



YWCA CANBERRA
Minutes of YWCA
Canberra
2023 Annual General Meeting

The following are the minutes of the YWCA Canberra 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at 5:30pm on Monday 30 October 2023 in person and via Zoom

Chair: Carina Zeccola, President

Meeting opened at 6:00PM

1. Welcome and apologies

Following a call to order by Carina.

Carina welcomed everyone to the 2023 YWCA Canberra Annual General Meeting.

Carina begins by acknowledging the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we gather today, the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people, and pay my respects to their Elders, past, present and future, as well as acknowledging any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people who may be in the room with us today. I also extend my respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who for thousands of years have preserved the culture and practices of their communities on country. This land was never surrendered, and we acknowledge that it always was, and will continue to always be, Aboriginal land.

No apologies received.

Members present		
Frances Crimmins	Emma McCarthy	Darcey Hoyle – Virtual
Carina Zeccola	Cath Woodward	Lisa Holmes – Virtual
Isobel Daly	Cara Jacobs	Lucy Archinal-Hudson – Virtual
Leah Dwyer	Bernadette Carbin	Eve Currie – Virtual
Natalie Hyde	Nitya Taneja	Isabella Ridga – Virtual
Renee Mastrolembo	Hannah Vardy	Dr Amanda Parker – Virtual
Thea Shelley	Elaine Dargan – Virtual	Elizabeth Reinhardt – Virtual
Rosyln Dundas	Betty Ferguson – Virtual	Julie Lean – Virtual

.....
Initial

Maree Harman	Amy Kingham – Virtual	Pek Kee Chan – Virtual
Kirstin Blume	Caroline Khalil – Virtual	Vicki Green – PROXY
Jude Burger	Andrea Conti – Virtual	Kirsty Martin – PROXY
Jacqui Raby	Di Bakon – Virtual	Colleen Duff – PROXY
Hayley Rogers	Isha Singhal – Virtual and then arrived in person 6:20PM	Antonette Dailey – PROXY
Fern Denton-McDermott	Lauren Hassall – Virtual	

Others in attendance
Auditor – Kathleen Buckley
Minute Taker – Isobel Daly – YWCA Staff
Pam Tapia – YWCA Staff
Eleanor Sander O’Hearn – YWCA Staff
Kiera McCormick– YWCA Staff
Jessie Grace – YWCA Staff

2. Minutes of 2022 Annual General Meeting

Carina as Chair of the meeting addresses the minutes from last year’s AGM and requested a mover and seconder.

Motion: that the minutes of the 2022 AGM be accepted.

Moved by: Maree Harman
Seconded by: Kristin Blume

3. President’s Report

I am pleased to provide my 4th report as President of YWCA Canberra.

As stewards of an organisation that has provided services to women and their families in Canberra since 1929, YWCA Canberra’s Board continually challenge ourselves to guide YWCA Canberra in a direction that reflects our proud history, while evolving to ensure we continue to meet the needs of our community.

I am proud to present a summary of just a few of the impacts our work in the community over the last 12 months and in our fifth and final year of our 2018-2023 strategic plan. I was lucky to be on the Board in 2018 when we set this strategic plan and have been very proud to see the Plan implemented over the past 5 years. During the past year:

- We have added an additional early learning centre to our services, and now operate 7 centres. We worked closely with the Parent run Reid Early Learning Association and transitioned this centre to YWCA Canberra. This included incorporating all, staff children and families to join YWCA Canberra in February 2023.
- We were successful in our tender to retain our contract with DFAT and were awarded a new contract in February 2023 to continue to operate Currajong Early Learning Centre for a further 6 years.

