



## Minutes

### WEPA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 7:30pm

ZOOM meeting

*The meeting papers for the WEPA Annual General Meeting, including agenda and Treasurer's Report, were emailed to members on 4<sup>th</sup> June.*

**Attendees:** Marc Cottee, Eva Coulam, Kay Donovan, Jade HSueh, Diana Jones, Helen Jordan, Heidi Key, Wayne Kosh, John Moratelli (chair), Geoff Osborne, Christina Pender, Robyn Pettit, Diana Pryde, John Pryde, Lisa Selbie, Judy Simpson, Sue-Ellen Smith, Gay Spies, Helen Wicker, Jonathon Wicker

**Apologies:** Wendy Bishop, Lorraine Cairnes, Jocelyn Chey, Tig Crowley, Kristina Dodds, Jill Green, Mary Ann Irvin, Tim James, Kate Lamb, Peter Moffitt, Mary-Jane Morgan, Garth Newton, Bob Taffel, Andrew Scott, Alasdair Stuart

#### 1. Opening remarks – John Moratelli, President

1.1 John Moratelli opened the meeting at 7:31pm and welcomed everyone.

1.2 John acknowledged the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Gamaraigal people, paid respect to their elders past and present, and acknowledged their care and nurturing of the land over tens of millennia.

1.3 ***It was moved by John Moratelli, seconded by Gay Spies, that the apologies as listed above be accepted. Carried.***

#### 2. Minutes of the AGM held 4th June 2024

The minutes of the last AGM were circulated with the meeting papers.

***It was moved by John Moratelli, seconded by Wayne Kosh, that the minutes of the WEPA Annual General Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024 be adopted. Carried.***

### 3. Receiving of Reports

#### 3.1 President's Report – John Moratelli

John Moratelli read his report for the preceding 12 months. He thanked the committee members for their work and mentioned in particular the hard work of Secretary, Heidi Key, who was named Willoughby Environmental Citizen of the Year.

John's report is **Attachment A**.

***It was moved by John Moratelli, seconded by Geoff Osborne, that the President's Report for 2024-25 be accepted. Carried.***

#### 3.2 Treasurer's Report – Diana Jones

Diana Jones presented her Treasurer's Report which was provided with the meeting papers. Diana mentioned that we are in a similar financial position as last year having an excess of receipts over payments of about \$100, and that we continue to make monthly donations to Climate Council, Environmental Defenders Office, Nature Conservation Council, and Total Environment Centre.

Diana observed that the increase in membership fees in 2024 had helped with receipts.

The Treasurer's Report is **Attachment B**.

***It was moved by Diana Jones, seconded by Christina Pender, that the Treasurer's Report for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 be accepted. Carried.***

There were no questions on these reports.

### 4. Election of Office Bearers

***It was moved by John Moratelli, seconded by Gay Spies, that Diana Pryde be appointed Returning Officer. Carried.***

A call for nominees to the Executive Committee was circulated by email to all WEPA members on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2025. The Returning Officer, Diana Pryde, reported that WEPA had not received more nominations than positions available, and the current positions held had been re-applied for. The following nominations have been received, and all nominations have been accepted by nominees:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Nominee</u>	<u>Nominated</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
PRESIDENT	John Moratelli	Carol Matthews	John Pryde
VICE PRESIDENT	Gay Spies	Diana Jones	John Pryde

SECRETARY	Heidi Key	Kristina Dodds	Sebastian Tan
ASSISTANT SECRETARY	Christina Pender	Geoff Osborne	Heidi Key
TREASURER	Diana Jones	Gay Spies	John Pryde
COMMITTEE MEMBER	Eva Coulam	Heidi Key	Mary Ann Irvin
COMMITTEE MEMBER	Kristina Dodds	Gabriella Tan	Sebastian Tan
COMMITTEE MEMBER	Garth Newton	Kristina Dodds	Heidi Key
COMMITTEE MEMBER	Geoff Osborne	Christina Pender	Heidi Key
COMMITTEE MEMBER	John Pryde	Diana Pryde	Andrew Nelson

The Returning Officer stated that as there had been only one nominee for each of the positions, the above nominees were declared **elected**.

The remaining two ordinary committee member positions remain casual vacancies, which may be filled at the discretion of the Committee prior to the next AGM.

John Moratelli resumed the chair.

John mentioned that **WEPA's next public meeting** will be on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2025 at the Dougherty Centre. Time TBA. Nick Chapman, Willoughby City Council Resilience Specialist, and Alistair Quek, WCC Tree Compliance Officer, will talk about tree management in Willoughby. The NSW Government is proposing higher fines for illegal removal of trees and vegetation. All welcome.

