



Minutes of Annual General Meeting
Held on Tuesday 12 November 2024
Online meeting via Zoom

PRESENT:

Lisa Dunlop, Ann Yeomanson, Leanna Marinucci, Corrine Bowen, Dilnaz Billimoria, Sally Vuong, Joanne Cleary, Dr Niki Vincent (Guest Speaker), Fiona Sharkie, Andrea Learbuch, Bronwyn Morphett, Bronwyn Upston, Capella Henderson, Casey Dykes, Christina Davidson, Dayna Nicholas, Emily Kate Cowan, Emily Reeves, Frankie Bailey, Georgia Retallick, Jean Ooi, Jo French, Judith Drake, Kate Gibson, Laura Newstead, Lily Kovacevic, Louisa Mitchell, Louise Blair-West, Michael Smith, Nikki Harris-Allan, Penny Oakman, Rowan Cockrell, Samantha Cseh, Sarah Codling, Sui Shan Wu, Sulo Colombage, Suzanne Stojanovic, Tania Rose, Wendy Zhang, Elly Taylor, Anna Phyland, Avega Bishop, Catherine D'Arcy, Claire Butselaar, Colleen Russell, Jane Brierty, Katherine Lim, Kochava Lilit, Katie McKee, Lingzhi Ruan, Melanie Chapman, Naomi King Bol, Sarah Chong, Sarah Fowler, Sui Cin Zah, Vanessa Czerniawski, Ai Media Captioners.

APOLOGIES:

Mary Doyle MP, Dr Monique Ryan MP, Bridget Vallance MP, Belinda Li-Veldhuizen, Janet Young, Marianne DiGiallonardo, Katherine Dowson, Tiffany White, Helen Riseborough.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Women's Health East (WHE) acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, traditional owners of the land on which we work, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We affirm that sovereignty was never ceded and express our commitment to reconciliation.

1. WELCOME

Lisa Dunlop, Board Chair, welcomed all members, peers and partners, funders, community women, staff and volunteers to the 2023 - 2024 Annual General Meeting.

A special welcome was extended to:

Aunty Georgina Nicholson (Wurundjeri Elder) and Dr Niki Vincent (Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner).

2. WELCOME TO COUNTRY

Lisa Dunlop introduced Aunty Georgina Nicholson, an Elder of the Wurundjeri people, who, although unable to attend in person, kindly recorded her Welcome to Country.

Aunty Georgina welcomed all present to the land of the Wurundjeri people, whose sovereignty was never ceded. The Wurundjeri people are one of five tribes which are part of the Kulin nation. She acknowledged her ancestors who walked and lived on the lands as free spirits, and paid respects to all Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples present, and their elders. Aunty Georgina reflected on the legacy of those who came before and spoke of her strong family links in the region.

Lisa thanked Aunty Georgina on behalf of all in attendance.

3. PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

Lisa Dunlop formally tabled the 2023-2024 Annual Report. Attendees were sent a link to the WHE Annual Report prior to the AGM. The Annual Report 2023-2024 is also available on the WHE website.

Lisa invited Fiona Sharkie (Acting CEO) to present an overview of the year's achievements, as detailed in the Annual Report.

4. CEO'S REPORT

Fiona Sharkie, Acting CEO, presented an overview of Women's Health East's achievements of the past year in advancing its strategic priorities. In doing so, Fiona acknowledged the leadership, strategic capabilities and integrity of CEO Elly Taylor, who is currently on parental leave.

Fiona outlined WHE's strategic priorities – advance gender equality, prevent violence against women, improve sexual and reproductive health and mental health and wellbeing – which form the basis of our work with and for women and girls, and with partner organisations in the region. A snapshot of some of WHE's achievements over the year included:

- Health promotion activities reached 4,300 people
- 40 Gender Equality workshops delivered to a total of 380 participants
- Support for 1900 Chinese and Hakha Chin women through a range of programs
- Growth of the Together for Equality and Respect partnership to 34 organisations
- Increased access to abortion health care in the region as a result of sustained advocacy over ten years
- A continuation of additional 'boost' funding for a further two years for women's health services
- Commencing new projects, including partnering with Women's Health in the South East to create a training program to strengthen the capability of Victoria's adult education sector to prevent and address work-related gendered violence.

Fiona also highlighted WHE's proactive work to strengthen an intersectional approach, particularly through two major co-design projects:

- Get the Go Ahead – a program which engaged with a group of diverse, disabled young people to develop resources to build understanding of sexual and reproductive health rights, with a particular focus on affirmative consent.
- Margins to the Mainstream – a four year project led by WHE and Women With Disabilities Victoria, and co-designed with 16 lived experience experts, to build organisational and community capacity to end the negative impacts of gender inequality and ableism for women with disabilities.