.....
Initial

- Our Early Childhood team has worked with over 1,000 children 5 years and under across the Canberra region.
- We continue to provide quality school age care for close to 2,500 children aged four to 12 years at 12 locations.
- Our charitable property management program, Rentwell, has continued to grow to achieve 90 affordable rental properties in its portfolio. The growth of property management has continued to grow steadily and we are confident we will soon pass 150 properties.
- Through our training and education unit, we have educated 307 students in early childhood and education and care, leadership and management, achieving nationally recognised qualifications.
- Our Lanyon Food Hub has supported over 300 members, providing food on 1,760 occasions
- We have supported over 600 women and their families with crisis, supported tenancy services and family case management across all of our housing support services.
- We have over 1,700 centre-based occasions for young people at Mura Lanyon Youth Community Centre
- Our workplace training on recognising Domestic & family Violence was delivered to over 400 people.
- The She Leads program has engaged over 400 women in professional development activities, training, and events.

A highlight for me and a major focus of the Board this year has been the strategic oversight of the Y Homes Development. We are proud to have invested and repurposed the land that was underutilised due to the aging buildings and adapt to one of the most pressing needs to provide safe, appropriate housing for women. We believe this project provides a legacy for YWCA Canberra and when finished a blueprint for other charities to showcase how to repurpose land, showcasing exceptional design can achieve affordability delivering 9 beautiful homes.

I am also pleased to present our new 5-year strategic plan that the Board adopted during this year, in close consultation with our Executive, staff and other key stakeholders to take us forward, continuing and building on the last 5 years into the future. This Strategic Plan will cover 2023 – 2028, the next 5 years.

We retained our vision of “Girls and women thriving” which we felt resonated as strongly with us today as 5 years ago in guiding us as an organisation.

Our mission – Gender equity by strengthening communities and empowering girls and women through our services and advocacy.

Our Goal – Progress towards gender equality in the Canberra region and beyond.

During this process we also developed our 15-year vision and theory of change. This was informed by the World YWCA vision and the movements global goal, which is that “by 2035, 100 million young women and girls will have transformed power structures to create justice, gender equality and a world without violence and war: leading a sustainable YWCA movement, inclusive of all women”.

I would like to conclude by acknowledging my fellow Board Directors and the executive team of YWCA Canberra for their consistency, expertise, energy and dedication to their roles as leaders of this organisation. As a group we have achieved so much this year in preparing a strategy to guide our next Board and staff to provide services and advocacy for those in our community. I am very much looking forward to what we as a group will achieve in delivering on our new strategy.

.....
Initial

On behalf of the Board, I would particularly like to thank the YWCA Canberra staff for their dedication, commitment, and exceptional work throughout the last year.

I am incredibly proud that we are truly guided by the organisation's values of courage, equality, respect, inclusion, reconciliation and responsibility, and our continued commitment to meeting the needs of the Canberra community, particularly those who are most vulnerable.

Lastly, I would like to thank all those individuals, of which there are too many to name, who supported and donated both money and professional services this past year for your invaluable contributions.

I am looking forward to the next 12-months and my last two-year term as President of YWCA Canberra.

Are there any questions relating to this report?

Motion

I propose that the President's Report and Annual Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2023 as presented be adopted.

Do I have a mover and seconder?

Motion:

Moved by: Maree Harman
Seconded by: Jude Burger

The motion to accept the President's Report and annual report.

I will now pass to Frances for the Chief Executive Officer's report.

4. Chief Executive Director's Report

Frances Crimmins, CEO spoke to the members present as follows.

Good evening, everyone, I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land we're meeting on, and pay my respects to their Elders past, present and future. I'd particularly like to emphasise the important role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have always had, and continue to have, in this community. These women have been custodians of culture for generations and continue to enrich our lives and our culture today. This land was never surrendered, and we acknowledge that it always was and will continue to always be Aboriginal land.

I was very proud to lead our community engagement in support of the Voice referendum. While we feel the hurt, disappointment, and concerned over the outcome, we will continue to call for support to the Uluru Statement from the Heart and support treaty and truth telling as the next pathways in reconciliation with the first nation peoples of Australia.

