



Transcript of Annual General Meeting held at 10.30 am AEST on Friday 29th March, 2019

Good morning, and Welcome to our first AGM.

Chair: I am Norman Taralrud-Bay, Chair of the Rotarian Action Group for Family Safety Inc, *Breaking the Family Violence Cycle*.

The time is now 10.30 am Australian Eastern Standard Time, and I declare the meeting open. As this is our first time holding an AGM by teleconference, I ask for your patience if we experience any technical issues.

In order to establish that a quorum is present, would the participants calling in from outside the room please identify themselves, one by one.

*1 To do this, please press *1 on your computer or phone, when I believe the software will form a queue so you can each speak one by one. When you are connected, please identify yourself, then remain silent while the others do so.

Thank you, I can confirm that we have a quorum for the meeting, being at least 10% of the members entitled to vote and more than 3 members. We have 5 present. Here with me in the room we have: Pam Brown, and there are 3 who have dialled in: Carl Michel, Gavin Wayland and Garry Higgins.

The Agenda has been circulated and with your agreement I will take the items in the order 2,3,1, so that any discussion following my remarks in the form of a Board Report may continue even if some participants must leave the meeting.

Are there any objections? *1 Press *1 as before to speak.

(At this point the software muted all participants, and they were asked to call in again, re-establishing the meeting.) Meeting resumes:

2. Thank you, Item 2, then, to **receive the Treasurer's Report:** over to you, Gavin.

Gavin Wayland: The recording has started...am I OK to continue?

The financial period from the start of the organisation 28th January 2018 to the end of the financial year, 30th June 2018, total income was A\$769, we had A\$744 of expenses, resulting in a surplus of A\$25.

That A\$25 was in the bank as cash at the 30th June 2018.

That's basically the financial report.

Chair: Yes, and it's my understanding that the bank account now stands at a little under A\$500 with the subscriptions that we have taken in.

Gavin Wayland: Yes, with the subscriptions that we have taken in in the current financial year, that's right.

Chair: our bank account stands now at a little under \$500?

Gavin Wayland: They have amounted to A\$485, 18 subscriptions at A\$25

Chair: ...and a few people have made an administrative donation, so we appreciate that.

Are there any questions on the Financial Report?

Garry Higgins: No, Garry here, it sounds OK to me.

Chair: Right. Thank you. I'll just point out that our main expenses are web-related, for our email system Mailchimp, for our website, Squarespace, so we don't have enough money in the bank account to cover a year's expenses, so we do need to encourage other people to join, to bring money in to cover what we might think of as our 'Club Service' account expenses, as obviously we don't incur any expenses that we don't absolutely need, and our basic expenses should not need to increase much as our activities grow, as project funding will be provided in other ways.

I'll move now to Item

3. Announcement of Board Member election.

Members will recall we circulated a call for Nominations, which were due in by 2nd February. We indicated there were four positions available at this time. We received only one Nomination, and therefore no ballot was required. On your behalf I therefore welcome Past President Garry Higgins of the Rotary Club of Maryborough as our 9th Board Member. I will say a few more words about Maryborough under item 1.

You will see that we still have 3 positions available. In filling these we very much want to broaden our geographical and cultural representation beyond Australia and the USA, but there is plenty of opportunity for all to help in the RAG's committees and administration, so if you would like to become directly involved and help us build an effective voice worldwide, I do urge you to contact any Board Member to discuss. Best done by email to the RAG email in the first instance.

Are there any questions or discussion on this Item ?

(Pause)

Thank you, I will now move on to

Item 1 Board Report

After forming the first Committee in September 2014, we applied formally to RI in October 2016 and it took us till the RI Board Meeting in Atlanta in June 2017 to be accepted as one of the then 24 RAGs. Of which we were informed in August 2017.

In the meantime we had been accepting expressions of interest via our website, which became operational in 2015-16, and at Conventions, Zone Institutes and wherever we could interface with Rotarians to show a presence and explain our intended activity.

In this way we gathered the number of supporters required: at least 25 members across 5 countries and 3 Zones. We started with 47 supporters, and we now have a total audience of 259 across 36 countries. And we are represented on all continents. However, Mailchimp rates only 20% of our list as 'highly engaged', so we have much more work to do with our supporters.

