



## Special General Meeting Minutes

<b>Date:</b>	Sunday, 21 May 2023
<b>Time:</b>	1:38 pm opened by Pasan Tennakoon
<b>Place:</b>	Port School, Wheeler Road, Hamilton Hill and Online

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Blazing Swan Committee acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all First Nations Australia peoples today.

Committee Attending	
Paul Castle (resigning)	Treasurer
Gerard Laumen	Ordinary Committee Member
Lena Neumeier (resigning)	Ordinary Committee Member
John McCann	Secretary
Pasan Tennakoon (resigning)	Chairperson

Attending Members			
Will Amesz	Jane Hawdon	Hedda Koenig	Damien Roper
Elicia Anders	Genevieve Howe	Gerard Laumen	Sanjai Santos
Joseph Andrin	Brett Iddon	Ryan Linkowski	Holly Schulze
Sharon Banks	Alice McKinnon	Anton Lord	Jess Schwedinger
Major Banvait	Wren Jessica Richards	Sharyn Maes	Gwendelyn-Jay Selkirk
Vida Barrett	Diggory Frampton	Alicia Manolas	Balmik Soin
Tim Braybrooke	Martin Phillips	John McCann	Kimberley Strong
Paul Castle	Blake Rawlins	Clint Moore	Pasan Tennakoon
Gemma Conroy	Brian Johnson	Verena Mornhinweg	Kara Tripp
Craig Dickinson	Drew Johnston	Richard Morup	Nicholas Turner
Daniel Farrell	Gwynneth Jones	David Moyses	Jennifer Van Der Wacht
Leila Folland	Alice Kavanagh	Lena Neumeier	Tim Viljoen

Joy Foster	Nimrod Kazoom	Barnaby Nichols	Lewis Viljoen
Bruce Garrod	Glyn Kernick	Josh Niven	Stean Vitasovic
James Hastings	Michael King	Peter Roehrig	Sonia Vivienne-Thorp
Adam Ward	Joel Cornwall	Deric Martin	Andy Hunter
Bruce Wicksteed	Stuart Porter	Martin Drake	Sharon Gibson
Angus Priest	Nat Spendier	Garth Krasinski	Kirk Hawthorn
Peter Sharp	Yasmin Delacour	David Cake	Cindy Stingel

<b>Proxies</b> In format: Member acting as proxy, Member who granted them proxy. “*” Indicates proxy granted with restrictions	
Genevieve Howe	Kirsty Rochford
Genevieve Howe	Craig Dickinson
Genevieve Howe	Nick O’Halloran
Marie Clarke	Nina Triche
Marie Clarke	Andrew McFarlane**
Vida Barrett	Tony Howard**
Vida Barrett	Neoma Ghosh
Vida Barrett	Tom Draffen
Glyn Kernick	Elisabeth Kernick
Kimberley Strong	Clinton Arnott
Gemma Conroy	Matt Field
Tim Viljoen	Chloe King

<b>Declaration of a Material Personal Interest (Conflict of Interest)</b>
Lewis Viljoen is a Director of Easy Access, a company that might be invoicing Blazing Swan for services in March and possibly April 2023. Easy Access is also storing the Koasis Theme Camp shipping container.

## **REPORT TO MEMBERSHIP by Pasan Tennakoon**

Pasan Tennakoon thanked the Committee and Volunteer Team Heads of Department and Leads.

He reported that just over 3,000 tickets had been sold (attendance was approximately 2,850) The total value of tickets sold was approx \$815,000, that with expenses of approximately \$760,000 would leave an expected event operating surplus of \$55,000. There had been an increased arts budget and an increase in theme camp grants this year. We also had two new volunteer Teams this year - Wellness and Accessibility. We had a record number of event volunteers this year - 459. Pasan noted that several Heads of Department and Leads were stepping down following the event, and thanked them.

The Association's net bank position is currently \$435,000, noting however that invoices are still coming in from the event. The Association's goal is to carry forward a reserve of \$300,000 as provision against event cancellation in any one year due to some unexpected circumstance.

