



BUDDIES REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP LTD
ABN 40 606 820 302

Annual General Meeting.

Held on 25 August, 2019

At USC Sippy Downs, E Block, Room 14

MINUTES

Minutes recorded by Andrea Douglas, Buddies Refugee Support Group Ltd, Secretary

1.0 Opening and Welcome

Scott Grimmett, Director opened the Meeting at 11.15am. The director welcomed Members and Guests. He introduced current directors, himself, Paul McKinlay and Lesley Willcoxson and apologised for directors Mitra Khakbaz and Shaye Yuill who were unable to attend.

2.0 Attendance and apologies

Apologies from 18 members were accepted by the Chair.

16 members and 1 guest attended the AGM. Two proxy votes had been received these were from Margaret Norris and Jamie Seymour

A full list of apologies and attendees is appended.

A quorum was confirmed.

3.0 Adoption of the Minutes of 2017/18 AGM

Minutes of the last AGM were sent out with the notice of the AGM and printed copies were available at the meeting. There were no issues raised about the 2017/18 AGM minutes.

Moved : Margaret Landbeck

Seconded: Len Mangan

The motion was carried

4.0 Directors' report

Scott Grimmett read a letter to the members from Mitra Khakbaz who was unable to attend the meeting. The letter is appended.

Scott, Paul and Lesley gave an overview of their period of time as directors this financial year.

Scott directed the members to the annual report which had been sent to them prior to the meeting. The overall summary of the year which has been taken from highlights and reports in the Bulletin is detailed in the annual report which indicates a successful year for Buddies, meeting their stated objectives.

No objections to the annual report were raised at the meeting.

A motion to accept the annual report and distribute in next week's bulletin was put forward

Moved : James Fowler

Seconded: Penny Rivlin

The motion was carried

5.0 Financial Report

The financial report was presented by James Fowler, Bookkeeper.

James presented the dashboard report as is given in the Annual report and then went into more depth on the income and expenditure, stating that members can request a copy of the detailed summary from him if required.

He discussed the drop of 25% in revenue from the previous financial year but the increase of 76% in Direct support to refugees and 52% increase in Indirect support provided to the refugee support organisations was a healthy sign that Buddies lived up to its name as a Refugee Support organisation. Recognising some of this was possible because of starting the financial year with a high capital base from the previous year, highlights the strong need to increase our annual income if we are to continue this level of support. The annual finance report is appended.

A motion to adopt the financial report was put forward.

Moved : Penny Rivlin

Seconded: Lesley Willcoxson

The motion was carried

Members were notified of a decision to not have an audit this financial year in the AGM notice.

Discussion from the floor on increasing income followed. Glynni Cummings suggested a \$10 membership fee is low and consideration should be given to increasing the fee. After much discussion a motion was put forward that the fee should be increased up to a maximum of \$20 in the next financial year, 2020/21 at the discretion of the new directors if this increase fits with their plans for the organisation.

Moved : Lesley Willcoxson

Seconded: Lynne Johnson

The motion was carried

It was noted that over the past couple of years membership numbers have been falling and no longer cover the administration costs of the company (mainly insurance) and a membership drive is essential. It was further noted we have over 1100 people receiving the Bulletin and only 70 financial members.

It was brought to the meetings attention that there are now a number of groups on the Sunshine Coast supporting refugee issues, including Maleny Welcomes refugees and Noosa Welcomes Refugees. The overall number of supporters across the Coast has increased, and there has been a 're-distribution' of members between groups, contributing in part to the drop in the Buddies member numbers.

Wendy Oakley suggested a stronger call for membership using the Bulletin Banner. All members at the meeting supported this approach.

Glynni Cummings suggested Buddies seek a patron that might give the company some political clout. This idea will be discussed by the directors.