The joy of being part of YWCA Canberra is still strong as I present my 10th annual general meeting report. The 2022- 2023 year has continued with growth, community impact and a renewal of purpose and vision as we completed the financial year with a new 5-year strategic plan.

Taking the title from our 80-year history book, *a work in progress*, each year we build on the year before. Achieving goals and outcomes and commencing the next goal, with all activities and progress on mission of Girls and women thriving.

.....
Initial

The annual report provides the detail of what we achieved in the last year, however as I look over the last 10 years, it is a legacy that builds on each year of our 95 years of service, and a celebration of our *work in progress* for YWCA Canberra and the continued contribution we make to the ACT and surrounding region. It is also important that we reflect on our commitment to the YWCA Global movement and as we prepare for World Council in 4 weeks' time, for the first time a digital event.

While we celebrate our progress and success in Canberra and we congratulate YWCA Australia their achievements and success in housing developments around the country; I think it is important for us all, as members of YWCA to reflect on the many YWCA's globally who currently impact by conflict, post conflict or the threat of conflict.

In the preparation for World Council, at our townhall meetings and through channels such a bullet and dove, I am both sad and in admiration of YWCA women sharing their lived experience and the importance of listening to their stories of the impacts of war and how war manifests on women and children.

At World Councils, YWCA leaders have passed more than 40 resolutions since 1894 about women, peace and security. I think it is important we acknowledge, reflect, and listen to their voices of witness as part of the YWCA global movement.

Advocacy and being dauntless in our actions for gender equity is core of what we do. We have continued to grow our policy work and use our position and knowledge as a front-line service provider and evidence we collect through mechanisms such as Our lives survey for women in the ACT, to inform our advocacy agenda and priorities. Gender based violence continues to be predominant in our communities. Our work in our domestic and family violence support services, continues to be oversubscribed in demand for support can case management services.

Our training and education in prevention and response also continued to grow in the last year with over 400 people participating in our education programs.

Much time has been spent in the many engagements with the Community Services Directorate and the commissioning process for housing and homeless services. It has been a decade since these services were last procured and it is with great perseverance in the staff who have been working so hard on refining our offering as a women's specialist homeless service.

It was encouraging when we were awarded the very competitive tender of Comon Ground Dickson which commenced in July 2022. I am hopeful we will not only retain our current services but will see a growth in these programs as a trusted and reliable community organisation.

It was also delightful to transition another long-standing community early childhood service to YWCA Canberra. The Reid children's cottage has operated for many decades, and it is a privilege the parents committee selected YWCA Canberra to continue this much needed inner city early learning centre.

As already mentioned, it has been wonderful to watch homes being built on our only block land purchased over 30 years ago. The vision then was that the land and buildings would be a women's safe place and it is a privilege for everyone involved in the project to deliver much need homes.

As always, a huge thank you to board directors, over the last 12 months you have contributed more of your time as we developed our next strategy. Thank you for your confidence and support to us in delivery of the strategy. To our partners, members and friends for their loyalty to the organisation and contribution to our vision for the Canberra community.

.....
Initial

It's important to recognise on these occasions the immense amount of time, talent, creative thinking, and commitment that goes into achieving these results.

Our team of more than 400 staff are diverse, passionate and highly skilled at what they do. I'm so proud of the YWCA Canberra team and it is an absolute honour to be their CEO, with shared leadership of the executive and senior management team. Please join me in a round of applause for the YWCA Canberra staff.

Thank you.

Motion: that the Executive Director's Report for the year ending 30 June 2023 as presented be adopted.

Moved by: Kristin Blume

Seconded by: Isha Singhal

The motion to accept the Executive Director's Report is passed.

I would now like to take any questions related to the YWCA Canberra Constitution, the *Corporations Act 2001* or the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

- No Questions asked.

I would now like to invite our Treasurer, Natalie Hyde, to deliver the Treasurer's report.