Pasan reported that the expiry of the lease with the operators of the 38 Amherst Street facility on 28 February 2023 had prompted Blazing Swan to review its container storage arrangements and it had been decided that it would be most effective to have a new site selected in time to receive the shipping containers returning from Kulin post-event. This was the final stage of a process initiated by Membership in 2021 to reassess all of Blazing Swan's relationship with the operators of the 38 Amherst Street facility. Pasan noted that the short time frame which we gave ourselves and some failures in communication had made this a difficult process. He said he was optimistic about the potential for the new shipping container storage site in Kewdale.

Members asked where we would find build space for the Temple and Effigy if we no longer had access to the 38 Amherst Street facility. Pasan said he expected to be able to hire space for about \$5,000 to \$10,000 each year. Pasan apologised to the two Theme Camps whose shipping container arrangements had been caught up in this, although he said he understood those issues had been sorted out.

## **LESSONS LEARNED 2023 by Pasan Tennakoon and the Membership**

Pasan Tennakoon said that the event was a success despite a very challenging external environment. He thanked all those people who had responded quickly and effectively to two very serious critical incidents

Members took issue with Pasan's characterisation of the response to these critical incidents as timely and successful. Members said that their personal experience included having minimal contact and support from Blazing Swan, and noted that there had been a lot of positive spin and talk, but very little straight talking or evidence of progress in addressing concerns about how these issues arose and were subsequently addressed.

Pasan said that concerns for confidentiality had created difficulties. Members said that they were looking for a simple apology from him for those things that hadn't been done well, rather than explanations. Joseph Andrin spoke up at this point and apologised for his involvement as Community Relations Head of Department in an instance of miscommunication in the follow up to one of the critical incidents.

It was noted that Blazing Swan needed to apply, and has committed to apply, continuous improvement of our trauma response onsite, and our support for first responders during and post-event.

Pasan said there had been an issue with a contractor that had caused problems in the provision of electricity, but this had been overcome. Pasan said that the weather and the eclipse in Exmouth had resulted in fewer than usual people staying post-event to help with packdown. There were also issues with organising transport of shipping containers back to the new storage site. Members commented that these were entirely predictable issues and the fault was the Committee's lack of planning or attention to the issue of packdown, and the problem with shipping containers was one of its own making.

Pasan and Members made several observations about how packdown might be better handled in future, noting that it has always been hard and difficult work. The people up there this year went above and beyond and can't be criticised, but we need to do it differently next year. Blazing Swan was listening to feedback and was looking at, among other things:

- Creating a dedicated Team just for packdown
- Having clear roles, directions, equipment and appropriately trained crew
- Using contractors where appropriate
- Having more - and better - storage space and storage containers onsite
- Have Theme Camps and participants leave site on time
- Have standardised containers for Theme Camps using the cargo return to Perth service

Members observed that rules were being broken without apparent repercussions including instances of people using drones, bringing unauthorised animals into food preparation and serving areas and failing to leave the site at the conclusion of the event. Pasan advised that the drone in question had been confiscated for the duration of the event.

Members observed that it seemed that there had been a shortage of Shift Event Managers and onsite administrative support. There were repeated instances where the Operations Office was locked and unattended. Pasan said there had been problems recruiting experienced people and although there was a conscious attempt to train up people in the role it could be some years before we could be confident in getting a good crew together. Pasan observed that he did multiple night shifts.

Members observed that the very late notice that Mutant Vehicles would not be able to operate with passengers had upset the plans of many of the operators who had put a lot of time and money in getting these vehicles to site. Pasan said that it was an issue with the Shire's Environmental Health & Safety Officer who had ruled late in the day that Mutant Vehicles would be treated as amusement rides and be subject to stringent regulation. We could not satisfy those regulatory requirements in the timeframe available and we were given approval to operate them only on the basis that they not carry passengers while moving about. This information was communicated to Mutant Vehicle operators as soon as it became clear our attempts to get approval for the vehicles to operate with passengers had failed. He said that Blazing Swan hoped to be able to get full regulatory approval in time for next year's event.