Victorian government funding is being sought to extend the Margins to the Mainstream program to more regions in Victoria.

Fiona acknowledged the leadership of Elly Taylor, the tireless work and personal commitment of the executive team and staff, and the governance work of the WHE Board to support the WHE team and the women and girls of the region. Fiona also thanked members and partner organisations for their ongoing support.

5. KEYNOTE SPEAKER – DR NIKI VINCENT

Lisa welcomed and introduced Dr Niki Vincent, Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner, who has oversight of the implementation of the Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020 and plays a key leadership role in promoting gender equality in the community and workplaces.

Niki spoke to the commencement of Victoria's Gender Equality Act in March 2021, the first of its kind in Australia, which places a positive duty on public sector workplaces to address inequality. The Act also explicitly incorporates intersectionality, recognising that gender equality cannot be achieved while any group of people is left behind. The Act covers 300 public sector organisations across Victoria.

Niki outlined some key findings from the Commission's Intersectionality at Work Report, a collation and analysis of public sector intersectional workforce data. The data shows compounding forms of discrimination have notable impacts on career progression, financial stability and wellbeing. For example, data on pay gaps indicate that men without disability are the highest paid, men with disability rank second highest in pay, women without disability rank third highest in pay, and women with disability are the lowest paid group. The data also reveals that women with disability experience sexual harassment at twice the rate of women without disability.

Recent Gender Equality Act public sector progress reports and audits demonstrate positive intentions and also indicate that more work is needed to build knowledge and capacity, including the incorporation of an intersectional lens to gender impact assessments. To advance intersectional gender equality, Niki highlighted the importance of workplaces engaging in meaningful consultation with different groups of people, collecting workforce data on intersectional identity aspects, understanding where organisational structures and processes might be contributing to patterns of inequality, and actively planning to address any inequality through a Gender Equality Plan. Guidance on how to apply an intersectional approach to gender impact assessments is available on the Gender Equality Commission website.

Lisa thanked Niki for her informative keynote presentation and for sharing concrete steps for advancing intersectional gender equality in workplaces and in the community.

6. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM

The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on 9 November 2023 were circulated online to attendees prior to the meeting.

MOTION: That the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Women's Health East Inc. held on Wednesday 9 November 2023 be confirmed.

Moved: Lisa Dunlop

Seconded: Ann Yeomanson

CARRIED

7. TREASURER'S REPORT

Leanna Marinucci (Treasurer) tabled the audited financial report for the year ending 30 June 2024, which had been made available to attendees prior to the AGM via electronic link.

WHE's income for 2023-2024 totalled \$2,420,758 and expenditure was \$2,414,939 – resulting in a surplus of \$5,819 for the year. WHE's net asset balance at 30 June 2024 was \$572,680.

Operating grants remained the major source of income, making up 92% of total income for the year. WHE also achieved a 41% increase in its Fee-for-Service income. As part of the Victorian Women's Health sector, Women's Health East has been successful in obtaining additional boost funding for 2024-2025.

MOTION: That the audited financial statements for the year to 30 June 2024 be accepted.

Moved: Leanna Marinucci

Seconded: Sally Vuong

CARRIED

8. ANNUAL REPORT

Lisa Dunlop referred again to the full Annual Report as circulated via electronic link prior to the AGM.

MOTION: That the Annual Report for 2023-2024 be received.

Moved: Lisa Dunlop

Seconded: Ann Yeomanson

CARRIED

9. BOARD ELECTIONS

Fiona Sharkie (Acting CEO and Returning Officer) advised that the following members were elected unopposed to the Board of Women's Health East for a two-year term:

Lisa Dunlop Belinda Li-Veldhuizen Sally Vuong Joanne Cleary

Lisa thanked Fiona and congratulated all newly elected Board members.

CLOSE

Lisa concluded the 2024 AGM by thanking WHE's members, committed Board members, invaluable partner organisations and peers, generous funders and dedicated staff for their unwavering support to achieve WHE's vision of equality, empowerment and wellbeing for all women.

Lisa acknowledged and congratulated staff member, Colleen Russell, on attaining the milestone of 20 years working with Women's Health East. Lisa also thanked all staff under the leadership of Fiona Sharkie, and Elly Taylor for her great leadership over the past twelve months.

Meeting closed at 11.05 am.