

Minutes of the Meeting of the Publications Committee of the Australian Rangeland Society held on 19 April 2013 by Teleconference

Meeting commenced at 4.30 pm EST

1. Present

Steve Blake
Don Burnside
Noelene Duckett
David Eldridge
Russell Grant
Ken Hodgkinson (in Chair)
Peter Johnston
John Milne
Wal Whalley

2. Apologies

Carolyn Ireland (Minutes Secretary)

3. Minutes of Teleconference meeting 20 December 2012

Minutes circulated before the meetings were accepted as a true record.

Moved: Wal Whalley, **Seconded** Don Burnside. The acceptance of the minutes was carried unanimously.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes of 30 September 2008, 30 June 2011, 25 August 2011, 16 November 2011, 16 November 2011, 1 March 2012, 26 September 2012 and 20 December 2012 meetings

4.1 Increase membership of Publications Committee (30 September 2008)

No progress had been made in increasing the membership of the Publications Committee.

4.2 Associate Editor Appointments (30 September 2008)

See Agenda items 4.9 and 5.2.

4.3 Appointment of new Chair for Publications Committee (30 June 2011)

See Agenda item 5.1.

4.4 Changes to Range Management Newsletter (25 August 2011)

Noelene Duckett reported that no progress had been made by her on this.

4.5 Advisory Editors (16 November 2011)

Ten people have been appointed Advisory Editors and their names could be found on the inside front cover of each issue of the Rangeland Journal.

4.6 Emailing RMN direct to members (26 September 2012)

Noelene Duckett reported no progress. The contact at the Digital web site had changed and this had slowed progress.

4.7 Commissioning of state representatives to find articles for the RMN (26 September 2012)

Noelene Duckett reported no progress.

4.8 ARS Web site inclusion of descriptive material (26 September 2012)

Russell Grant had not had any time to make progress because of loading the papers from the Conference onto the web site.

4.9 Appointment of Digby Race as an Associate Editor (20 December 2012)

Council had approved the appointment.

4.10 Contract for publishing Special Issues (20 December 2012)

Council had approved the contract that would be put in place between the organizer of the Special Issue and the Australian Rangeland Society.

4.11 ARS Facebook and Twitter proposals (20 December 2012)

The Committee had recommended to Council that James Wright be appointed as Editor of the ARS Twitter site. A letter had been received from Council requesting more information on the role of the position, estimates of the set-up and maintenance costs and the expected achievements of the position. Council also sought information on James Wright's expertise for this position. Ken Hodgkinson had not yet responded to the letter. Don Burnside raised the issue of an Editor of the Facebook site. A Facebook site used for the Kununurra Conference was available and it was agreed that Ken Hodgkinson and Don Burnside would develop a proposal for the managing of the site as the Society's Facebook site.

5. Business

5.1 Recommendation to Council on new Chair of Publications Committee

Ken Hodgkinson handed over the chairing of the meeting to Wal Whalley, who had acted as the Chairman of the Recruitment Committee, for this item. Wal Whalley explained that two candidates had submitted application letters together with CVs. He had circulated those to the members of the Committee and had asked them for an opinion as for their suitability for the post and their preference for one of the candidates. All members had responded and there was only a small difference between the numbers of votes cast for both candidates. In consequence, he proposed a discussion followed by a vote on who should be recommended to Council. After the discussion, the numbers of votes cast for Ron Hacker were 6 and for Andrew Ash were 3. A motion that: 'Ron Hacker is recommended to Council as the preferred candidate to be appointed as the Chairman of the Publications Committee, and, if for any reason such an appointment was not made, then Andrew Ash is recommended for the post' was proposed by Wal Whalley, seconded by Don Burnside and carried unanimously.

5.2. Recommendations to Council on new Associate Editors

The CVs for Glenda Wardle, Ashley Sparrow and Elena Abraham had been circulated before the meeting. Ken Hodgkinson stated that these three appointments were to fill gaps in the coverage of the areas of ecology and conservation, plant- soil interactions and arid zone ecology among the current group of Associate Editors and to increase the number of Associate Editors. Each case was considered separately.

In relation to Glenda Wardle Ken Hodgkinson pointed out that she had expertise in acting as an Associate Editor for other journals, had a sound publication record and would bring Australian University expertise to the Associate Editors. There was concern expressed about her status as an ecologist and that she was not a member of the Australian Rangeland Society. John Milne pointed that it was not a prerequisite for an Associate Editor to be a member of the Society, and Wal Whalley argued that she would bring different perspectives and expertise, and with them other networks of scientists, which could be of benefit to the Society. Other members felt that they did not have enough expertise to contribute to the discussion or to vote on the proposed appointment. On a vote Glenda Wardle was recommended to Council for appointment as an Associate Editor.

In relation to Ashley Sparrow, Ken Hodgkinson explained that, after turning down the opportunity to become an Associate Editor a year ago, he had agreed to have his name put forward this year. He had a strong CV and was regarded as a high-quality scientist. Both David Eldridge and John Milne supported strongly his appointment from experience of his work as a reviewer. It was recommended unanimously that Ashley Sparrow be recommended to Council for appointment as an Associate Editor.

Ken Hodgkinson stated that David Eldridge had suggested to him that Elena Abraham would be a suitable Associate Editor. Her expertise on desertification in non-Australian conditions was excellent and he had been impressed by a plenary paper that she had given at a conference in Europe. She had expertise across a number of geographical scales and had worked in the social sciences as well as in the biological sciences. John Milne thought that she had a strong CV, worked across a number of South American countries and would bring a South American input to the Associate Editors which was currently lacking. It was recommended unanimously that Elena Abraham be recommended to Council for appointment as an Associate Editor.

5.3 Finance for Special Issue on Fire in the Carbon Economy

Dionne Walsh was the proposer of the above Special Issue. She had queried the sum of \$10,000 for publishing the Special Issue as it seemed somewhat high to her and that she was having difficulty putting together funding from organisations that she worked with. Also most of the papers were arising out of papers delivered at the Kununurra Conference. The Committee took the view that the sum was the standard sum and that there was insufficient arguments not to adhere to the policy. The topic was of high importance and it was thought that funders could be found. Peter Johnson agreed to contact Dionne about funding opportunities that he was aware of and Ken Hodgkinson would explore federal funding opportunities in Canberra. John Milne asked to write to Dionne Walsh to explain the position.

6. Any other business

Wal Whalley proposed the motion that: 'The Publications Committee thanks Ken Hodgkinson for the many years of service, hard work, commitment and expertise that he had brought to the role of Chairman of the Committee and the excellent progress that had been made with various publication.' Don Burnside seconded the

motion and it was carried unanimously. Ken Hodgkinson thanked the Committee and indicated that it probably be a couple of months before the formal hand-over to the new Chairman took place.

The meeting closed at 6.00 pm EST.