



BLAZING SWAN INC

Annual General Meeting Minutes

Date:	Sunday, 17 September 2023
Time:	1:00 pm opened by Lewis Viljoen
Place:	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	Ordinary Committee Member
Genevieve Howe	Ordinary Committee Member
Gerard Laumen	Ordinary Committee Member
John McCann	Secretary
Sharyn Maes	Ordinary Committee Member
Jess Schwendinger	Treasurer
Kimmy Strong	Ordinary Committee Member
Lewis Viljoen	Chairperson
Tim Viljoen	Deputy Chairperson

Attending Members			
Jane Hawden	Anton Lord	Sanjai Santos	Jennifer Van Der Wacht
Drew Johnson	Andrew MacFarlane	Holly Schulze	Sharon Banks
Alice Kavanagh	Richard Morup	Nicola Schuman	Bryan Sommerville
Nimrod Kazoom	Stuart Porter	Gaetan Schurrer	Gemma Conroy
Glyn Kernick	Ashleigh Povey	Nat Spendier	Wren Porter
Ryan Linkowski	Peter Roehrig	Cindy Stingel	Elicia Anders
Joseph Andrin	Major Banvait	Matt Field	Daniel Farrell
Clinton Arnott	Marie Clarke	Ben Grenfell	

Proxies
Neoma Ghosh
Kirsty Rochford
Sonia Vivienne-Thorpe
Elisabeth Kernick
Wally Douglas
Stean Vitasovich
David Moyse
Eva Sirantoine

Declaration of a Material Personal Interest (Conflict of Interest
Lewis Viljoen is a Director of Easy Access, a company that might be invoicing Blazing Swan for services in March and possibly April 2023. Koasis Theme Camp is storing a shipping container at the same site occupied by Easy Access..

REPORTS TO MEMBERSHIP

Message from the Chair - Lewis Viljoen, Association Chairperson

Lewis thanked everyone who was attending in person and online. He observed that he had promised to lead the Association through a period of solid consolidation. He noted that the Committee was functioning well, meeting two hours every week, steadily working through finishing up issues associated with the 2023 Event and setting the scene for the 2024 Event.

While the focus was on consolidation, the Association was working on several initiatives that should address some immediate concerns and also lay the groundwork for the Association's - and the Event's - long term future. We were, he said, working on:

- Strengthening our relationship with Kulin
- Recruiting to all vacant positions, and encouraging the Leadership Mentoring and Development Program developed by Sharon Banks and Genevieve Howe.
- Improving our financial recording and reporting systems to allow us to better manage expenditure.
- Looking at an overhaul of our Volunteer Management system, our Website, and our Membership system.
- Recruiting a logistics and assets specialist, and negotiating to relocate and expand our container storage space at the Event Site.

Volunteer Recognition - Gerard Laumen, Committee Member

Gerard thanked all of our volunteers. We had a record number of Event Crew at our 2023, including the new Accessibility Team. In addition to the Event volunteers, we were indebted to our year-round volunteers who did all the essential work in-between the Blazing Swan Events, and all the necessary planning and preparatory work leading up to each Blazing Swan Event.

Treasury report - Paul Castle and Jess Schwendinger

Paul Castle, our former Treasurer, advised that we were still working through the data for the 2023 Event. At this stage it appeared that the 2023 Event may have operated at a small loss. It was important to note that the projected loss may be reduced as final bills are processed. Furthermore we had started the 2024 Event with over \$300,000 in reserve

2023 Event

Total Income	\$812,467.9
Expenses	\$886,495.62
Net surplus according to Xero	-\$74,027.72

Net position in the bank	\$293,320.33
--------------------------	--------------

Jess, our current Treasurer, told the meeting that we were still working on preparing the audited financial report. This had been held up due to workload issues with the Auditors, and we hoped to have it available in October.

Over the last few months we had been doing a thorough review of our financial accounting and budgeting systems and were working with our accountants to make these better reflect the increasing size and complexity of our operations. This also included going back through previous expenditure data. Out of this work we hoped to improve our ability to drill down into areas and categories of expenditure for the purposes of making comparisons from year to year and producing information for our operational areas and Members.