5. Treasurer's Report

Natalie Hyde spoke to the members present as follows:

It is my absolute pleasure and privilege to be speaking to you today about our financial report. Our audited financial statements for the 2022-23 financial year can be accessed on the YWCA Canberra website and a copy was provided to you before this meeting. For a concise overview of the results, you can refer to page 63 of the Annual report.

This year we achieved a surplus of slightly over \$840,000, compared to the surplus of \$2.38 million for the same period last year.

Overall, this is a positive result in a year where we have been recovering from ongoing changes stemming from the pandemic, such as how people work, the normalisation of working from home and the impact on programs like our school age care.

Additionally, like everyone, we have seen an increase in our costs due to inflation. We made a strategic decision to increase wages in the new year, in addition to our enterprise agreement pay increases. This resulted in an additional wage increase for all of our qualified and valued early learning educators. As you may be aware from media reports, the sector is facing a major skills crisis with many leaving the sector altogether. We believe this decision assisted us in retaining these staff.

In summary, our financial results for 2022-23 financial year were:

- Total income just over \$26 million, an increase from \$21,199,773 from the 2021-2022.
- Our cash reserve has increased to \$5.59 million, up from \$5.47 million in the prior year. The increase primarily reflects growth in operating cash flow. This adequately meets our short-term financial needs.

.....
Initial

- Total equity as of 30 June 2023 stands at slightly over \$14.3 million, increasing from \$13.1 million in the prior year.

We continue to demonstrate financial security through a disciplined focus and commitment to our stewardship and responsibility in managing our resources and risks to ensure the organisation's long-term sustainability.

Overall, I believe the financial results for the 2022–23 year demonstrate the value of the diversification of income sources that our Boards and Managers have been pursuing. As Carina has mentioned, investment in legacy work like Y Homes contributes to our strong culture of stewardship in our governance practice and creates opportunities for future leaders of YWCA Canberra.

In closing, I wish to thank the Finance Committee for their efforts, care and attention over the last 12 months. We meet quarterly to discuss and analyse the YWCA Canberra's financial reports and financial position, and to make recommendations to the board. The committee also reviews the budgets and legal compliance and oversees the review and update of the investment papers for the annual Board Planning Day so that strategic projects can be considered.

On behalf of The Board and the Finance Committee, I want to express the huge appreciation we have for the support we receive from the Executive Director of Finance, Pek Kee Chan and the CEO for their timely provision of financial reports, discussion papers, and willingness to answer our probing questions, so that we may provide informed organisational oversight and governance.

Are there any questions relating to this report?

- No questions asked.

President moves Treasurer's Report

Thanks Natalie.

Motion: I propose that the Treasurer's Report and the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2023 as presented be adopted.

Do I have a mover and seconder?

Moved by: Maree Harman
Seconded by: Jude Burger

The motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and financial statements is passed.

Motion: that the Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2023 as presented be adopted.

Moved by: Maree Harman
Seconded by: Jude Burger

The motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and the financial statements is passed.

6. Appointment of Auditor

Natalie Hyde presented the following as Treasurer:

.....
Initial

YWCA Canberra moves a vote of thanks to the Auditors, Bellchambers Barrett for their professional and timely work throughout the year.

Thanks to James Barrett from Bellchambers Barrett for joining us this evening.

I move that YWCA Canberra appoints Bellchambers Barrett to continue as auditors for the 2022-23 year.

Motion: that the YWCA of Canberra appoints Bellchambers Barrett as auditors for the 2023 - 2024 year,

YWCA Canberra moves a vote of thanks to the Auditors, Bellchambers Barrett for their professional and timely work throughout the year.

Thanks to Kathleen Buckley from Bellchambers Barrett for joining us this evening on line.

I move that YWCA Canberra appoints Bellchambers Barrett to continue as auditors for the 2023–24 year.

Moved by: Kristin Blume

Seconded by: Jude Burger

The motion to accept the Bellchambers Barrett as the auditors for the 2023 – 2024 years is passed.