6.0 Election of New Directors

Four directors are stepping down from their positions; Scott Grimmett, Lesley Willcoxson, Mitra Khakbaz and Shaye Yuill. Paul McKinlay is remaining as a director

Three nominations were submitted:

- Len Mangan, nominated by Scott Grimmett and seconded by Lesley Willcoxson.
- Lynne Johnson, nominated by Scott Grimmett and seconded by Paul McKinlay
- Mo Darbas, nominated by Scott Grimmett and seconded by Paul McKinlay

Scott Grimmett explained the three nominations could if no objections be voted on as one. None were raised.

Motion to accept of three nominated members as directors for the next two years was put forward.

Moved: Scott Grimmett Seconded: Kayla Szumer The motion was carried

The continuing director and the three newly elected directors each gave a short overview of their background and vision of how they can help Buddies. Their Bio's are appended.

Margaret Norris moved a vote of thanks to the outgoing directors seconded by Kayla Szumer.

7.0 Other Business

Scott Grimmett moved a vote of thanks to Wendy Oakley for her work on the Bulletin and annual report. He pointed out the Bulletin which is produced weekly and is distributed to over 1100 people is a major contributor to the awareness of the plight of refugees for many people.

Paul McKinlay thanked the outgoing directors for their hard work and support they had given him during his time as director.

Kayla Szumer discussed the Learning English holiday this September 22 - 27 and the need for more volunteers for homestay, transport and assistance in the classroom.

Meeting closed at 12.45pm.

Appendices

1. Apologies and Attendees
2. Mitra Khakbaz's letter
3. Financial report and comments
4. Directors Bio's

Appendix 1: Apologies and Attendees

Apologies	
Carolyn	Bates
Jean	Carroll
Janine	de la Begassiere
Laurel	Dumbrell
Philip	Feinstein
Fergus	FitzGerald
Mitra	Khakbaz
Sheila	Merriman
Margaret	Norman
Margaret	Norris
Yokki	Rother
Jamie	Seymour
Helen	Smith
Kendall	Snowden
Gaynore	Stoessel
Rada	Van der Werff
Jeannie	Williams
Diane	Woolley
Shaye	Yuill

Attendees	
Geoff	Bailey (guest)
Glynni	Cumming
Mo	Darbas
Andrea	Douglas
James	Fowler
Scott	Grimmett
Lynne	Johnson
Margaret	Landbeck
Len	Mangan
Paul	McKinlay
Wendy	Oakley
Tricia	Reade
Penny	Rivlin
Kayla	Szumer
Florence	Teillet
Lesley	Willcoxson
Denise	Williams

Appendix 2: Mitra Khakbar's Letter

Dear Buddies members

As I reach to the end of my term as a director with this fine organisation, I'd like to firstly apologise for missing the AGM. I do appreciate you indulging me and receiving this note.

The last three years with Buddies have been very significant for me. I was constantly reminded of the spirit of humanity and generosity of hearts.

I start by acknowledging and thanking all board members, finance committee, and secretary. I couldn't ask for a better group of people to work with. Thank you.

I am not sure what I have brought to Buddies with me but I certainly have gained much. I joined the board when the organisation was going through "norming and storming" at the same time. And I saw the best and worst. I go through worst as it is not much. The worst was natural process of growth and change but the best genuinely is the best of what truly describes the values of Buddies and it would take much longer to describe.

So I summarise: Each and every one of volunteers, members, supporters and even challengers have constantly reminded me of what the strengths of Buddies are. Your kindness, wisdom, commitment to bettering lives of those at the margin of society, your tireless effort of fundraising and holding tight to the spirit of fair go when lots have given up is best qualities any organisation or group can ask for.

Thank you for allowing me to be on this journey with you. This is not a goodbye but a note to simply thank you, wish Buddies and all members best and hoping that the spirit that binds us to each other and to the values we hold dear would grow beyond the boundaries of the sunny coast.

Thank you and I am sure I will see you at some of monthly meetings.