Jess reported that we were also moving forward with work to:

- Identify a prudent reserve which we would carry forward from year to year. At the moment we were working with the idea of carrying a reserve of \$250,000
- Understand the issues around creating a benevolent fund, separately funded and under the management of trustees that could be used to support members of our community.
- Increase the transfer of skills from our contracted Accountants to our volunteers
- Address succession planning for the Treasurer and the key roles in our Finance Team
- Make our financial information more accessible.

More generally we were looking to improve our financial situation through a careful process of asset acquisition (and improved asset management) and investment in infrastructure improvements where - and only where - that approach clearly offered long term savings and advantages. Hired equipment and services would, however, always be part of our operating model, whether for reasons of economy, safety, timing or best use of our volunteer resources. We were mindful of the need wherever possible of improving the skills of our volunteers through training or the opportunity to transfer skills from our contractors. Jess presented our expectation for 2024 in the following table:

2024 Event

Estimated income	\$1,167,000
Estimated expenses	\$1,100,674
Estimated surplus	\$66,326

Special Resolutions to Amend the Blazing Swan Incorporated Constitution - John McCann, Association Secretary

John asked the Meeting to consider the following Special Resolutions, numbered 1. To 8. below, to amend the Association Constitution:

1, John McCann moved, "THIS MEETING RESOLVES TO APPROVE A SPECIAL RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE BLAZING SWAN INCORPORATED CONSTITUTION BY REMOVING SUBRULE 37(2)."

John explained that the intention of this rule change is to rescind an previous change to the model rules that allowed for a new (first time) appointee to serve on Committee for up to two years before coming up for re-election. This had created a confusing situation where only some positions came up for reelection at an AGM. If it was the case that a first time committee member hadn't had a chance to 'find their feet' and give their best performance before coming up for re-election in just a year (or less) John said he was sure that members would take that into account.

John read this Special Resolution to the Committee and asked for a seconder. Sharon Banks seconded the Special Resolution. The Special Resolution number 1. was passed by the members with more than 70% voting in favour.

2. John McCann moved, "THIS MEETING RESOLVES TO APPROVE A SPECIAL RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE BLAZING SWAN INCORPORATED CONSTITUTION BY AMENDING THE TEXT OF SUBRULE 37(3) TO READ AS FOLLOWS: 'SUBJECT TO RULE 39, A COMMITTEE MEMBER WHO IS ELECTED OR APPOINTED HOLDS OFFICE UNTIL THE POSITIONS ON THE COMMITTEE ARE DECLARED VACANT AT THE NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AFTER THEIR ELECTION OR APPOINTMENT.'.AND BY AMENDING THE TEXT OF SUBRULE 39(1)(B) TO READ: 'RESIGNS FROM THE COMMITTEE OR IS REMOVED FROM OFFICE UNDER RULE 38 OR BECOMES INELIGIBLE TO ACCEPT AN APPOINTMENT OR ACT AS A COMMITTEE MEMBER BY VIRTUE OF SECTION 39 OF THE ACT.'."

John explained that the intention of this change in rule 37 is to make it clear that a person who is appointed to fill a casual vacancy on Committee is treated the same as a person who is elected to Committee, and to make a change in rule 39 to correct an internal referencing error.

John read this Special Resolution to the Committee and asked for a seconder. Sharon Banks seconded the Special Resolution. The Special Resolution number 2. was passed by the members with more than 70% voting in favour.

