

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held on 29th August 2021

At Uniting Church Hall, 2 – 10 Gloucester Rd Buderim

All Covid 19 safe procedures were adhered to. Qld Gov Check-in app used. When not possible, people signed in. Chairs were placed 1.5m apart to ensure attendees maintained required social distancing. Covid safe procedures were adhered to in the kitchen under the supervision of Penny Rivlin.

MINUTES

Minutes recorded by Gaynore Stoessel, Secretary, Buddies Refugee Group Ltd, Sunshine Coast

1.0 Opening and Welcome

Paul McKinlay, Director, opened the meeting at 11.10 am. The Traditional Owners of the land the meeting was being held on were acknowledged, and all members and guests were welcomed. Noted that Buddies, which started some 20 years ago in a living room, is still going strong.

Minutes from the Sept 6th Buddies 2020 AGM were circulated among the members.

2.0 Attendance and Apologies

Apologies from 8 members were accepted by the Chair.

20 members and 1 guest attended the AGM.

A full list of apologies and attendees is appended.

Buddies currently has 76 financial members, so a quorum was confirmed.

3.0 Directors' Report

- Full report from the four Buddies' Directors is in the Buddies Annual Report 2020-21. This Annual Report has been emailed to all Buddies members.
- Chair Paul McKinlay thanked his fellow Directors and gave some highlights of the report.
- Buddies is a small organisation. Unfortunately, we cannot change the world overnight, but we are doing what we can. The fight continues, a David and Goliath sort of thing.
- In February 2021, James Fowler, after doing a great job as Treasurer, stepped down. Clare Arico has now been appointed to this role, and is doing a fantastic job as well.
- At the end of 2020, Andrea Douglas, who fulfilled the role of Secretary very capably, stepped down, and Gaynore Stoessel took over the position.
- The Board of Directors is deeply grateful for the many people who continue to strive to assist refugees and seekers of asylum in a myriad of ways. This includes the members of the Finance group – Clare Arico, Dee Williams, Penny Rivlin and Tricia Reade – who work very hard to ensure Buddies' limited funds are allocated wisely and that we maintain our accountability.

No objections to the Annual Report were raised at the meeting.

A motion to accept the Annual Report was put forward.

Moved: Margaret Landbeck Seconded: Penny Rivlin The motion was carried.

4.0 Treasurer's Report

- Treasurer, Clare Arico, gave the financial report.
- Complete report is in the Annual Report. Clare presented a summary of the figures and highlights. (See Appendix 2)
- For 2020-21, total income was \$21,798.02, and total expenditure was \$22,236.74. So, basically, we have spent on Refugees and Asylum Seekers what we have earned.
- 90% of our funds were spent on Refugee Support and Advocacy Groups, or given as direct support to Refugees and Asylum Seekers. (There were 2 men in particular from this latter group.)
- 52% of funds came from fund raising, while 42% came from donations.
- Eumundi car parking raised \$9,878.00 in 2020-21, which is close to double what was raised last financial year.
- Nett disposable funds at the moment are \$3,103.00. Unfortunately, due to Covid, September LEH had to be cancelled – so Buddies is in a good financial position to continue helping Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

4.1 Discussion on Treasurer's Report

- Robyn Jones asked what visas the men mentioned in the Treasurer's Report. Len explained that one has refugee status, while one has no visa status at all.
- Anna Broadaway thanked all Buddies for all the work they have done throughout the year.
- Paul McKinlay explained aspects of finances where we accrue for special events like LEH, and also keep a buffer so we are prepared to help (give financially) if an emergency arises.
- Penny Rivlin notified us that the temporary visas of the men released earlier from Kangaroo Point are set to expire very soon. They will require support (housing, finance, jobs if possible). Penny has been in touch with Rebecca Lim from the Refugee Hub at the Indooroopilly Uniting Church to find what support is needed. She will notify us as soon as a reply is received.
- Financial Report appended at end of minutes.

A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was put forward.

Moved: Penny Rivlin Seconded: Dee Williams The motion was carried

5.0 General Business

5.1 Kendall gave a report on the sale of avocados (and custard apples). Last year the trees were given a savage prune, so there was not as great a yield as last year. Also, unfortunately, quite a few avos were stolen off the trees. However, the not insignificant amount of \$425 was raised through fruit sales. (The full report is also in the Annual Report.)

5.2 Glynni reported some highlights from the LEH in April. Due to Covid, not the usual refugees (on permanent visas) attended. People came recommended from Romero, many on temporary visas or escaping domestic violence. Also, there were many more children attending than in previous years, and it was heartening to see so many volunteers as well. Because of the ongoing Covid situation and not as many refugees coming to Australia, Lesley is considering changing the format of LEH. (Again, the full report is in the Annual Report.)

5.3 Paul asked six people to come forward – considered pillars of Buddies. They are-

- Wendy Oakley - publishes the Bulletin, which comes out fortnightly and is distributed by email. It is one of Buddies' most important communication tools
- Penny Rivlin – carparking team, organising rosters and volunteers, on finance committee, helping with food at meetings
- Dee Williams – car parking team, finance committee, helping with food at meetings
- Tricia Reade – car parking, finance committee
- Anna (Anneliese Broadway) Facebook Administrator
- Clare Arico – Treasurer

All were presented with a box of 'Merci' chocolates. (Very apt brand name, it was noted.)

