



AMA

Australian Medical Association Northern Territory Inc.

33rd Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 10th May 2022
2/25 Parap Road, PARAP NT 0820

MINUTES

Meeting Opened: 18:20 hours

A/Professor Parker thanked everyone for attending, acknowledged the Larrakia and Arrernte people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we have this meeting today and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

A/Professor Parker confirmed we had a quorum.

1. Present in Person

A/Professor Robert Parker
Dr David Chapman
Mrs Fiona Crombie

Dr Jennifer Mitchell
Dr Howard Flavell
Dr William Majoni

Present via Teleconference

Dr Cameron Scott
Dr Kimberley Flavell

Dr Kane Vellar

Present via Zoom

Dr Bernard Westley
Dr Stephen Gourley

Dr Sonja Janson

2. Apologies

Dr Bart Currie
Mr Arun Mahajani

Ms Jessie Spargo

Ms Thomson confirmed a quorum as per the AMA NT Constitution.

3. Acceptance of Minutes from the AGM held on 27 May 2021

The minutes from the meeting of 7 May 2020 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Moved by A/Professor Robert Parker and seconded by Drs Jennifer Mitchell and David Chapman that the minutes be accepted.

Motion Carried.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising.

5. Treasurer's Report

I am very happy to report that the financial year of 2021 has been very stable year compared to the previous last few years. Our membership income has remained very consistent at approximately \$116,000. We have not received income from other sources and no interest of any significance from bank deposits.

The profit and loss statement for 2021 is very similar to 2020 with a slight reduction in management payments to the Federal AMA of \$86,364 (\$90,909 for 2020), who continue in their support of the office and secretarial services. We have provided slightly more financial support in sponsorship and student grants of \$3,200 this year. Again, travel expenses have been minimal due to COVID-19 restraints and increasing use of teleconferencing for meetings. AMA NT has a surplus of approximately \$12,900 for the end of 2021. We therefore should have an increased accumulated surplus over the last 2 years which should be reassuring to members and the Executive.

Merit Partners have performed our audit. There were no financial discrepancies noted however there were some membership payment allocation errors due to iMIS delayed data reconciliation, for 4 members over 2021. These have been followed up and corrected to reflect payments allocated to the correct month. This problem lies with the Federal AMA membership data base. Fiona has discussed this with her Federal colleagues and explained the problem to the Auditor.

There have been discussions in previous years about changing our auditor. Previously we have not proceeded with changing accountants as it was felt the AMA NT accounts were too small for many accountants in Darwin, and costs were too high. Fiona has been in discussion the Irene Quah – who is the General Manager Corporate Services at the AMA Federal office, regarding changing accountants to BellChambersBarrett in Canberra, who have been installed as the Federal AMA's auditors. They would therefore have a much better overview of the membership and accounting processes of the AMA and the interlinked nature of AMA NT and the Federal AMA. The cost for their services will be discussed with them and the Federal AMA. Fiona advised that she spoke to the Director at Merit Partners to advise that she was not happy with the lengthy audit process and believes they are starting to audit outside their scope. Fiona also commented further on her discussions with Irene Quah who advised that their auditor did not come into their office (never actually met face-to-face) and all their accounting, in fact the entire AMA office have gone paperless. Irene also commented that an audit our size should have been completed in a week not nearly 6. Fiona supported the move to a new auditor as previous approaches some years ago to other firms did not get any interest. It is good business practice to move auditors every five or so years.

I would therefore like to propose a motion to the AGM of the AMA NT that BellChambersBarrett accountants be appointed as our Auditor for the financial year 2022. Moved by Dr Jennifer Mitchell and seconded by A/Professor Robert Parker and Dr Cameron Scott.

Motion Carried.

I would like to thank Fiona and Kerri for their ongoing hard work and dedication to AMA NT and their assistance to AMA NT members and the Executive. Their tireless work ensures smooth running of the office. I would like to advise that I will not be standing for re-election to the executive. Thank you to all members and the Executive with Rob as our leader, for your support and advice over the last nearly 20 years I have been on the council.

A/Professor Parker thanked Dr Mitchell for her continued support in the role. Mrs Crombie left the room to then present Dr Mitchell with a card and vase of dried flowers as a thank you.

The Treasurer's report was moved by Dr Jennifer Mitchell and seconded by A/Professor Robert Parker and Dr Howard Flavell

Motion Carried

6. President's Report

Welcome to the 2022 AMA NT AGM.

It has been a busy year as usual for AMA NT.

AMA NT has been a leading organisation in informing the public about issues related to Covid-19 and the Omicron Wave that affected the NT. AMA NT appeared to be the “go to” organisation for the TV and radio media when they wanted reliable opinion on Covid-19 and its effect on the NT.

AMA NT, in the context of the Covid Omicron wave, also worked with the ANMF NT branch to call on the NT Government to declare a Territory wide “Code Brown” in response to the massive pressures on the health system associated with the wave. This was to support clinicians in NT Hospitals who had requested the Code Brown to allow them to cope with the Omicron pressures but had their calls rejected by the Health Department. It was disappointing that the Chief Minister referred to the call by the AMA NT and ANMF NT as a stunt “because there was only one Covid affected patient in ICU”. Meanwhile, there were two or three wards at RDH totally devoted to the care of Covid affected patients with often half the required staff because others were off on Covid furlough. It was disappointing that in this context, one senior Clinician told me that he wished that he caught Covid to give him a ten-day break from the intense stress of the clinical load.

AMA NT was also proactive in preventing the winding down of the Centre for National Resilience in Alice Springs that would have resulted in over a hundred Covid affected individuals being discharged on to the streets of Alice Springs with no accommodation and very limited food supplies because transport links had been disrupted due to flooding.