3. John McCann moved, "THIS MEETING RESOLVES TO APPROVE A SPECIAL RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE BLAZING SWAN INCORPORATED CONSTITUTION BY:

- AMENDING THE TEXT OF SUBRULE 43(3) TO READ AS FOLLOWS: 'SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS MAY BE CONVENED BY EITHER THE CHAIRPERSON OR THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON, ALONG WITH A MINIMUM OF 2 OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS.', AND
- AMENDING THE TEXT OF SUBRULE 44(5) TO READ AS FOLLOWS: 'IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBRULE 43(3), SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS MAY BE CALLED AT LITTLE OR NO NOTICE DEPENDING UPON THE SITUATION THAT IS BEING DEALT WITH.', AND
- AMENDING THE TEXT OF SUBRULE 44(6) TO READ AS FOLLOWS: 'IF A SPECIAL COMMITTEE

MEETING IS CONVENED, THE CHAIRPERSON OR DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON MUST INFORM THE REST OF THE COMMITTEE BEFORE THE END OF THE NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE OUTCOME OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING.'."

John explained that the intention of this change is to allow the Deputy Chairperson to convene a Special Committee Meeting in the case where the Chairperson is unavailable to do so.

John read this Special Resolution to the Committee and asked for a seconder. Richard Morup seconded the Special Resolution. The Special Resolution number 3. was passed by the members with more than 70% voting in favour.

4. John McCann moved "THIS MEETING RESOLVES TO APPROVE A SPECIAL RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE BLAZING SWAN INCORPORATED CONSTITUTION BY ADDING THE FOLLOWING TEXT TO SUBRULE 2(1): 'QUORUM IN RELATION TO A SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING IS ACHIEVED WHEN EITHER THE CHAIRPERSON OR THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON, ALONG WITH TWO OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN A COMMITTEE MEETING ARE PRESENT AT THAT MEETING.'."

John explained that this Special Resolution followed upon the previous Special Resolution, noting that the Deputy Chair could now be involved in initiating a Special Committee Meeting and could be part of the quorum of a Special Committee Meeting.

John read this Special Resolution to the Committee and asked for a seconder. Joseph Andrin seconded the Special Resolution. The Special Resolution number 4. was passed by the members with more than 70% voting in favour.

5. John McCann moved, "THIS MEETING RESOLVES TO APPROVE A SPECIAL RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE BLAZING SWAN INCORPORATED CONSTITUTION BY ADDING A SUBRULE 40(5) WHICH WILL READ AS FOLLOWS: 'PRIOR TO APPOINTING A MEMBER TO FILL A VACANT POSITION ON THE COMMITTEE UNDER SUBRULE 40(1), THE COMMITTEE MUST GIVE THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION TWO WEEKS NOTICE OF THE VACANCY IN THE CASE OF ANY POSITION ON THE COMMITTEE OTHER THAN THE SECRETARY, AND IN THE CASE OF THE POSITION OF SECRETARY, ONE WEEKS NOTICE.'."

John explained that this Special Resolution was to give Association Members the opportunity to be aware of an intention to fill casual vacancies within the Committee. It did not require the Committee to call for nominations from the Membership, or to have any voting process involving the Membership, but it did guarantee that Members were aware of an intention to fill a casual vacancy on the Committee before the vacancy was actually filled, which was not the case at the moment.

John read this Special Resolution to the Committee and asked for a seconder. Gemma Conroy seconded the Special Resolution. The Special Resolution number 5. was passed by the members with more than 70% voting in favour.

6. John McCann moved, "THIS MEETING RESOLVES TO APPROVE A SPECIAL RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE BLAZING SWAN INCORPORATED CONSTITUTION BY AMENDING THE TEXT OF SUBRULE 55(3) TO READ AS FOLLOWS: 'THE APPOINTMENT OF A PROXY MUST BE IN WRITING AND SIGNED BY THE ORDINARY MEMBER MAKING THE APPOINTMENT AND THAT APPOINTMENT WILL ONLY HAVE EFFECT WHILE THE PERSON MAKING THE APPOINTMENT IS NOT PRESENT AT THE GENERAL MEETING TO WHICH THE APPOINTMENT APPLIES.'."

John explained that this Special Resolution would have the effect of acknowledging the common-sense interpretation that a person who had appointed a proxy for a meeting effectively withdrew that appointment if they actually attended the meeting in person or online, but goes on to clarify that in that case the proxy appointment will automatically re-active if the person making the appointment has to subsequently leave, or is disconnected from the meeting.

