

MEETING SUMMARY: 16th March 2023

The thirty third meeting (BM33) of WHA's Board took place on 16th March 2023 in Canberra.

Members of the Board are:

- Peter Bridgewater (Chair), Chair
- Cameron Bell (Deputy Chair), Funding Member, Agriculture Victoria
- Sharon Kolek, Funding Member, Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer
- Sarah Britton, nominee of the Animal Health Committee [Apology]
- Michelle Campbell-Ward, Individual Member Representative elected by the Individual Members
- Andrew Pearce, nominee of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- Three organisations elected by the Organisational Members:
 - Leanne Wicker, Wildlife Disease Association Australasia
 - Julien Grosmaire, Australian Veterinary Conversation Biologists
 - Nicola Craddock, Zoo and Aquarium Association
- Rodney Vile, Invited Member, Environment Agency
- James Newman, Invited Active Observer (Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water).

This was a first meeting of a newly elected board, under a new, independent chair, Dr Peter Bridgewater. Along with routine matters arising, general business items discussed by the Board focused on strategic priorities for the organisation for the year ahead, transition to a public company limited by guarantee, and progressing disbursement of funds from the WHA Public Fund. An important strategic priority considered by the Board for the year ahead was exploring diversification of funding and for the first time WHA will engage a parttime Marketing Coordinator to assist. A priority will be a campaign to assist communications with relevant agencies and organisations.

Associated with its growth, the organisation is working towards transitioning from an Incorporated Association to a public company limited by guarantee (public CLG). A new constitution is being drafted in preparation for this transition, and the Board considered a number of models for future board composition and membership categories. The current constitution has served WHA well and the new legal structure is to be simple, operational and remain fit for purpose as the organisation grows and looks to continue to best serve the needs of Australia in the areas of wildlife and One Health.

WHA has a registered Public Fund and a Public Fund Working Group has been formed with authority delegated by the Board to commit funds to support wildlife health work consistent with the Objects of the organisation. The Public Fund should play a key role in conveying WHA's messaging, purpose, and act as a driver for donations to support the organisation's objectives.

As the first meeting with the newly elected Board, board members were identified and endorsed to fill positions in sub-committees and working groups of the board including the Audit and Risk Committee, Nominations and Remuneration Committee, Research Advisory Committee, and the Public Fund Working Group. Cameron Bell was nominated and endorsed to continue in his role as deputy chair and Peter thanked him and other board members for their support and taking on these roles. A special vote of thanks was given to the outgoing, acting chair of WHA, Sarah Britton, who had so ably stepped into the role following the retirement of the past chair, and led WHA through its most significant period of change.

For more information on anything that occurred during the meeting please contact your representative on the board, the CEO (0438 755 078) or WHA Public Officer, Karen Magee (02 9960 6333).