



## Minutes of YWCA

## YWCA CANBERRA Canberra 2024 Annual General Meeting

The following are the minutes of the YWCA Canberra 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at 6:00pm on Monday 4 November 2024 in person and via Zoom

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**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 2024 YWCA Canberra Annual General Meeting.

Carina confirmed we have reached quorum with 19 members in the room, 13 Proxys and 11 online attendees.

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.

**Two apologies were received:**

- Roslyn Dundas
- Betty Ferguson

| Members present    |                        |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Frances Crimmins   | Maree Harman – Virtual | Colleen Duff – Proxy         |
| Carina Zeccola     | Kirstin Blume          | Pek Kee Chan – Proxy         |
| Isobel Daly        | Jude Burger            | Lucy Archinal-Hudson – Proxy |
| Leah Dwyer         | Fern Denton-McDermott  | Nowrin Khan – Proxy          |
| Natalie Hyde       | Caroline Khalil        | Melanie French – Proxy       |
| Renee Mastrolembro | Lauren Hassall         | Angie Ford                   |

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|                            |                           |                             |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cara Jacobs                | Kirsty Martin             | Aiobhin Crimmins – Proxy    |
| Bernadette Carbin          | Emma McCarthy - Proxy     | Monica Sander – Proxy       |
| Ceshton Hanns – Proxy      | Amy Kingham – Proxy       | Vicki McGaw – Proxy         |
| Julie Lean – Proxy         | Victoria Oakden – Proxy   | Cathi Moore – Virtual       |
| Kathryn Hurn – Virtual     | Rosetta Romano – Virtual  | Andrea Conti – Virtual      |
| Lidan Cao – Virtual        | Eve Currie – Virtual      | Anntonette Dailey – Virtual |
| Jane Alver – Virtual       | Ariah Holmes – Virtual    | Tania MacCana – Virtual     |
| Catherine Beachley - Proxy | Di Wang                   | Megan Hunter                |
| Eleanor Sander O'Hearn     | Anne-Marie Ruiz-Ferrandiz |                             |

|                                      |
|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Others in attendance</b>          |
| Auditor – Kathleen Buckley – Virtual |

## 2. Minutes of 2023 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 2023 AGM be accepted.**

**Moved by:** Lauren Hassall

**Seconded by:** Fern Denton-McDermott

The motion to accept the Minutes of 2023 Annual General Meeting is passed.

## 3. President's Report

Carina Zeccola, President, spoke to the members present as follows:

I am pleased to present my board report as President of YWCA Canberra for 2023-2024. This will be my 5<sup>th</sup> report.

As stewards of an organisation that has provided services to girls, women and their families since 1929, YWCA Canberra's board continually challenges itself to lead in a direction that honours our history while evolving to meet the changing needs of our community. Over the past financial year, we have successfully refocused our core business operations. We are deeply grateful for the continued support of our team and stakeholders, and we are excited to build on this momentum as we advance under our new strategic direction.

2023-2024 marks the first year of our new Strategic Plan for 2023-2028. This plan, grounded in our vision and mission, is designed to ensure we continue to adapt and thrive in a sector undergoing significant renewal. We are navigating evolving regulatory, compliance, and quality assurance mechanisms, alongside an intensified social and political focus on gender equality and housing.

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This year has also been significant for workplace relations, as we successfully negotiated our current Enterprise Agreement. From December 2023, all staff will be entitled to a minimum of three days of paid shutdown leave during the end-of-year period.

Additionally, we have introduced access to paid parental leave from commencement. These are significant improvements in our staff's workplace entitlements, reflecting the valuable contributions of our workforce to the greater Canberra community.

Accreditation against the QIC standards supports us in delivering high-quality, safe services and improving client and community engagement. YWCA Canberra continues to be accredited in key service areas, including the National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care, School-Aged Care, the National Regulatory System for Community Housing, and the Registered Training Organisation Standards.

- Our Early Childhood team has worked with over 740+ children 5 years and under across the Canberra and surrounding region. We continue to provide quality school age care for close to 1400 children aged 4-12 years at 12 locations.
- Our charitable property management program, Rentwell, has continued to grow to achieve 119 affordable rental properties in its portfolio.
- We have educated 268 students in early childhood and education and care, leadership and management, nationally recognised qualifications.
- Our Lanyon Food Hub has supported over 375 clients, providing food on 2415 occasions
- We have supported over 700 women and their families with crisis, supported tenancy service and family case management across all our housing support services.
- YHomes has provided 1500 individual nights of safe and secure accommodation.
- Next Door provided 149 support periods.
- The She Leads program has engaged just under 500 girls and women in professional development activities, training, and events.
- 853 hours of Work Respect was completed.