John read this Special Resolution to the Committee and asked for a seconder. Sharon Banks seconded the Special Resolution. The Special Resolution number 6. was passed by the members with more than 70% voting in favour.

7. John McCann moved, "THIS MEETING RESOLVES TO APPROVE A SPECIAL RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE BLAZING SWAN INCORPORATED CONSTITUTION BY AMENDING THE TEXT OF SUBRULE 55(9) TO READ AS FOLLOWS: 'A FORM APPOINTING A PROXY SENT BY POST OR ELECTRONICALLY IS OF NO EFFECT UNLESS IT IS RECEIVED BY THE ASSOCIATION SECRETARY NOT LATER THAN ONE HOUR BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING, UNLESS SUBRULE 55(10) APPLIES.'."

John explained that this Special Resolution was to give Association Members the opportunity to nominate proxies via mail or email and have those nominations accepted by the Secretary any time up until an hour before the commencement of the General Meeting that the proxies related to. The existing time limit of no later than 24 hours before the commencement of the General was more than was needed for checking that the persons authorising and accepting the proxy were legitimate members and that there was no misrepresentation involved.

John read this Special Resolution to the Committee and asked for a seconder. Stuart Porter seconded the Special Resolution. The Special Resolution number 7. was passed by the members with more than 70% voting in favour.

8. John McCann moved, "THIS MEETING RESOLVES TO APPROVE A SPECIAL RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE BLAZING SWAN INCORPORATED CONSTITUTION BY AMENDING THE TEXT OF SUBRULE 66(1) TO READ AS FOLLOWS: 'THE COMMITTEE MAY BY RESOLUTION MAKE OR AMEND BY-LAWS AND ANY BY-LAWS DECIDED IN THIS MANNER, NEEDS TO BE RATIFIED BY THE MEMBERSHIP AT THE NEXT GENERAL MEETING..!'"

John explained that this Special Resolution was to remove the term 'organising committee' from the existing rule and replace it with the word, 'committee'. The term 'organising committee' was not defined anywhere else in the Constitution. This was 'housekeeping' and we wouldn't trouble members with it except that we were putting forward other important changes.

John read this Special Resolution to the Committee and asked for a seconder. Gemma Conroy seconded the Special Resolution. The Special Resolution number 8. was passed by the members with more than 70% voting in favour.

That concluded the presentation and voting on the Special Resolutions. John explained that they would now be forwarded to the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS) for approval. This could take months rather than weeks, and until the changes were approved the existing Blazing Swan Incorporated Constitution was still 'in force'.

Statement of Inclusion - John McCann, Association Secretary

John McCann told the meeting that while we had our 11 Principles, and our 5 Core Values

(Respect, Honesty, Fairness, Respect and Integrity) we did not have a statement setting out our commitment to diversity and equity. John read the proposed statement to the meeting.

John McCann then moved, "This meeting approves the adoption of the following Statement of Inclusion by Blazing Swan, 'Blazing Swan Incorporated is committed to providing our Association Members, volunteers, contractors and event participants with an equal opportunity to be part of a safe community, workplace and Event. We believe in the inherent dignity, worth, unique attributes and human rights of all individuals. We respect people of all ethnicities, ages, abilities, appearances and gender identities and orientations - and all beliefs that share this respectful outlook

We ask our Association Members, volunteers, contractors and Event participants to show this respect to everyone in this community at all times, in person and online. We ask all members of our community to support and defend people who are being discriminated against or persecuted for reasons of their ethnicity, age, abilities, appearance, gender identity or orientation, or for their respectful beliefs."