Mitra

Appendix 3: Financial Report and Comments

Buddies Refugee Support Group Ltd.		
Statement of Accounts - Full Year Summary		
2018 - 2019		
	\$	
Cash at Bank as at 1 July 2018	13,134	
Income		
Membership Fees	1,200	6%
Donations	4,057	19%
Fund Raising	13,760	65%
Grants	1,998	10%
Total Income	21,015	100%
Expenditure		
Operating costs	1,384.00	5%
Community Awareness	3,831.00	15%
Fundraising Costs	617.00	2%
Direct Support for Asylum Seekers & Refugees	7,778.00	30%
Donations to refugee support & advocacy groups	12,250.00	47%
Total Expenditure	25,860.00	100%
Cash at Bank as at 30 June 2019	8,289.00	

- The Bank Balance on 1 July 2018 was \$13,100
- Total income for 2018 - 19 was \$21,015
- Total expenditure for 2018 - 19 was \$25,860
- Cash at bank at close of business on 30 June 2019 was \$8,829

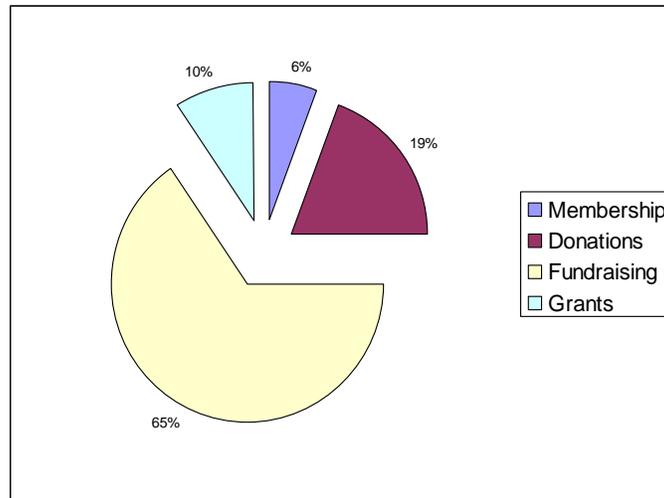
Income

The majority of Buddies income 65% came from fund raising activities and 19% from donations. Of the fund raising activities, Eumundi Car Parking raised over \$5,500 over the 12 months representing 27% of Buddies income for the year.

Bunnings Sausage Sizzles were also a significant source of revenue - over \$4,700 or 23% of income. Sales of Scott Grimmett's produce raised 9% of revenue with film nights and Goodwill Wine commissions making up the balance.

Of interest is the first use of the Container Exchange program to raise funds. In the year under review, it had only just begun and we received \$50 in May. This could develop into a productive revenue stream in members embraced the concept and directed their refunds to Buddies.

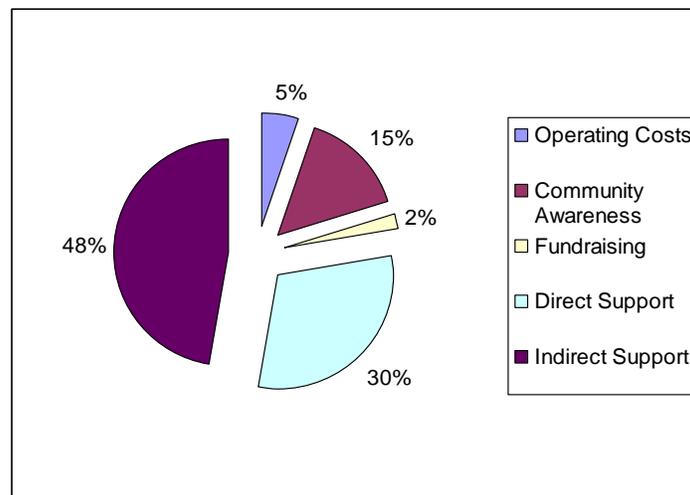
Income



Expenses

Operating Costs comprised only 5% of total expenses. The biggest outgoing 48% was Indirect Support to refugees through other organisations. Almost a third of expenditure was spent on Direct Support through the Learn English Holiday Program and refugee expenses. Community Awareness expenses were \$3,831 although included in our revenue is a grant from the S.C. Council of almost \$2,000 for “Walk Together”.

