy which has been renewed for 12 months until 01 Oct 2025. This Liability insurance covers Management meetings, AGM in Townsville and the AGM gathering at Twin Towns Resort. Liability insurance is a requirement for the Association so as to provide cover for all amounts which we become legally liable to pay as compensation (other than fines, penalties) for personal injury and/or property damage as a result of an occurrence in connection with our business for public and/or products liability. Public Liability – limit of liability is for $20,000,000.

**APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR**

RWM Accountants, the current Auditor, has indicated their willingness to continue in the position of Auditor for 2024 – 2025.

Moved: Robert Althofer, Seconded: Martyn Struhs, that RWM Accountants be appointed Auditor.

Chair advised that a new auditor closer to Townsville will be researched so that the auditor will be closer to where the Treasurer resides for ease of communication.

Merv Dicton advised the chair that the Auditor report required to be proposed

**Proposal:** The Auditor review report has been provided and I propose that it be adopted by the members.

All in favour…..Agreed, All apposed……….Nil

**CARRIED.**

**ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS FOR 2024-25**

Malcolm Gray would stand for re-election for the position of President and declared the seat vacant. As there were no other nominations for the position, the Chairman declared Malcolm Gray elected President unopposed

**CARRIED BY ACCLIMATION**

Justin Huggett would not stand for re-election for the position of Vice President, and declared his seat vacant. As there were no nominations for the position, this position will remain vacant as it is not a requirement to be filled under the Incorporations Act.

**CARRIED BY ACCLIMATION**

Robert Althofer would stand for re-election for the position of Secretary and declared the seat vacant. As there were no other nominations for the position, I declare Robert Althofer elected Secretary unopposed.

**CARRIED BY ACCLIMATION**

David White would not stand for re-election as Treasurer, and declared his seat vacant. Nominations received for Treasurer was one nomination being, Brendan Martin. There are no other nominations for this position. As there were no other nominations for the position, the Chairman declared Brendan Martin elected Treasurer unopposed.

**CARRIED BY ACCLIMATION**

The following members were nominating for the vacant positions in the Management Committee and were duly elected unopposed:

* Troy McGill
* Merv Dicton
* Anthony Duroux

**CARRIED BY ACCLIMATION**

**THE COMMITTEE:** President: Malcolm Gray, Secretary: Robert Althofer, Treasurer: Brendan Martin, Members: Troy McGill, Merv Dicton and Anthony Duroux.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

There are no Agenda items for this meeting.

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

1. Chair - requested discussion of adoption of a sub category under Associate Member to be considered for War and Service Widows, and spouse of 2 RAR veterans to be looked at for constitutional change at the next AGM. This sub category would offer free membership to the immediate War and Service Widows and spouse of those who have passed away in service. Further follow up and discussion of this will be required.
2. Jason Harrison – AGM minutes not received until 12 months later, this should be provided either on the Association website or emailed out to all members. Chair agreed and will action in a timely manner to all financial members.
3. Jason Harrison – Committee Meeting minutes should also be more assessable, advised by chair that all minutes are kept and can be provided on request as they may require to be redacted for privacy reasons. If this is something that the majority of members wish then that could be looked at but will take time to provide.
4. Michael Kruger – Better communication to state reps required as we have no idea of what is going on within the Association. Also require Membership lists to be updated and provided to state reps when changes occur. Advised that only just found out about an internment service in ACT region and he and Rob may not be able to attend. Chair agreed that communication can be improved and will look at inviting members to committee meetings and providing updated Association Member lists for each region. Chair also advised and apologised that the internment service was only sent out to the one ACT rep (Rob) and not to both reps yesterday asking to see if they were in a position to support.
5. Jason Harrison – Advised that state reps should be providing reports on activities and General Meetings should be conducted for better communication. Advised by the chair of the issue of quorum being present for General Meetings and that this may be hard to get members to attend.
6. Gordon Hurford – Advised on the 80th year Anniversary next year of the Battalion and that since most 1st Tour Vietnam vets resided in SEQLD an were close to God’s waiting room that activity celebrations were under way with an extra day planned for the Sunday to take place. Gordon reiterated that the event for 80th Birthday celebrations was not just for the normal crowd but for everyone and is set for Sat 25th and Sun 26th Oct 2025 in Tweed Heads and booking location at the winery has been locked in. Social Member – Anthony Duroux stated that he would look to attend and be ready to assist in this event.
7. Mick Slater – Advised that if a Patron was found then he was happy to step into the VP role to assist, advised that a strategy on communications should be looked at by the committee. Michael Kruger advised of possible Patrons moving forward being, JJ Frewin, Mick Mahey whilst Mick Slater advised that Simon Stuart was also a possible option.
8. Merv Dicton – Advised that he would like to look at proposing 2 x Life Members. Chair advised that as president was unavailable it would be better to follow the nomination form process as the member may be in attendance at this meeting and considerations of service to Association would be required.

That completes general business.

**Closing Remarks –**

Thanks to the Patron, Life Members and Honorary members and a big thank you goes out to all our families, without the support and appreciation from our families then a lot of this support could not be possible. I would also like to again thank our departing committee members, Justin Huggett, David White and Rick Avery for all their support provided to the Association.

**DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date, time and place for the next Annual General Meeting will be advised in due course

**CONCLUSION**

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 1215 pm.

President Secretary



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