Glyn Kernick seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

Tim Viljoen spoke to the Lessons Learned from the 2023 Event

Tim spoke to the list of problems identified through feedback from Event participants in 2021 and 2023, and identified said we'd be introducing the following changes in 2024:

- The numbers of official vehicles would be increased and there would be better management of them.
- A dedicated radio channel would be available for Theme Camp to Theme Camp communication
- There would be an increase in our administrative staff and equipment on site, utilising our satellite internet links.
- We would develop and get agreement on a Sound Policy, and apply it

Lewis Viljoen gave a summary of our key improvement projects for 2024

Our Assets would be better managed with the appointment of a dedicated Assets Manager. We were scouting an expanded area adjacent to the Kulin Bush Racetrack where we could store our shipping containers. Increased capacity here would mean less need to carry gear between Perth and Kulin and make setup and packdown easier.

Lost property would be handled by a new Centre Kiosk Team, part of Blazing Swan. Centre Kiosk would also be an information centre and a contact point for participants with questions or needing assistance. This would take the load off Rangers and Event Management and allow them to concentrate on their own tasks.

Our financial systems were being improved from the ground up. We would be identifying both the area and the purpose of every payment, reconciling expenditure against our budget allocations and providing more useful financial reports.

We were looking at buying in a Volunteer Management System which would make life easier for Team Leads and Event Volunteers.

Jess Schwendinger talked about our plan to give priority to Consent in 2024

Jess told the meeting that creating robust protocols for managing Consent violations and threats, along with building a strong Consent Culture in Blazing Swan were priority tasks. As flagged at the Special General Meeting of Blazing Swan in May 2023 these matters were so urgent that we were taking a multi-channel approach.

We have been developing a proposal with a specialist sexual assault referral centre to have some of their crew onsite at Blaze 2024, along with backup in Perth. We were also looking at offering accredited training with or through other agencies and internally. Our attention is not only on supporting people who have been sexually assaulted, but also on supporting our first responders.

We have engaged lawyers to look at our ability to exclude and remove people from the Event based on grounds of behaviour at our Event, or at other Events in WA. We are expecting a response from them by mid to late November.

We are putting out a call for people to join a Steering Group to help us design our Consent Strategy. Our strategy will encompass procedural, informational and inspiration elements, involving not just our volunteers, but all of our Event participants.

John McCann proposed a change to the preamble to our 11 Principles

John explained that there was a problem that arose when we made Consent our 11th Principle that was noted at the time, that we should now fix. The explanation of how the 10 Burning Man Principles operate emphasises that no Principle is absolute, and that they all act in association with each other, and each modifies the others. When we added Consent to our initial 10 Principles we needed to make clear that Consent is NOT modified by the other Principles. Consent is always Consent.

John moved, "This Meeting adopts the following wording as the approved preamble to Blazing Swan's 11 Principles - 'Blazing Swan is not just an Event, we are also a Community with a commitment to Burning Man's 10 Principles. The 10 Principles, taken one by one are not absolute rules, and none of the 10 work in isolation from the others. The 10 Principles should be understood in how they work together. We encourage you to think about how you can combine them and integrate them into your lives - your work, expression, sense of play, your relationships and your sense of yourself. Blazing Swan created an 11th Principle, Consent. Consent is different from the other 10 Principles. The Consent Principle stands alone. It can not be modified or diminished by the operation of any of the other 10 Principles. At our Events, Consent is not only a Principle, it is also a rule and an absolute requirement.'" Seconded Jess Schwendinger. Motion carried.

Paul Castle detailed a proposal to clarify Volunteer Benefits for 2024 and beyond

Paul noted that we were currently operating with a binding motion enabling a set of Volunteer Benefits that had been endorsed by Members at the 2021 Blazing Swan Annual General Meeting. Unfortunately the benefits detailed in that motion were not as clearly laid out as they could have been, and we were looking today to bring forward a simpler set, and also incorporate some guidelines for how we would deal with reimbursement of travel expenses where the travel was for the purpose of volunteering with Blazing Swan. There was considerable discussion and no clear agreement, especially around the proposed arrangements for travel expenses reimbursement. John McCann suggested that we could decide not to put the motion to adopt a

new set of rules before this meeting, but we would in that case find that the Committee could not implement any new rules (which was normally within their power) until this 2021 motion from the AGM was rescinded. Anton Lord moved, "This meeting rescinds the 2021 AGM motion relating to Volunteer Benefits and calls upon the Committee to develop and implement a set of Volunteer Benefits developed in consultation with the Blazing Swan membership." Seconded Natalie Spender. Motion carried.