Expenditure



Conclusions

A comparison of the FY 2019 with the FY 2018 result shows up some interesting matters for consideration.

1. Income.

Excluding grants, donations and fundraising was \$6,180 or 25% down in FY 19. Reasons for this are not entirely clear. Donations were down just over \$1,900 and fundraising by over \$4,000. We have limited influence over donations, but we can improve fundraising by having more members getting involved in more projects such as film nights. FY 2018 was a good year for that, raising over \$4,100 (gross). And we need more Financial Members , current membership is 70.

2. Outgoings.

Because we began the 2018 - 2019 FY with over \$13,100, we were able to well exceed the previous year expenditure in

- a) Community awareness - up \$2,630
- b) Direct support - up \$3,358
- c) Indirect support - \$4,200 (Prompted by Government cutbacks to refugee entitlements)

So the good news is that Buddies Refugee Support Group Ltd truly lived up to its name - Supporting Refugees

The challenge to us all is to apply ourselves to the task of increasing memberships and raising more funds to enable us to continue our mission - to Support Refugees.

Appendix 4: Directors Bio's

Paul McKinlay (Returning Director)

Paul lives in Buderim with his wife Anna and two teenage boys Gideon and Isaac. As a social planner with Sunshine Coast Council, he remains abreast of the changes that are evolving on the coast, and the political processes that inform decisions at the local government level.

A brief stint many years ago volunteering to assist temporary visa applicants opened his eyes to the plight of refugees and people seeking asylum in Australia. He joined Buddies in 2016 and became a director in 2018.

Paul believes the path to a more humane response from Australia to the issues faced by refugees and seekers of asylum is a combination of education, communication of facts and truths, advocacy and hospitality - all central features of the Buddies ethos.

When not working or increasing his knowledge around refugee issues, he likes to write, sing with the New World Rhythm choir, taxi his kids and their friends around the coast, and spend precious time with his friends and family.

Len Mangan

Len is retired & married with four adult sons.

He has been performing volunteer roles throughout his life including;

- Decades of formal & informal roles within the Catholic Church.
- Three & a half years as a full time volunteer in PNG & 5 years part time in Fiji.
- Honorary roles (local, state & national) within the union movement.
- And is still a volunteer Evaluator for the Australian Business Excellence Awards.

He has completed the Australian Institute of Company Directors course.

He believes the new board, with members who are relatively new to Buddies, needs to be proactive about including older experienced members' views in their deliberations, communications & decision making (respect the past). He also looks forward to discovering more about Buddies history, consolidating business as usual & building a sustainable well planned future for Buddies.

Len is passionate about supporting refugees & asylum seekers.

Mo Dabas

Through his work in academic research, public sector and community based positions, Mo acquired a capacity to combine theoretical and conceptual approach with practical experience to strategic policy development and implementation.

His twenty five years experience in Public Sector and Community Based positions has provided Mo substantial experience in effective community consultation, development of community engagement strategies, strong organisation representation skills and negotiation and liaison through participation in networks and inter-organisational working parties.

Mo has a Bachelor of Social Science and Policy degree majoring in Research Methods and Science and

Technology Studies which equipped him adaptability of skills that can be applied in a variety of public and private sector settings

Lynne Johnson

I am interested in the position on Buddies' Board because I am passionate about refugees.

My experience is as a journalist, researcher and editor as well as spending many years as a Speech and Drama teacher. With this background, I feel one of the strengths I can bring to the position is communication skills.

I have been involved with Buddies for about two years and have been a host under the Learn Holiday English program. I have worked behind the scenes with Lesley in the area of education in schools. This involved a drama programme to help students understand the suffering and experiences of refugees. I think education of young people to help change attitudes is very important. I would like this to be an area of focus for Buddies.

My other areas of interest are increasing Buddies' outreach to members and refugees and promoting dialogue between conflicting groups. It's important for us to find some sort of common ground with people who currently don't share our position on refugees so we can find a way to move forward. Just preaching to the converted will not get us out of the impasse Australia is currently stuck in.