Our advocacy efforts have also brought meaningful results for Canberrans. After a prolonged period of delays, we launched our YHomes location, now known as Daridhawara, meaning "safe place" in Ngunnawal. This project has already provided nine safe homes for older women and women with children facing crises.

We are immensely proud to have been endorsed by Reconciliation Australia for our fourth consecutive Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Our RAP Working Group committee continues to oversee and report on progress while identifying new ways to improve our contribution. We remain committed to working closely with the Ngunnawal community and continually improving our Reconciliation journey.

Furthermore, we successfully secured additional space at our Condor Community House under a peppercorn arrangement, which will allow us to offer additional early learning places to Tuggeranong families in the new year.

We were again awarded the Workplace Gender Equality Agency's citation as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality—our 11th consecutive year of recognition, and our fifth as the only Canberra organisation to achieve it.

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YWCA Canberra's strong financial performance and governance, healthy balance sheet, and prudent strategic decisions have enabled us to continue meeting these challenges and delivering on our core objectives and mission.

As always, I would like to acknowledge and extend my sincere thanks to our staff, board directors, partners, members, fellow community organisations, donors, volunteers, and friends for their loyalty and contribution to our vision for the Canberra community.

We are tremendously proud of the impact YWCA Canberra continues to have across our broad span of work. We hope you enjoy learning more about our 2023-2024 achievements in this year's Annual Report.

Are there any questions relating to this report?

- No questions were asked.

#### **Motion**

**I propose that the President's Report and Annual Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2024 as presented be adopted.**

Do I have a mover and seconder?

**Moved by:** Jude Burger

**Seconded by:** Caroline Khalil

The motion to accept the President's Report and Annual Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2024 Report is passed.

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.

The joy of being part of YWCA Canberra is still strong as ever as I present my 11<sup>th</sup> annual general meeting report. The 2023-2024 year has continued with growth, community impact and a renewal of purpose and vision as we commenced the year with a new 5-year strategic plan.

Our annual report details our achievements from the past year. However, when reflecting on the last 11 years, I see a legacy-built year by year, nearly a century in the making. It's a testament to YWCA Canberra's enduring commitment to our community and the meaningful impact we've made in the ACT and surrounding region.

Each achievement builds on our long history of service, celebrating our contributions while looking forward to continued progress and advocacy for gender equality and community strength. It is also

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important for us to reflect on our commitment to the YWCA Global movement. While we celebrate the progress and success we've achieved at YWCA Canberra, I would also like to extend recognition to YWCA Australia for their significant accomplishments, particularly in housing developments across the country and the recent release of *We've Been Robbed: Young Women and Gender Diverse People's Housing Experiences and Solutions*.

This year, participating in World Council in December, was a stark reminder of the importance of YWCA movement as a force for securing peace, justice and climate action. Being in Australia, it's crucial for us as YWCA members to remember and stand in solidarity with YWCAs around the world, especially those currently affected by conflict, recovering from conflict, or facing the threat of it.

I am both sad and in admiration of YWCA women globally 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. I am incredibly proud of the work we've done together at YWCA Canberra during the 2023-2024 year. Our new 2023-2028 Strategic Plan is driving positive change across all areas, and our focus on gender equality and affordable housing is more critical than ever.

On that note, it really has been wonderful to witness the opening of YHomes. This was a significant initiative for our organisation that truly underscored our dedication to Canberra's housing crisis and providing secure housing options for women and children. I am also proud of our stewardship of our resources and utilizing for such positive impact towards our vision of girls and women thriving.

The name "Daridhawara," meaning "safe place" in Ngunnawal, was gifted to us by the Ngunnawal Elders, reflecting our commitment to working closely with the Ngunnawal community and advancing our Reconciliation journey.

This initiative is a testament to our ongoing efforts to provide safe, affordable housing and support to those in need, ensuring that women and families have access to secure living environments. It was a big year for Children's Services with Deputy CEO and ED, Bernadette Carbin retiring after 13 years of service at YWCA Canberra and we welcomed new Executive Director, Katherine Hellwig.

Our Early Childhood team has worked with over 740+ children 5 years and under across the Canberra and surrounding region. We continue to provide quality school age care for close to 1400 children aged 4-12 years at 12 locations.