Lewis Viljoen gave an overview of plans for the 2024 Event

We were aiming for around 3,000 attendees. Tickets would begin to be allocated in November - for Association Members, Volunteers and Theme Camps. General sale (GenPop) tickets would be available from December. Prices are going up (around 25%) to match increases in costs, and also because they've been kept low for the last couple of years. Although we weren't offering these ourselves, we noted the increasing availability of instalment payment arrangements that people might use to purchase their tickets.

Lewis Viljoen spoke to the need to have a dedicated Event Operations Manager

As many Members would know, we have been attempting to fill the role of Event Operations Manager for several weeks. Given the need to have someone 'on board' by November at the latest, the Committee had decided to bring to the AGM a motion that would authorise us to invite tenders to provide an Event Operations Manager service. The Event Operations Manager would be involved in planning and organising the Event, and in selecting and training our Event Shift Managers - the people who are actually running the Event in 12 hour shifts during the Event.

Lewis said the Committee's view was that it would not be safe to try to run the Event without the organising and coordinating input from an experienced Event Operations Manager. This was one role which we must 'get right'. We would continue canvassing the field for volunteers, but at a point in the very near future we would run out of time, and a tender arrangement would be our last option. Even then we didn't know what was out there, but we just had to go ahead one step at a time.

Some discussion followed. Lewis was asked if we could afford this arrangement. John McCann responded by saying that we could not afford not to have an experienced person in this role. Better planning and coordination had the potential to save tens of thousands of dollars, while the absence of that had the potential to cost us just as much.

John McCann moved, "This Meeting authorises the Blazing Swan Committee to fill the role of 2024 Event Operations using a tender/contract arrangement if the Committee believes that such an arrangement is necessary." Seconded Ryan Linkowski. Motion carried.

Genevieve Howe talked about the other vacancies we were looking to fill in the organisation

Genevieve noted that we had some success recently in filling roles at the Team Lead and Head of Department level, but some Team Lead and specialist roles were still vacant. The most current list of vacancies was now on the Blazing Swan Website, on the Volunteering Page. Blazing Swan would be very supportive of anyone stepping into a role, and anyone who was interested could join the Mentoring Program being run by Sharon Banks (and Genevieve). The next session in that program would happen in late October.

John McCann addressed the Meeting with regard to the positions of Committee Secretary and Ordinary Committee Member held by John McCann and Gerard Laumen respectively.

In accordance with Sub Rules 37(2) and 37(3) both positions are automatically declared vacant at this Annual General Meeting (AGM). Notice of this vacancy was given to Association Members prior to this AGM in accordance with Sub Rule 34(1). By the time the period for Applications closed, 28 days prior to the AGM in accordance with Sub Rule 34(2), only two applications had been received. One from John McCann for the role of Association Secretary, and one from Gerard Laumen for the role of Ordinary Committee Member.

In accordance with Sub Rule 35(3), there being no other applicants for these positions, John McCann and Gerard Laumen are declared to be elected to the role of Association Secretary and Ordinary Committee Member respectively.

Concluding remarks by Lewis Viljoen

Lewis thanked everyone for attending. He noted special thanks to Port School for hosting our AGM once again, and to Jane Hawdon for making that possible and for all her work. Lewis said that the Committee was keen to hear more feedback from Members. We would be circulating proposals relating to Volunteer Benefits as discussed earlier, and we would be calling out for people to become involved in our Steering Group for Consent. We would also be looking to schedule a get-together for Members and Volunteers before Christmas.

As Chairperson of this meeting, I certify that these are the correct Minutes of the Blazing Swan Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 17 September 2023.

..... Lewis Viljoen, Chairperson BLAZING SWAN INCORPORATED, 17 October 2023