5.4 General discussion arising from previous reports and comments

- Glynni – brought up the current Afghanistan situation. Buddies has an opportunity to perhaps look after at least one family.
- Margaret Landbeck – need to put more pressure on the Federal Government to grant permanency to refugees. Noted 300,000 signed the petition for the Biloela Family, yet the Federal Government has ignored this. However, also noted that when the Biloela Family was in the forefront of the news, there was a lot of sympathy for them among the population – we are not without hope.
- Len – was in touch with a family from 'Welcome to Maleny' group. They will be opening their home to Afghani refugees.
- Robyn – note the Federal Government has reduced the general intake of refugees to some 13,000. The 3,000 Afghani refugees they intend to take will be deducted from this number. There are many organisations (RCA etc) where you can put your name down, to demonstrate against this paltry number.
- Anna & Clare – Romero has just had their Pantry Run Fundraiser, now will be seeking donations for Afghani refugees
- Susan Berry – explained she is working for the Qld Afghan Community Association. (President is Aaron Sadat). They have started a Go Fund Me page. At the moment some 100 Afghani refugees are in the Stamford Hotel in Brisbane (arrived Thursday). They are looking to charity groups for assistance. Unanimous decision to pass onto Susan, the donated grocery items brought to meeting, to give to the Afghani refugees.
- Len – another position that is needed for Buddies. Someone to be prepared and oversee when an emergency like this happens. Would need someone with co-ordinating and media skills. Wendy to put an ad in the Bulletin for this. Buddies is a small group, but there are a hundred plus groups around Australia like us. If we all work together, we can achieve much.
- Robyn – there are two groups of Afghani groups coming to Australia. Those coming straight to Australia with refugee status, and those taken to other countries who will have to apply for refugee status. Australia takes 2 years to give refugee status, while many other countries (eg. Canada) take 6-9 weeks. Need to get information like this into the media.
- Kendall – noted the hypocrisy/inconsistency of the Australian Federal Government policies toward refugees and those seeking asylum. Friends Ramesh and VJ's daughter has just turned 10. She was notified by mail that she is now an Australian citizen, yet her parents are still without work rights, cannot obtain a permanent visa.

- Lynda – re the vote on changing membership payments. Increase membership? Change to a different model? Paul explained that it is a complicated process (need legal advice) and would need a whole other meeting to attend to this matter properly. Therefore, no vote on that today.

6.0 Adoption of the Minutes AGM 2020

Before they can be accepted, it was noted that Glynni Cumming and Geoff Bailey attended this AGM, but their names were not recorded in the Attendee List of the AGM 2020 Minutes. Secretary has noted this and will amend accordingly.

A motion to accept the Minutes AGM 2020 was put forward.

Moved Robyn Jones Seconded Wendy Oakley Motion carried

7.0 Election of Directors

Noted the constitution states that Buddies “must have at least three and no more than five directors”.

Len Mangan and Lynda Utting will remain as directors for 2021-22.

Paul McKinlay will step down. (He has been a director for 3 continuous years, and a person can be a director for no more than 3 years in a row. However, after a break, they can be nominated for director again.)

Gaynore Stoessel will also step down as a director. (She also has the role of secretary, which is more than enough.)

Therefore, at least one new director needs to be appointed.

One nomination was submitted:

Susan Berry: nominated by Dee Williams and seconded by Diana Woolley.

- Susan gave a brief overview of her background and how she could benefit Buddies. She originally comes from Qld, the South Burnett, but has lived and worked (including international banking) extensively overseas. She knows what it is like to be uprooted and start again. At the moment Susan lives in West End Brisbane, and is a single mum of three teenage girls. Susan’s mother lives on the Sunshine Coast. Susan believes that personal contact with Asylum Seekers and Refugees is most important, and at the moment, is working with the president of the Qld Afghan Community Association in Brisbane.

A motion to accept this nomination was put forward.

Moved: Dee Williams Seconded: Diana Woolley Motion carried.

Meeting closed at 12.15 pm.

APPENDIX 1

ATTENDEES AND APOLOGIES

Attendees (21)

Paul McKinlay
Len Mangan
Lynda Utting
Gaynore Stoessel
Barbara DeFreitas
David Walters
Wendy Oakley
Anneliese (Anna) Broadway
Diana Woolley
Glynni Cumming
Geoff Bailey (guest)

Yokki Rother
Kendall Snowden
Dee Williams
Penny Rivlin
Maree Keating
Bronwyn Jackson
Robyn Jones
Margaret Landbeck
Suzanne Enter
Clare Arico
Susan Berry

Apologies (8)

Andrea Douglas
James Fowler
Lesley Willcoxson
Kayla Szumer
Margaret Norris
Scott Grimmett
Tricia Reade
Cathy Apelt

APPENDIX 2

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Buddies Refugee Support Group Ltd. Summary Statement of Accounts - F.Y. to 30 June 2021

Income		
Membership Fees	980.00	4%
Donations	9,108.92	42%
Fund Raising	11,409.10	52%
Other	300.00	1%
Total Income	21,798.02	100%
Expenditure		
Operating costs	1,756.32	8%
Community Awareness	488.97	2%
Fundraising Costs	-	0%
Direct Support for Asylum Seekers & Refugees	5,641.45	25%
Donations to Refugee Support & Advocacy Groups	14,350.00	65%
Total Expenditure	22,236.74	100%
Cash at Bank		
As at 1 July 2020	6,241.69	
Plus Income	21,798.02	
	<u>28,039.71</u>	
Less Expenditure	22,236.74	
Balance at bank 30 June 2021	<u>5,802.97</u>	
Less June accruals	2,310.00	
Funds Available for Disbursement	3,492.97	