Our achievements in staff workplace relations are also notable. This year, we negotiated a new Enterprise Agreement, offering paid parental leave on commencement, alongside three days of paid shutdown leave, recognising the critical role our workforce plays. Through our fourth Stretch RAP and our advocacy, we continue to honour our commitment to reconciliation.

Through the Rentwell program growing rapidly, we now have almost 150 homes and our specialist homelessness services, solidified long-term funding agreements that bolster our support for survivors of domestic and family violence.

Our Registered Training Organisation continues to train future leaders, reaching 356 students this year and we celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual She Leads Conference bringing 2025 as the next decade of She Leads events.

I'm equally proud of our ongoing accreditation and our recognition as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality, an honour we've held for 13 years. This aligns seamlessly with our commitment to fostering safe, respectful, and inclusive workplaces, reinforced by our dedication to the principles of the Work Respect initiative which is being completed in organisations all across Australia.

We have been successful in securing our core ACT Government homelessness funding through the commissioning processes over the last few years. The impact of our specialist homelessness

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services and DFSV support services has been recognized with a doubling of our contract funding services and securing contracts for the next decade.

Future looking we will continue in our growth strategy including expansion of our own housing portfolio, secure the Federal government funding for 5 years for both the National Womens Safety Alliance and Nation Womens equality Alliance, providing us with a platform to influence policy at the federal level.

We are continuing to assess opportunities for future early learning centers and SAC program. The addition of Aranda Primary School SAC this year was very competitive and again acknowledgement of our quality programs.

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 almost 500 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.

A special thanks to the Board, the support, dedication, expertise is invaluable. As the organisation grows in complexity and diversifies our income and impact, it is through your considered governance, audit, risk and financial management that the executive team are grateful for. Your trust and guidance give us the confidence to be bold in decision making and pushes us to dream bigger in achieving our strategic goals.

Thank you.

Are there any questions relating to this report?

- No questions were asked.

**Motion: that the Executive Director's Report for the year ending 30 June 2024 as presented be adopted.**

**Moved by:** Angie Ford

**Seconded by:** Jacqui Dowling

The motion to accept the Executive Director's Report for the year ending 30 June 2024 is passed.

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

## **5. Treasurer's Report**

Natalie Hyde, Treasurer 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 2023-24 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 81 of the Annual report.

YWCA Canberra remains in a sound financial position with net assets as of 30 June 2024 \$16,410,168 representing an increase of \$2,044,670 or 14%. The increase in net assets was primarily attributable to income growth in children's services due to improved occupancy, increase in capital grants and donations for Y Homes social housing project, and gains in our investment

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portfolio. These key factors have strengthened our asset base and providing additional resources for future sustainability. This will enable us to expand our services and respond to future community needs.

In summary, our financial results for 2023-24 financial year were:

- Total income is just over \$31.13 million, an increase from \$26.21 million from the 2022-2023.
- The total comprehensive income is \$1,230,850
- Our cash reserves declined to \$5.07 million from \$5.59 million in the previous year. This decrease is attributed to a \$108k increase in cash used for investing activities and an additional \$385k in lease repayments, following the lease incentives received by the central office in FY 2022-23. Nonetheless, our short-term financial needs remain well-covered.
- Total equity as of 30 June 2024 stands at slightly over \$16.4 million, increasing from \$14.3 million in the prior year.

Our auditor, Kathleen Buckley from Bellchambers Barrett for joining us this evening online. Are there any questions from members for Kathleen, relating to the audit and Financial statements?

Are there any questions for the Auditors?

- No questions were asked.

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 2023–24 year demonstrates the value of the diversification of income sources that our Board and Executive have been pursuing. 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 were asked.

**Motion: I propose that the Treasurer's Report for the year ended 30 June 2024 as presented be adopted.**

Do I have a mover and seconder?

**Moved by:** Caroline Khalili

**Seconded by:** Eleanor Sander O'Hearn

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

**Motion: That the Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2024 as presented be adopted.**

Do I have a mover and seconder?

**Moved by:** Kristin Blume

**Seconded by:** Renee Mastrolemba

The motion to accept the Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2024 is passed.

## **6. Appointment of Auditor**

Natalie Hyde presented the following as Treasurer:

I would now like to move to our Resolutions for the removal and appointment of new auditors.

The President noted, we will do a vote and if all in attendance could confirm if they are in favour or against.

### **Resolution 1 – Ordinary Resolution**

YWCA Canberra remove Bellchambers Barrett as the current auditor of the company, with effect from the end of the meeting at which this resolution is passed.

All in Favor of Resolution 1:

- **All in Favor - Unanimous**

Resolution 1 passes.