A member noted their concern that there seemed to be a constant drive to have more and more people attend the event. They said it was their view that it's down to the Membership to decide who we want. How do we attract people who will make a contribution to our community? Perhaps we should be looking at giving priority to strengthening our community rather than simply growing our event. Pasan said it was a requirement flowing from our affiliation with Burning Man to be an inclusive event, and not to filter people (unless there are legal matters that would prevent them attending). David Cake, the Burning Man Regional Representative said at this point that 'welcoming the stranger' (the Principle of Radical Inclusion) did not mean welcoming people who are known to create problems.

Some Members observed that it might be advantageous to require ALL event participants to volunteer in some capacity. That way everybody, and especially new people, would get the Blaze experience from the 'ground up'.

Pasan told the meeting that there were many vacancies for year round roles in the organisation, particularly since the Event closed. He recommended that members look at them and think about applying.

The Meeting was then adjourned for twenty minutes. When the meeting resumed there was a presentation of a farewell card to Pasan, and the presentation of a gift from the Committee members. Pasan thanked the Committee, the volunteers and the Members.

The Meeting then moved on to a discussion of current Committee vacancies and voting to fill those vacancies, as detailed in the following table.

## Election of New Committee Members

### CHAIRPERSON

Pasan Tennakoon announced his resignation from the role of Chairperson of the Association. John McCann, the Association Secretary took over the role of chairing the meeting. John McCann called for nominations for the now vacant position of Association Chairperson. Lewis Viljoen was the only person to stand for the position.

John McCann moved, **“This meeting accepts the resignation of Pasan Tennakoon as Chairperson and resolves to appoint Lewis Viljoen to the position of Chairperson of the Association.”**  
Seconded Michael King and David Cake. Motion carried.

### DEPUTY CHAIR

John McCann noted that the position of Deputy Chair of the Association is currently vacant. John McCann called for nominations for the vacant position of Deputy Chair. Tim Viljoen was the only person to stand for the position.

John McCann moved, **“This meeting notes that the position of Deputy Chair is currently vacant and resolves to appoint Tim Viljoen to the position of Deputy Chair of the Association.”**  
Seconded Gemma Conroy and Sharon Banks. Motion carried.

### TREASURER

Paul Castle announced his resignation from the role of Treasurer of the Association. John McCann called for nomination for the now vacant position of Treasurer. Jess Schwendinger was the only person to stand for the position.

John McCann moved, **“This meeting accepts the resignation of Paul Castle as Treasurer and resolves to appoint Jess Schwendinger to the position of Treasurer of the Association.”**  
Seconded Alica Manolas and Will Amesz. Motion carried.

### ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Lena Neumeier announced her resignation from the role of Ordinary Committee Member of the Association. John McCann noted that there were a further three positions of Ordinary Committee Member currently vacant. John McCann called for nomination for the four vacant positions. Kimberley Strong, Paul Castle, Genevieve Howe and Sharyn Maes were the only persons to stand for the positions.

John McCann moved, **“This meeting accepts the resignation of Lena Neumeier as Ordinary Committee Member and noting that there are now four positions of Ordinary Committee Member currently vacant, resolves to appoint Kimberley Strong, Paul Castle, Genevieve Howe and Sharyn Maes to the vacant positions of Ordinary Committee Member in the Association Committee.”** Seconded Kirk Hawthorn and Major Banvair. Motion carried.

John McCann, acting chair of the meeting, thanked everyone for their attendance and congratulated the new Committee. He declared the meeting closed at 5pm.

As acting chair of this meeting, I certify that these are the correct Minutes of the Blazing Swan General Meeting held on Sunday 21 May 2023.

..... John McCann, Secretary BLAZING SWAN INCORPORATED, 20  
June 2023