**5. John Moratelli closed the meeting at 7:53pm**

## **Attachment A     President's Report – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024 – 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

### WEPA President's Report – 2025 AGM

It's always difficult for the committee to decide what we should devote our limited resources to, and the period covered by this report has been no different. Although we now have an annual planning meeting early each year to help us decide what our priorities should be, the meetings illustrate that we can't do all that we would like with the limited resources available to us.

While the committee has had very little turnover of membership for years, and functions well, we are aware of the need to recruit more members to the committee to better share the work around and take on new projects. To encourage this we are happy for members who may be interested in finding out how the committee operates and the issues we need to consider, to observe our meetings. If you'd like to contribute your ideas, talents or time, but don't have the capacity for a committee role, we welcome any support that members can offer. This might be occasional help with a WEPA event, helping with submissions or writing something for our newsletter. We understand that personal life commitments are the priority, so we aim to make local environmental advocacy a positive experience, not a burden. In either event you can contact us via our website.

One of WEPA's longstanding priorities has been to inform the community about where candidates for election stand in relation to important environmental issues, and during the past year we have done so in relation to the council and the recent national elections.

For the Willoughby council elections, WEPA sent out a survey to all the candidates and reported on their responses via a bulletin to members. The elections resulted in the election of four environmental independents to Willoughby council, of which I am one, under the banner Willoughby Community Independents. This result, along with the defeat of some conservative candidates by WCI and other independents, should result in a more environmentally progressive council.

For the national elections, WEPA and Doctors for the Environment Australia, co-hosted a very successful Meet the Candidates event at the Zenith Theatre on 26 March, attended by around 200. Nicolette Boele (Independent), Gisele Kapterian (Liberal), Louise McCallum (Labor) and Heather Armstrong, representing Harjit Singh (The Greens) introduced themselves, answered five prepared questions, took audience questions, and gave closing remarks - all within 90 minutes. The evening was expertly moderated by Professor Nick Talley, Head of Medicine at the University of Newcastle. And we joined up eight new members at the event!

Another priority is member recruitment. One of the ways in which we do this is by participating in community events which for last year were – National Tree Day, the Fauna Fair and the Northbridge Baths Centenary. These events not only allow us to talk to people about what we do but allow us to raise awareness about current environmental issues and fundraise through raffles, the selling of wildlife cards and, depending on the event, the selling of native plants.

We have also made it a priority to produce a seasonal WEPA News, which we succeeded in doing in June, September and November 2024, and in February and May 2025, and which have generated positive feedback from members. Then there are the ten or so bulletins published during the year informing members of upcoming events whether organised by us or others, advising members of the responses to the candidates' survey, and alerting members to opportunities to lodge submissions on relevant environmental issues.

These efforts haven't come at the cost of WEPA contributing to environmental debate by way of submissions:

- We made a submission to the Nature Conservation Council of NSW in relation to their policy document for the 2024 council elections which helped focus the document on the issues councils can influence and give more coverage to issues specific to metropolitan environmental organisations such as ours.
- Our submission to the NSW Legislative Council's Inquiry into the development of the Transport Oriented Development Program resulted in my giving verbal evidence to the inquiry and answering questions in July. I said that, while WEPA supported sensible infill and medium density and didn't want Sydney to continue to sprawl indefinitely, we thought the government's proposals would lead to loss of urban tree canopy, an increase in the urban heat island effect, loss of habitat, and impact non-car-based transport options. I also said we supported windfall gain taxes to recover some of the uplift in property values generated by public transport investment to support such investment.
- We also made submissions:
  - o to the NSW Government on the Draft Guidelines for Synthetic Turf in Public Open Spaces
  - o to the Senate Inquiry into the Nature Positive Bill 2024 looking at changes to the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act
  - o to the NSW EPA on their action paper NSW Plastics: The Way Forward
  - o to the NSW Legislative Council's Inquiry into the Management of Cat Populations

- o in relation to the Discussion Paper on the NSW Government's Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws
- o in relation to the Department of Planning's proposed changes to the Biodiversity and Conservation SEPP to deter illegal tree and vegetation clearing

These priorities have meant that we have not had as many film screenings or talks as usual. However, we did conduct a very successful webinar in June in relation to synthetic turf. Between the heat generated by synthetic turf fields, the risk of burns, the toxic PFAS chemicals used, and the microplastic waste generated, these fields are becoming an increasing problem in our local environment. At our webinar, Natural Turf Alliance President and Co-founder, Catriona Carver, spoke about these problems arising from the use of synthetic turf in our public open space and answered audience questions.

We also continue to engage with other environmental groups, particularly the peak NSW environmental group, the Nature Conservation Council of NSW; the Natural Turf Alliance, Asian Australians for Climate Solutions and our neighbouring local environmental group, STEP, covering Ku-ring-gai, Hornsby and surrounding suburbs.