7. Other Business and questions – presented by President

We didn't receive any questions prior to the meeting, so I would like to take any questions on the floor related to the YWCA Canberra Constitution, the *Corporations Act 2001* or the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.

Questions: no questions asked.

8. Announcement of Life Members

I now have the honour of announcing new Life members of YWCA Canberra who have been appointed by the Board.

Life membership is one way we honour the women who have served this organisation and made a considerable contribution to the Y movement and community.

This year, we welcome one new Life Member.

Emma MaCarthy

Emma McCarthy is a Canberra based member who will be completing her maximum two terms, in total eight years, as a director on World YWCA board in the role of Treasurer. Emma has been instrumental in her governance role in leading World YWCA back to a sustainable financial position and leading the new strategic directions program. Emma has also served on YWCA Australia Board for seven years as Treasurer and President.

I now call on Emma to come forward and accept her life membership badge and please join me in congratulating our newest Life Member Emma MaCarthy.

9. Thanking and acknowledgement of outgoing Board Directors and Trainees

.....
Initial

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Di Bakon, who will finish as a director on the Board at this AGM. Di your leadership and contribution to YWCA Canberra has been immense. Your continued advocacy and voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait women is powerful. You have kept us true in our Reconciliation Action Plan and ensuring our actions and contributions have a tangible impact towards reconciliation. From all the Board and the RAP committee members we say thank you.

It has been an privilege to work with you and on behalf of YWCA Canberra thank you for your dedication and invaluable contribution.

Elaine Dargan will also be stepping down from the Board after this AGM. Elaine was a Board trainee in 2022 and accepted a casual vacancy during the year. Thank you, Elaine, for your contribution and we wish you well in your exciting career which we understand will see you moving from Canberra in the new year.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank our Board Trainees for 2023, please come forward and accept your certificates:

Thea Shelly
Isha Singhal

10. Announcement of election of Board of Directors

I will now pass to our Returning Officer, Renee Mastrolembo – Member of our Nominations Committee to announce the Board Directors following the election and our new Board Trainees.

Good evening everyone,

My name is Renee Mastrolembo and I'm pleased to be acting as Returning Officer for this year's YWCA Canberra Board Director elections.

This year, we had five positions open for Board Directors, and one Office Bearer roles for President.

We received only one nomination for President, Carina Zeccola and I am pleased to announce Carina will continue as President YWCA Canberra. Congratulations Carina.

We received five nominations for Board Directors. Our constitution requires a minimum of 30% of our Director positions to be held by young women aged 30 and under, and therefore two vacant positions need to be filled by young women.

The four positions were elected via electronic vote. The voting period was open from 20 October to 27 October.

I am pleased to announce the following candidates have been elected to the YWCA Canberra Board.

Caroline Khalil

Fern Denton-McDermott

Jacqueline Dowling

Lauren Hassell

.....
Initial

Congratulations to all elected Board directors. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who nominated – we are grateful to have such a passionate and engaged membership, who are interested in serving on our Board.

It is now my pleasure to announce the recipients of our 2024 Board Traineeships. The Board Traineeships program is one of our key leadership opportunities, fostering the next generation of women and gender diverse leaders.

Again we received many applications, for our traineeships we have available and I want to thank everyone who nominated.

Our incoming Board Trainees for 2024 are:

Eve Currie
Lucy Archinal-Hudson
Nitya Taneja

Congratulations to all of you, and the Board looks forward to working with you over the coming year.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our members for taking the time to vote in our elections, as well as thanking CorpVote and the YWCA Canberra team for running an efficient and transparent process.

I will now hand back to Carina.

11. Close of meeting

This now concludes the formal proceedings for this evening. Thank you all for in attending the 2023 YWCA Canberra Annual General Meeting. We appreciate your time and effort. To those of you who joined us virtually, I look forward to seeing you at an event soon. To those who were able to join us in person, we hope that you are able to join us now for some light refreshments.

Thank you, and good evening.

Meeting Closed at: 6:34PM