

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Estonian Relief Committee Limited held at Taara Gardens Community Hall, Thirlmere on Sunday, 22 October, 2017 Commencing at 11:10 am**

**ATTENDANCE:** According to the attendance book – 27 attendees + 7 proxies

**AGENDA – ORDINARY BUSINESS**

1. To confirm the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Company, held on Sunday, 16 October, 2016
2. Annual Accounts and Records
3. Election of Auditors
4. Election of Director's
5. General Business

The Chairman, M. Rampe opened the meeting by welcoming the members.

A minutes silence was observed as a sign of respect to members who had passed during the year.

Vote counters: Maie Barrow, Hedda Moll and Ingrid Slamer.

**ITEM 1: Confirmation of Minutes**

K. Ford read the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday, 16 October, 2016. The minutes were accepted unanimously (M. Maasepp/M. Barrow).

**ITEM 2: Annual Accounts and Records**

M. Rampe called upon K. Ford to present the annual accounts. K. Ford told the members that the balance sheet showed equity of \$849,174.20, with an operating profit of \$11,251.34. Though interest rates are very low, the ERC is fortunate that I. Chad had the foresight to open one T/D @ 4.3% for five years. Also two donations of \$1000 each had been received from L. Holm and H. Ots.

K. Ford then read the auditor's message.

The accounts were accepted unanimously (K. Adamson/T. Ford).

M. Rampe read the Chairman's report noting that the financial year ended with a profit of \$11,251.34 and that ERC's cash position had increased slightly to \$849,174.20. Donations made by the Company during the year included Sõrve (\$5,000), Meie Kodu (\$4000), Sydney Estonian Playschool (\$1,000), Brisbane Estonian Playschool (\$4,000) and Virmalised (\$1,600).

During 2016-17, the ERC continued the process of financially assisting organisations that are promoting Estonian cultural activities in Australia. The organisations included: Australian Estonian Newspaper "Meie Kodu"; Sydney Estonian Parents and Friends Association "Sõrve Sõbrad"; Brisbane Estonian Playschool and Children's Estonian Playgroup in Sydney Estonian House.

A total of \$20,600 was distributed among these organisations to assist them during the 2017-2018 financial year.

During 2016, we commenced the process of establishing a cultural organisation which would enable donations to be tax deductible to the donor. A draft constitution of an appropriate entity has been drawn up by our lawyers Makinson d'Apice.

Due to the simplification of the organisation's business, the number of annual director meetings was reduced to two.

In addition, K. Ford and L. Holm have resigned as directors. He thanked them and his fellow directors for their efforts during the year.

The Chairman's Report was accepted unanimously (A. Kõrgvee/R. Littlefair).

### **ITEM 3: Election of Auditors**

Rick Fitzpatrick & Co. offered themselves for re-election as the annual financial auditors. With no opposition, Rick Fitzpatrick & Co. was appointed as auditors for the following twelve months (2017-2018) (Kaili Ford/M. Juske).

### **ITEM 4: Election of Directors**

M. Rampe advised the meeting that under the new Company Constitution recently adopted, the Board of Directors is to be composed of a maximum of 9. This year we have 5 existing directors and 4 new nominees to fill these Board positions. The 5 previous directors who have re-nominated include:

- Mr. Mart Rampe
- Mrs. Ingrid Tartu
- Mr. Tõnu Moll
- Mr. Peeter Muttik
- Mr. Hillar Ranniko

New nominees include:

- D. Juho Loover
- Maie Barrow
- Kaili Ford
- Ron Cowan

As the number of nominees equals the number of director positions available, there was no need to conduct a vote. M. Rampe declared the above nominees as being elected and invited the new nominees to introduce themselves to the gathering.

M. Barrow asked about the length of directors' tenure. M. Rampe responded three years with the possibility to re-nominate. M. Barrow felt continuity of leadership was important so that a "coup" could not replace all existing directors at the same election. M. Barrow suggested that director positions (and elections) should therefore be staggered.

M. Rampe asked if the membership accepted all directors. Proposed and seconded (R. Littlefair/M. Maasepp) and accepted unanimously.

## ITEM 5: General Business

M. Rampe opened the meeting to general business and questions from the floor.

- Village resident disgruntled about the removal of a large tree. Meeting was advised that RSL LifeCare was judicious about which trees to remove as well as having to do so to connect to the sewer.
- Some village residents disappointed when RSL bus can't accommodate the numbers.
- Some roadside plantings not watered regularly. This would require one more gardener which would drive up the maintenance cost for all residents.
- Ü. Slamer asked why Brisbane Playgroup gets so much more than Sydney. P. Muttik explained that all applications for grants are considered and accepted provided they fall within the criteria and amount of money to be distributed. M. Barrow was disappointed that newcomers from Estonia expected educating their children be paid by others, whereas previous generation of parents have volunteered or paid any costs themselves. I. Tartu admitted that the ERC directors had similar thoughts during grant application discussions.
- Tiina Alvre asked how many members the ERC had and if there was an overlap with other organisations. Tiina Alvre was advised that the number of financial members was 56.  
K. Ford advised she had sent out 80 AGM notifications, but if members did not pay their membership within 2 years they would be removed. Because of the large overlap with other organisations and the fact that both AESL and ERC were the main distributors of funds, three years ago AESL agreed to forgo ERC's annual membership fee.
- M. Rampe said the above question pointed out the desperate need for rationalisation between fundraising and distributing funds between organisations. This has led to discussions about ERC and AESL merging and if, what and how it could be done. Fundraising would easily be rationalised since it is the same organisations and same members who donate. This could be carried out by the new entity which would actively pursue memberships and donations and would create efficiencies which save money. Further discussion is needed before any new entity is activated.
- M. Barrow suggested promoting ERC's activities through webpages, newspaper and the like. At present we generate income solely from the generosity of our old loyal supporters, but with publicity we might encourage the new generation of Estonians to see and tap into the benefits.
- P. Muttik was pleased with the new board which was more diverse and will be trying to broaden the wider spectrum of the Estonian community.
- Eili Annuk said that with no new members, the numbers are decreasing rapidly.
- M. Rampe indicated that a new national fund raising body might be able to justify employing someone on a part time basis. M. Barrow said her experience with ÜKN showed that having a part time executive officer paid by the hour was worthwhile.
- K. Ford thanked the Board and the members on behalf of herself and L. Holm and said that her 18 year journey on the Board had been fruitful and enjoyable.

At the close of the meeting, M. Rampe thanked everybody for coming and asked them to stay for a little light refreshment and thanked RSL LifeCare management for the use of the facilities.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12:05 pm.

---

M. RAMPE

---

K. FORD