WEPA is also represented at the quarterly meetings of the Northern Landcare Network which is an informal network representing groups and organisations involved in ecological restoration and/or the environment.

Finally, I'd like to thank all our committee members for their hard work over the year. Between them they generate all the bulletins, newsletters, events and submissions I've outlined. It's very much a team effort. But I should give a special shoutout to Heidi Key, our indefatigable Secretary, who not only spends an enormous amount of time fulfilling that role but managed, through her work as a keen bush regenerator over many years, to score this year's gong for the Willoughby Environmental Citizen of the Year.

John Moratelli

10 June 2025

# Attachment B Treasurer's Report – Year-ending December 2024

## WILLOUGHBY ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ASSOCIATION (WEPA) INCORPORATED BALANCE SHEET AS AT:

	31-Dec-24	31-Dec-23	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-21
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Westpac Community Solutions Cheque account	2,547.10	2,455.15	438.15	163.12
Westpac Community Solutions Cash Reserve	4,213.94	4,213.58	5,713.15	7,212.48
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>6,761.04</b>	<b>6,668.73</b>	<b>6,151.30</b>	<b>7,375.60</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Australian Ethical Investment	2,313.75	2,237.80	2,039.85	2,276.88
Projector funded by Willoughby City Council	1,910.00	1,910.00	1,910.00	1,910.00
Less Depreciated value of projector	-1,910.00	-1,910.00	-1,910.00	
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>2,313.75</b>	<b>2,237.80</b>	<b>2,039.85</b>	<b>4,186.88</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>9,074.79</b>	<b>8,906.30</b>	<b>8,191.15</b>	<b>11,562.48</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>				
Memberships in Advance	100.00	110.00	85.00	110.00
	100.00	110.00	85.00	110.00
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>110.00</b>	<b>85.00</b>	<b>110.00</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>8,974.79</b>	<b>8,796.33</b>	<b>8,106.15</b>	<b>11,452.48</b>
<b>ACCUMULATED FUNDS</b>				
Balance as at 1st January 2024	8,796.33	8,106.15	11,452.48	12,452.92
Increase (-Decrease) in value of Australian Ethical Investment	76.15	197.75	-237.03	446.33
Reduction by depreciation in value of projector			-1,910.00	
Add Excess of Receipts over Payments				
/Deduct Excess of Payments over Receipts	102.31	492.43	-1,199.30	-1,446.77
<b>Balance as at 31 December 2024</b>	<b>8,974.79</b>	<b>8,796.33</b>	<b>8,106.15</b>	<b>11,452.48</b>
	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

## WILLOUGHBY ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ASSOCIATION (WEPA) INCORPORATED INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR:

	ENDED 31-Dec-24	ENDED 31-Dec-23	ENDED 31-Dec-22	ENDED 31-Dec-21
<b>RECEIPTS</b>				
Membership Fees	2,550.00	1,830.00	1,580.00	1,185.00
Donations - General	1,259.00	1,774.98	2,420.00	1,850.00
Donations - Tunnel legal costs	0.00	0.00	5,425.00	0.00
Sales of plants, cards, raffle tickets, Lyrebird entrance	843.00	4,481.51	846.48	0.00
Interest Received	0.36	0.43	0.87	0.89
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>4,652.36</b>	<b>7,886.93</b>	<b>10,272.15</b>	<b>3,035.89</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>				
Advertising				105.00
Filing Fees - NSW Fair Trading-Constitution change + Annual Filing fee		106.46	101.44	47.21
Insurance - Public Liability & Volunteers	420.00	415.00	395.00	390.00
Legal Fees re Beaches Link Tunnel			5,500.00	
Meeting Expenses \$77 - reimbursed by NCC		0.00	250.00	
NCC Conference fees reimb John M. M Fowley		62.97		
Post Office Box rental	174.00	153.00	144.00	136.00
Purchases of Cards, Plants, stall fees	694.55	2,187.15	1,221.00	
Speaker		345.00		
Square Card Reader & fees deducted	11.25	48.02	59.00	
Subscriptions and Donations				
- ACF - membership plus donation	70.00			
- Better Planning Network	600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00
- Climate Council	600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00
- Environmental Defenders Office donation	600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00
- NCC Membership	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00
- NCC Donation	600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00
- TEC	600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00
- Turf alliance		200.00		
- The Wildemess Society	150.00	2,820.00	650.00	3,250.00
Web site / facebook expenses		183.96	396.00	396.00
Zoom 1 year subscription		246.29	230.89	156.45
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>4,550.05</b>	<b>7,394.49</b>	<b>11,471.45</b>	<b>4,482.66</b>
<b>EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER PAYMENTS</b>	<b>102.31</b>	<b>492.43</b>	<b>-1,199.30</b>	<b>-1,446.77</b>
/EXCESS OF PAYMENTS OVER RECEIPTS				