

**AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY FOR BIOCHEMISTRY
AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY INC**

Annual General Meeting No. 59 (2015) Minutes

The 59th Annual General Meeting of the Australian Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Inc. was held from 1740 hours on Wednesday 30th September 2015 in the Melbourne Convention Centre.

1. Apologies.

Apologies from Philip Nagley and Terry Piva were noted.

The Secretary informed the meeting that owing to the unavoidable absence of the Treasurer (Terry Piva), the order of business would be revised such that the President (MR) would briefly present the Treasurer's Report (Item 5) ahead of the President's Report (Item 4). The proposed responses to the budgetary issues raised in the Treasurer's report will then be covered in the president's report.

The Secretary also informed the meeting that as soon as the meeting was quorate, this fact would be declared by the Secretary and the proposed Constitutional change (Item 7) would be dealt with immediately.

2. Confirmation of the minutes of Annual General Meeting No. 58.

Acceptance of the minutes of Annual General Meeting No. 58 was proposed, seconded and passed as a true account of the meeting.

3. Results of Council Elections.

The President informed the meeting that single nominations had been received for all positions on Council for 2016. The Council membership is as follows for 2016:

President	Michael Ryan
President-Elect	Leann Tilley
Secretary	Briony Forbes
Treasurer	Terrence Piva
Editor	Chu Kong Liew
Secretary for Sust. Members	Sally Jay
FAOBMB Representative	Paul Gleeson

Representatives for:

ACT	Peter Mabbitt (Chit Heng Chooi Retired)
NSW	Kate Michie
Qld	Dominic Chi Hiung Ng
SA	Steven Polyak
Tas	Adele Holloway
Vic	Diana Stojanovski
WA	Nicolas Taylor

4. President's Report.

The President presented the report (to be published in the *Australian Biochemist*, December 2015).

- *ComBio*: It is expected that attendance at ComBio2015 will be in the order of 823 and the meeting thanked the organising committee of ComBio2015 for all of their hard work, with special thanks to the Co-Chairs, Marie Bogoyevitch and Ed Newbiggin. The president also thanked the organising committee including the program Co-Chairs Ed Newbiggin, Mathew Perugini and David Jans and Terry Piva as Treasurer.

The organisation of ComBio2016 is well underway, the Convenor is Joe Rothnagel, and the Treasurer is Terry Piva. Discussions are underway to appoint a convenor for ComBio2017.

Membership: It was noted that the membership of the Society is has declined somewhat to around 990 members and is on track in 2015/2016 to achieve this number again. The President noted the award of Gold Membership to long-standing Society members as follows:

Gold Members of 50 years+ standing:

- *Professor John de Jersey (past president)*
- *Dr Micheline Lane*
- *Dr Peter Nixon*
- *Dr Gideon Polya*
- *Professor William Sawyer (past president)*
- *A/Prof Jan Anderson,*
- *Dr Dean Bottrill,*
- *Dr Alan Neill,*
- *Dr Robert Blakeley,*
- *Dr Thomas Lynch,*
- *Professor James Pittard*
- *A/Prof Maria Runnegar*

Budget: The financial position of the Society remains fairly strong as the Treasurer's report indicated BUT the Society's capital base has been eroded by losses incurred over the last seven years, including a loss of \$94,574 in the 2014-15 financial year.

Council has resolved that further measures be undertaken to address these annual financial losses:

Reduce costs associated with the Australian Biochemist by producing the magazine in electronic format (except for one edition a year to be produced as a print version), thus reducing printing and mailing costs significantly.

CPI increase in membership fees (the meeting endorsed the proposed membership fee increases in the Treasurer's report)

There will be reductions in the support provided by ASBMB for Symposium speakers at ComBio and in the bursaries provided to attend the meetings.

Executive/Council costs will be reduced by organising the annual Executive meeting as a teleconference rather than a face to face meeting, thus reducing costs associated with airfares and meeting room hire.

Council has also put in place strategies to promote the Society and improve communication with members including:

The institution of the Ambassador program to place representatives of the Society in multiple institutions within the States, so that the profile of the Society is raised across as many universities and research institutions as possible. The Ambassadors will organise events, assist the State representatives and generally promote the Society.

The Society's website will be revamped and a budget for this has been agreed. Tenders are now being sought to carry out this work.

There will be more email communication with members and the benefits of membership of the Society will be more clearly represented to members and potential members.

Awards: The awards continue to attract high quality nominations, but the President appealed to the meeting for members to continue making as many nominations for the awards as possible.

Thanks: The President thanked members of ASBMB Executive and Council, Sally and Chris Jay in the National Office and Liana Freidman and the Editorial Committee. Organisers of Special Interest Groups and the many others who have worked hard for the Society were also thanked.

Changes to Council: Leaving – Peter Gunning (Past President), Paul Attwood (Secretary), Leann Tilley (FAOBMB Representative), Briony Forbes (SA State Representative) and Judith Weidenhofer (NSW State Representative) the President thanked these members of Council for their many years of service.
New Members – Leann Tilley (President-Elect), Briony Forbes (Secretary), Paul Gleeson (FAOBMB Rep) Steven Polyak (SA State Representative), Kate Michie (NSW State Representative), the President welcomed the new members.

Acceptance of the President's report was proposed, seconded and passed by the meeting.

5. **Treasurer's Report.**

The President presented the Treasurer's report to be published in the *Australian Biochemist*, December 2015. The report highlighted the continuing losses of the Society over the last 4 years, although the Society's finances remained relatively strong with current assets of \$553,066. The causes of these losses are that in spite of reductions in costs, this has been more than offset by a decline in revenue from memberships. The report foreshadowed the need of the Society to further reduce costs and increase membership (see Item 4).

Acceptance of the report was proposed, seconded and passed by the meeting.

6. **Membership Fees for 2015-16**

The treasurer outlined the proposal to raise membership fees by the CPI (3%) and to introduce a discount of 20% to those members who opted to take out three year memberships.

Prior to discussion of item 7 the Secretary declared the meeting quorate, with 50 members in attendance (quorum = 50 members).

7. **Changes to the Constitution.**

The Secretary went through the reasons behind the proposed change to the Constitution that has been endorsed by Council and circulated to members by email prior to the AGM. The Secretary involving a reduction in the quorum of the AGM from 50 to 20 and highlighted the difficulty in obtaining a quorum of 50 for the AGM, even at a well-attended ComBio meeting such as ComBio2015.

Amendment

10.4 The quorum for the Annual General Meeting shall be **20** members of the Society and all questions shall be decided by a simple majority of members present and voting, except in the case of proposed changes to the Constitution where votes communicated by email to the Secretary of the Society will also be included in the vote count. Email votes on Constitutional amendments must reach the Secretary at least 24 hours before the AGM

The Secretary asked the meeting for those in favour of the amendment to raise their hands. The support for the adoption of the amendment was unanimous and hence the proposal has been adopted.

8. **Changes to the By-Laws of the Constitution.**

There were no changes proposed.

9. **Funding for ASBMB-sponsored symposium speakers at ComBio.**

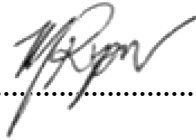
The Secretary reported that ASBMB provided 6 additional symposium speakers for ComBio2015 (\$2000 each).

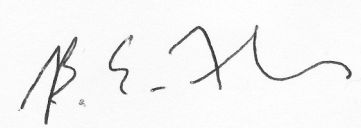
10. Any Other Business.

There was no other business.

Meeting closed 18.10 hours

Minutes Confirmed


..... **M RYAN (President)**


..... **B FORBES (Secretary)**