

The Queenstown Molecular Biology Meeting Society Incorporated



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2019

4 September 2019, 12.30pm, Clancy's Room, Rydges Hotel, Queenstown

Present: Peter Shepherd, Martin Kennedy, Andrew Shelling, Margreet Vissers, Nikki Morland, Rachel Purcell, Katrina Bevan, Justin O'Sullivan, John Taylor.

Apologies: Julian Eaton-Rye, Austen Ganley

Minutes of the 2018 AGM (provided in hard copy and via QRW website) were accepted as read.

Report from Chair (Prof Shepherd):

- A verbal report was provided by Peter
- Dynamics PCO are now under new management, with Alastair McIlwrick having sold the company during the year. The new owner needs up-front payments more quickly as does not yet have a long term track record with the Queenstown business community. Overall, things have gone very smoothly with organising the meeting.
- Registrations: this year there were 1400 registrations across all meetings; smaller than last year, although last year had several "bumper" meetings which drove higher registrations.
- Trades sponsors really good and this is key to the success of the meeting.
- Peter feels the Universities are "free-loading". Auckland (~\$40K including MWC) and Otago (~\$13K) pay fairly significant sponsorships, but none of the others do. Many PBRF outputs and other service/esteem factors are generated by the meetings, so increased sponsorship should be sought.
- Need to book Queenstown venues well in advance (two years at least). The **2020 meetings will again run in the first week of September.**
- Plenary/Nobel Speaker: this year was Prof Joan Steitz (University of California, San Francisco, USA). Justin O'Sullivan continues to work through the list for future year's high profile speakers. Randy Schekman (Berkeley) looks possible for 2020. There was some conversation about the need for a good briefing for the Plenary/Nobel Laureate's talk.
- Peter gave his thoughts and commitment to Te Whanaketanga Pūtaiao Māori Summit and the Infrastructure Summit, included below under "other business".

Report from Treasurer:

The financial report and summary statement prepared by Julian was tabled.

Points to note:

- last year made a surplus of \$26,800
- Net assets 31 March 2019 were \$118,065
- Must remain non-profit, but need assets to ensure viability and contingency. Peter feels we do need to build that contingency back up again.
- We have now moved to online banking, as proposed last year.

Report from 2019 Convenor:

Nikki Morland provided an oral report. She felt the meeting was going really well. The organising team strived for (and achieved) gender balance on the committee and for speakers. Really pleased with that balance, and those present at the AGM agreed it was an excellent programme. Registrations were about normal for QMB.

Thanks were extended to Nikki and her team.

Election of Officers:

Roles were retained unopposed by all incumbents, with encouragement to others present and willing to get involved to offer their services.

Peter Shepherd - Chair

Julian Eaton-Rye - Treasurer

Martin Kennedy - Secretary

Justin O'Sullivan – Nobel speakers

Rachel Purcell - Communications

Austen Ganley – Major Awards

Andrew Shelling – Fashionomics

Nikki Morland – Immediate past convenor

Other business:

Satellite Meetings: A lot of suggestions already:

Plant, Cancer, Drug Discovery, Bioinformatics/Gene Technology, Genomics

Aotearoa, Epigenetics/Human Genetics

Rebecca Campbell - Molecular Reproduction

Catherine Day - Structure/Protein

Sarah Diermeier - Non-coding RNA

Vision science; Diabetes/metabolic disease

DOHAD people and Anna Brooks (Cytometry) will run before QMB and feed into it.

Major Awards: This year's winners were Dr Tommi Vatanen, (Liggins Institute, University of Auckland), for the Illumina Emerging Researcher Award, and Dr Tim Hore (University of Otago), for the Thermo Fisher Scientific™ Award. Austen Ganley indicated he is happy to continue running the awards next year.

Te Whanaketanga Pūtaiao Māori Summit

Katrina Bevan: Bluff was the nearest marae so the opening was there which complicated things somewhat, but need to take this forward in in future in some shape or form. Peter keen for QRW to support the Te Whanaketanga Pūtaiao Māori Summit again next year, Katrina volunteered to organise, and NZers for Health Research have also agreed to provide support.

Katrina also indicated Graham Malaghan had asked if they could do a joint session on infrastructure. Peter commented that the Infrastructure summit morphed from being about major equipment, to a wider conversation. This was an experiment, and ended up mainly being a talk with the funders about funding mechanisms.

Discussion on Funder's Summit for 2020 meeting: Margreet spoke to this - thought the funders should be at QRW but they don't often come. Peter makes it free to the funders, but attendance is a bit sporadic. Juliet Gerard (Prime Minister's Science Adviser) and Gary Evans (MBIE Science Advisor) were here and this was seen as very positive, but maybe could get wider representation from funders and government. Can we get the incoming HRC CEO here?

It was agreed this and the Māori summit should run next year.

FAOMB Meeting (Christchurch) 2021: NZSBMB is hosting this in Christchurch at Te Pai Convention Ctr, in November 2021. This coincides with COMBIO and will be a big international meeting. Wayne Patrick is main organizer.

Peter not keen to try to align QRW with this meeting. The larger international format doesn't fit the ethos of QRW, and we need to build NZ science, with an emphasis on building careers of young and emerging scientists.

However, we do need to avoid clashes for major themes between the two meetings.

The meeting closed 1.30pm