In our early days we concentrated on raising awareness and discussion, as a way to encourage Rotarians to Action. Speaker programs were organised in Clubs, and our members went out speaking to other Clubs in their Districts. We also formed links to other Not-for-Profits so we could learn what was being done in this space, hoping to find programs we could use as models for Rotarians around the world.

One of the Clubs who was on the way to transforming community attitudes in their area was (and still is) the RC of Maryborough, District 9780, in the area of old Goldfields in our state of Victoria in Australia. We were impressed not only with how they had rallied the town around them, creating joint task forces of the major agencies, government, health, police, education etc., but also by the methodical way they went about it, involving community consultation, which mirrored the Rotary Connects process we showcase on our website. So we filmed a series of interviews with the participants, which I recommend viewing if you ever wonder what your own club could achieve, in what often seems a very daunting and sensitive space. There are also transcripts of the conversations. Our new Board Member PP Garry Higgins leads that effort at Maryborough still.

Another activity which we supported for 3 years' running was an exchange of professionals working in this field between District 6840 in Louisiana and District 9800 in Victoria. This has sparked good links between the services involved across our two countries and the transplantation of ideas.

In 2017-18 the Sebastopol Clubs in District 5130 California formed a joint committee which has been running awareness campaigns throughout the District, and providing local information to Rotarians, including cards to hand out to survivors and those who feel threatened.

Rotarians in the Philippines mounted an education project with a Global Grant which included a component about Family Safety, while a project in East Timor under another Global Grant is building capacity in Midwifery training at the university to equip midwives with the skills to recognise family violence and to respond appropriately.

Finally, in the current year we are moving a project for training therapists to heal traumatic memories using evidence-based therapies out of a two year pilot stage where 51 therapists were trained to support refugees, into a more ambitious ongoing program which can be delivered in many countries, when we have located enough trainers. This is called Healing the Hurt, and we shall be circulating more details to members shortly. This particular program lends itself to building partnerships and awareness with the many organisations we aim to help, such as Peace Fellows, all the First Responders, those working with refugees and displaced persons, troubled youth, etc., and we then hope to recruit these

organisations into Community Capacity Building initiatives such as Maryborough has pioneered.

Other Partners we are talking to include the Institute for Economics and Peace, which is a Rotary International Service Partner promoting Positive Peace actions, Mediators Beyond Borders International, Rotaract, and Peace Fellows where we can find them, among others.

For the coming year we will establish a 3 year Strategic Plan with the help of all members in the process, to develop programs in Community Capacity Building, Men's Behaviour Change, and Respectful Relationships training for boys and young men who are at risk of becoming perpetrators.

We are sure there are many activities undertaken by our supporters that we do not know about, or we would publicise them. So please do let us know those of which you are aware.

I'll now open this up to discussion and questions.
(pause)

Would anyone like to contribute?

Garry Higgins: Norman, just a question, Garry here, does RAGFamSafe have a strategic plan?

Chair: As I mentioned, we are going to establish a three year strategic plan. We have an 'Action Plan' which was effectively the initial Strategic Plan which is quite a high level document, not long, which we used in our Application to Rotary International.

We now have some more concrete steps, in the areas I have already mentioned, so it's time to update it, and we had a check-in call with Rotary International Action Groups on Monday this week, and they were encouraging us to do that as well. In October this year we will be subject to a 2 year audit to see if whether we are a viable group and fulfilling our promises to RI in our original Action Plan, so we clearly want to demonstrate what we are doing, and that's why we very much need to know what is happening at our member level which they are not telling us about...!

(Pause)

Any other comments or discussion? Any questions for Pam, who is leading the Healing the Hurt initiative?

Garry Higgins: Pam, Garry here again, sorry. When and how are you looking at rolling that project out?

Pam Brown: Well, we are trying to roll it out reasonably soon. We did do one...in the family violence area, we trained 33 people in the not-for-profit sector and so it's really about listening to communities and listening to the mental health workers, so, teaching them how to treat children who have experienced exposure to violence. So there's lots of therapists out there, really good therapists out there, and they help take care of children, but they don't know how to treat traumatic memories. So this is something that adds to their

toolbox, that adds to their skills and changes the way the child is functioning so that it is no longer affected by fear.

Garry Higgins: Right, OK .