### **Resolution 2 – Special Resolution**

Subject to the passing of Resolution 1, YWCA Canberra appoint RSM Australia as the auditor of the company, with effect from the end of the meeting at which this resolution is passed.

All in Favor of Resolution 2:

- **All in Favor – Unanimous**

Resolution 2 passes.

### **Resolution 3 – Ordinary Resolution**

Subject to the passing of Resolution 2, RSM Australia's remuneration for the 2024/2025 financial year be fixed at \$45,000 excluding GST.

All in Favor of Resolution 3:

- **All in Favor – Unanimous**

Resolution 3 passes.

### **Resolution 4 – Ordinary Resolution**

That the Company and its Directors do all things necessary to give effect to the above resolutions.

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All in Favor of Resolution 4:

- **All in Favor – Unanimous**

Resolution 4 passes.

**Motion: that the YWCA of Canberra appoints RSM Australia as auditors for the 2024 -2025 year and approves all resolutions:**

YWCA Canberra moves a vote of thanks to the Auditors, Bellchambers Barrett for their professional and timely work throughout the year. Bellchamber Barrett have been appointed our auditor for the last 6 years, the Board would like to thank you for your services over this period and again to Kathleen for attending our AGM this evening.

I move that YWCA Canberra appoints RSM Australia as auditors for the 2024–25 year.

**Moved by:** Eleanor Sander O’Hearn

**Seconded by:** Kristin Blume

The motion to accept RSM Australia as the auditors for the 2024 – 2025 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.

- No Questions were 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.

### **Bernadette Carbin**

We are thrilled to announce Bernadette Carbin as a life member at our AGM. Bernadette has been an invaluable part of YWCA Canberra, serving as the Deputy CEO and Executive Director of Children’s Services.

Her dedication and leadership have significantly contributed to our mission and the well-being of our community. Bernadette's commitment to excellence and her passion for making a difference have left a lasting impact on all of us.

Bernadette served as our Executive Director Children’s Services and Deputy CEO with a service of 13.5 years. When Bernadette joined YWCA Canberra in 2011, we had 2 two Early Learning Centres and five SAC programs. On Bernadettes retirement, the portfolio has grown to seven Early Learning Centre and 12 ASC programs.

Bernadette has contributed to the growth and financial sustainability of YWCA Canberra and our reputation as a quality, leading children’s services provider in the region. Bernadette led the services through one of our most challenging periods during Covid. We were required to keep services open

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for key workers and managing hygiene and infection control processes, for children who were not able to be vaccinated.

In addition to Bernadette's legacy to our Children's Services Portfolio, Bernadette was a key member of the executive team, acted as CEO on many occasions during her tenure and has been pivotal in delivery on the whole of organisations strategic plans and successful impact and outcomes for YWCA Canberra.

I now call on Bernadette to come forward and accept her life membership badge and please join me in congratulating our newest Life Member, Bernadette Carbin!

## **9. Announcement of election of Board of Directors**

I will now pass to our Retuning Officer, Kirsty Martin – Chair of our Nominations Committee to announce the Board Directors following the election and our new Board Trainee.

Good evening everyone,

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

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

We received only one nomination for Treasurer, Natalie Hyde and I am please to annouce Natalie will contiune as Teasurer YWCA Canberra. Congratulations Natalie.

We received only one nomination for Vice President, Kristin Blume and I am please to annouce Kristin will contiune as Vice President YWCA Canberra. Congratulations Kristin.

We received two 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 one vacant positions need to be filled by young women.

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

- Maree Harman
- Tahlia Burgoyne-Thorek

Congratulations Maree and Tahlia.

It is now my pleasure to announce the recipient of our 2025 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 traineeship we have available and I want to thank eveyone who nominated.

Our incoming Board Trainee for 2025 is:

- Anne-Marie Ruiz-Ferrandiz

Congratulations Anne-Marie, the Board looks forward to working with you over the coming year.

I will now hand back to Carina.

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## **10. Thanking and acknowledgement of outgoing Board Directors and Trainees**

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Kirsty Martin, who will finish as a director on the Board at this AGM.

Kirsty your leadership and contribution to YWCA Canberra has been immense. It has been an privilege to work with you for the past three years and on behalf of YWCA Canberra thank you for your dedication and invaluable contribution.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank our Board Trainees for 2024.

- Lucy Archinal-Hudson
- Eve Currie
- Nitya Taneja

## **11. Close of meeting**

This now concludes the formal proceedings for this evening. Thank you all for in attending the 2024 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: 6:41PM**