AMA NT has also been concerned about the build-up of surgical waiting lists due to Covid. The AMA NT organised a meeting between senior RDPH clinicians, the Health Minister, and Senior Health Department staff so that the Minister and senior bureaucrats could be properly informed of the issue with a chance to develop solutions.

The potential for two medical schools in the NT (CDU and NTMP) has attracted the attention of the AMA NT. My potential conflict of interest in the issue (as an Associate Professor with NTMP) is noted. However, the main interest of AMA NT has been to ensure that the medical students of both proposals receive the highest quality medical education and employment opportunities, in line with national medical workforce data and concerns raised by the Australian Medical Students Association.

This year sees the retirement of Dr Jenny Mitchell from AMA NT Council. Jenny Mitchell has made a significant contribution to the AMA NT over many years both as Councillor and Treasurer. I want to congratulate Jenny on her magnificent contribution to AMA NT and wish her well with her future endeavours wherever they may lead.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of all AMA NT Council members over the last year as well as the AMA NT staff, Mrs Fiona Crombie and Mrs Kerri Warthold.

The President’s report was moved by A/Professor Robert Parker and seconded by Drs David Chapman and Howard Flavell.

Motion Carried

7. Vacation of Office & Declaration of Office Bearers

Dr Parker stepped down as President and handed over to Mrs Fiona Crombie, Returning/Executive Officer.

Nominations:

President	A/Professor Robert Parker	Proposed by:	Dr Aathi Selvanayagam
		Seconded:	Dr Jennifer Mitchell

Immediate Past President

Dr Peter Beaumont

Vice President	Dr Stephen Gourley	Proposed by:	Dr Stephen Gourley
		Seconded:	Dr Robert Parker
	Dr Cameron Scott	Proposed by:	Dr Cameron Scott
		Seconded:	Dr David Chapman
Secretary / Public Officer		Vacant	Proposed by:
			Seconded:
Treasurer		Vacant	Proposed by:
			Seconded:
Council Members	Dr David Chapman	Proposed by:	Dr David Chapman
		Seconded:	Dr Abdul Madadi
	Dr Bernard Westley	Proposed by:	Dr Bernard Westley
		Seconded:	Dr Sonja Janson
	Dr Sonja Janson	Proposed by:	Dr Sonja Janson
		Seconded:	Dr Bernard Westley

Students Ms Jessie Spargo

Honorary Member / Historian Mr Arun Mahajani

Election

Mrs Crombie advised that under Clause 29 (1) of our Constitution as there are no contested positions all those nominated are duly elected.

President: There being only nomination at the AGM for the position of President, A/Professor Robert Parker was declared elected.

Vice-Presidents: There being only two nominations at the AGM for the positions of Vice-President, Drs Stephen Gourley and Cameron Scott were declared elected.

Secretary: There were no nominations for this position.

Treasurer: There were no nominations for this position.

Council Members: The following nominations were elected to AMA NT Council:

Dr David Chapman – Councillor
Dr Bernard Westley – Councillor
Dr Sonja Janson – Councillor

DiT Reps: There were no nominations for this position.

Student Rep: The Student Representative role is as an Associate Member position with no voting rights. Ms Jessie Spargo has requested to remain as the representative for 2022 and has advised that Ms Jai Defranciscis is interested in being involved.

Public Officer: There were no nominations for this position.

Under Clause 29 (2) and (3) nominations can be accepted from the floor. Dr Howard Flavell requested to be accepted as a Councillor. The AGM accepted and endorsed his nomination.

The AGM then discussed the vacancy of Secretary / Public Officer and Treasurer. Dr Bernard Westley offered to step up into the role of Secretary / Public Officer and Dr Howard Flavell offer to step up into the role of Treasurer. The AGM accepted and endorsed these nominations.

8. Induction of President

A/Professor Robert Parker was reinstated as AMA NT President for another term.

9. Confirmation of position of Immediate Past President

Under Clause 24 of the Composition of Council as outlined in Part 3 – Additional Details of the AMA NT Constitution, Dr Peter Beaumont remains Immediate Past President.

10. Appointments to various Federal AMA Council positions

The following AMA Councils require a representative from the AMA NT.

Representative to AMA Federal Council

Representative to the AMA Council of General Practice

Representative to AMA Council of Public Hospital Doctors

Representative on the AMA Council of Doctors-in-Training

Representative to AMA Council of Rural Doctors

Mrs Crombie suggested that this be deferred until our first AMA NT Council meeting in June in case any casual nominations come forward in the meantime. The AGM approved this decision.

11. Other Business

Dr Flavell raised concerns over the current state of RDPH which is at breaking point with hospital executives refusing to call a Code Yellow. Dr Gourley agreed that ASH is in the same position. Dr Flavell commented that now the Chief Minister Michael Gunner has resigned it is time to push the government to do something. A/Professor Parker advised the AGM that he was at the Budget Presentation today and spoke with the CE of DoH, Dr Frank Daly who said health received no additional funding except for mental health. The AGM discussed who would step up and be the new Chief Minister whether it would be Nicole Manison or Natasha Fyles. A/Professor Parker said he'd been trying to engage the media as much as possible and suggested they ask the various candidates in the upcoming federal election what their stance on public hospital funding is? Dr Flavell would like to see us really engage with the current / new Health Minister and ensure they aren't receiving sanitized versions of what really is the state of the hospitals across the Territory.

The AGM raised the potential reintroduction of discussions around euthanasia if there is a change of federal government.

12. There being no further business the AGM closed.

Meeting closed at 18:49 hours

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A/Professor Robert Parker
President