Pam Brown: So what we are looking for is local training, it's the gift of education, and once someone knows how to treat traumatic memories, they can use it for bushfires, they can use it for vehicle accidents, terrorist bombings – which we don't have many of in Australia – but it's a skill that you use for a majority of your clients.

Chair: ...and the strategic impact in terms of what we want to do, is, where we can, if we can treat actual potential perpetrators we can hopefully prevent further future violence from them. And it's an actual preventive activity. And we do know that while not everybody who has traumatic memories will become violent themselves, almost all people who have become violent do have traumatic memories in their background. So it really can help to protect the ability of a community, if enough people have been treated, to resolve conflict peacefully.

Pam Brown: And what we're looking at is recommended by the World Health Organisation, so it's not an airy fairy 'wouldn't it be lovely' sort of thing, it's a core treatment.

Chair: As an advanced training, it's something most not-for-profits – which as we know are struggling to survive – can't afford in their training budget, in normal circumstances, for their staff, so it just doesn't get done. We're aware of people who are willing to be trained, we are looking to make a package that will allow Clubs to do this in their areas, and also as I said before, to target particular groups where we can work through organisations to find therapists who will be able to deal with a lot of people who have traumatic memories.

Garry Higgins: I'm just wondering, Pam, if there's any...because our next push up here is offender counselling services...does this sort of thing...can it be part of a men's behavioural change programme,

Pam: Yes

Garry Higgins: and I'm not talking about a conventional one, but ...it can be?

Pam: Yes, I have used it a lot with sex offenders and anger management because you are not seeking to make someone control their anger, you are actually going in and working with the early childhood memories when they were abused, so they are always responding with anger, whenever they feel attacked they automatically go into an angry state, and if you can get them to realise that they are actually perfectly good people they don't get (indistinct), they become able not to overreact to things - they react to them normally.

Chair: It's going back to the source...

Pam: ...going back to the source, yes...

Chair:...which I think is incredibly useful, if one is willing to have the treatment, which is non-invasive, then, yup, I think it's well worth incorporating in...

Garry Higgins: ...the reason I ask that is our District Health Service Family Violence Governance Board, because we can't get a conventional service running here, we're looking

at 'doing our own' or formulating our own programme, and I'm just thinking this type of thing might form part of that new approach.

Pam Brown: Yes, I'm thinking that we would keep all of these programmes separate at the beginning, and testing as we do them, we want to keep that sort of record.

Chair: so the impact assessment is absolutely possible in this area.

Garry Higgins: That's good.

Chair: I suggest Garry that you and Pam talk further about that.

I've got a couple of further comments, if there are no further comments or questions?

(Pause)

We have just been given permission – all RAGs have – to start a charitable foundation, which used to be forbidden by RI in the past. I believe, if we were to set one up, it could have sub-programs under such a foundation, assuming we meet the necessary criteria here in Australia, we could have a programme sub-set for each of the areas that we are looking to work in, and then solicit donations on an ongoing basis, for those programmes. People could direct where they want their contributions to go. And if we could make it work, could give us a source of continuing funding without having to make a separate discrete appeal every time we mount a project. So, administratively, it would be hugely simpler for us, and it would help individuals and clubs to give a certain amount to an area that they would like to donate to, and we would obviously need to create a communications programme to say what's being done with that money in each stream. So that could certainly help us in funding certain activities.

Another thing that has just been allowed is that we can offer memberships to Clubs and Districts, including Rotaract Clubs, as opposed to just to individual Rotarians in the past. So we might want to think about how we might do that, done on an annual basis unfortunately, because leadership changes every year in Clubs and Districts, whereas our normal membership is multi-year, but probably worthwhile, and I'll be asking the Board to consider that. If you have input on that front, please provide it to us.

Finally, I'd like to ask a question. We've been encouraged by RI to interface with District Resource Networks – which is a phrase I've never heard before. Is anyone familiar with those?

Responses: No..

Chair: another of Rotary's best kept secrets?

Well, we'll find out if we have one – perhaps you can ask in your own District.

As you know, most of this has been recorded, and it will not be too hard to make a good record of it, so I will ensure that that is circulated to all members, including yourselves, and I now thank you for your participation and close the meeting, just mentioning we will have our next AGM in November of this year, which will be the normal schedule, with a 30 June year end that's the normal time that Incorporated Associations need to have their AGMs.

Meeting closed at 11.18 am.