

2020 FCA Annual General Meeting Minutes

Date: 15 October 2020
Time: 11am (AEDT)
Location: Zoom ID: 82610953058
Meeting Chair: Lucinda Corrigan
Scribe: Fiona Davis

Quorum Required: 11 members

Governor members: Lucinda Corrigan (also Board), Charlie Prell (also Board), Anna Rose (also Board), Anika Molesworth (also Board), Rebecca Gorman, Dale Park (also Board), Christie Kingston, Angus Emmott (also Board), Brett Hall (also Board), Peter Holding and Robert Quirk.

Board Director: Michael McDonald

Ordinary members: Angus Whyte, Jim McDonald, Anthony Houston, Mark Wootton, Norman Pater, John Pettigrew, Dennis Ward and Karrinjeet Singh-Mahil.

Other staff and Board: Wendy Cohen, James Atkinson, Fiona Davis, Claire Boyle and Tryphena Watson.

Guest speaker: Eytan Lenko

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| 1. Welcome and Chair remarks | Chairperson |
| 2. Guest speaker | Eytan Lenko |

Eytan Lenko is the Chair of Beyond Zero Emissions and a commissioner on the Northern Territory Economic Reconstruction Commission that is advising the NT Chief Minister on the future pathway for the NT economy.

Eytan discussed how to make rural and regional Australians an integral part of a broader range of climate initiatives.

See Appendix One for Eytan's bio.

AGM official proceedings begin: Non-members to depart

Chair officially opened the official AGM proceedings at 11.30am

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| 3. Apologies | Chairperson |
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Chair noted apologies were received from: Rob McCreath, Rob Lee, Rob

Purves and Alison Marchant. **Confirmed**

4.a Confirmation of Minutes of the previous AGM

Chairperson

Recommendation: That the Membership of Farmers for Climate Action accept the minutes of the previous AGM as a true reflection of its proceedings.

Confirmed subject to typo in Sussan Ley's name being corrected. **Motion passed**

4.b Business arising

Chairperson

No business arising

5. Chairperson report

Chairperson

See Appendix Two

Chair Lucinda Corrigan summarised her report, noting that 'pivoting' has been the word of 2020. Commended CEO on her ability to guide FCA during this challenging time.

Chair thanked outgoing Board director Rob Purves for his contribution, especially hosting the board at his property Carwoola. Chair also thanked outgoing Board director Christie Kingston for her enthusiasm and excellent policy discussions.

Deputy Chair Charlie Prell thanked Lucinda for her enormous contribution over the past few years.

6. CEO report

CEO

See Appendix Three

CEO Wendy Cohen tabled her report, and thanked Chair Lucinda Corrigan for her amazing work. Noted also sincere thanks to the team, board and donors.

7. Financial Report

Brett Hall,
Chair of the
Finance,
Risk and
Audit
committee

See Appendix Four

Brett summarised the financial report and thanked staff and the board for their work on the budget.

Recommendation: That the Membership of Farmers for Climate Action accept the provided audited financial report and express confidence that FCA can meet all obligations as they fall due. **Motion passed**

Recommendation: That the Membership of Farmers for Climate Action appoint Jeff Ryan of Thomas Davis & Co as auditor for the 2020/2021 period. **Motion passed**

8. Special Resolution: Constitutional Amendment

CEO

Recommendation: That the Membership of Farmers for Climate Action accept the proposed constitutional changes to extend the terms of Directors to three years. The changes were provided in a marked-up copy of the Constitution. On approval this resolution will apply to the forthcoming Director elections. **Motion passed**

9. Questions to the Directors

CEO

Anthony Houston raised questions about the board's stance regarding a price on carbon, and FCA's approach to cropping's role sequestering carbon.

10. Election of Office-bearers

CEO

See Appendix Five for list of nominees

- a. 2019/2020 Office holders stood down
- b. Announcement of nominations received (see Appendix Five)
- c. Governor Members voted on the election of office bearers consistent with the amended constitution. **Unanimous support**
- d. Election results were announced

11. Meeting formally closed at 12.04pm

Chairperson

Appendix One: Guest Speaker, Eytan Lenko

Eytan Lenko is the Chair of Beyond Zero Emissions and a commissioner on the Northern Territory Economic Reconstruction Commission that is advising the NT Chief Minister on the future pathway for the NT economy.

Eytan has a successful business and entrepreneurship background, he was a founder of Outware Mobile, one of Australia's fastest growing tech companies which was acquired in 2017.

Eytan co-founded Infrastructure Access Managers, a fund manager that aims to decarbonise Australian unlisted infrastructure and is a director of the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network.

Eytan is actively involved in the startup ecosystem both as an investor and a mentor. He is an advisor to the Impact Investment Group's Giant Leap Fund.

Appendix Two: Chair Report

We couldn't have predicted the events of 2020 even if we had been highly successful science fiction authors! What a year around Australia and globally with massive decreases in economic activity across industries such as airlines and transport, tourism, hospitality and food service, conferences and events. And sobering that global warming continues unabated.

I have been very aware of the restrictions in our operating environment, the effect on our team, community of practice and activity. It has been remarkable to see the work of Farmers for Climate Action go online like so many other organisations and what has been achieved since that occurred.

The last time the whole board gathered together in person was in September 2019 during a very successful few days visiting politicians in Canberra and talking about the opportunities in our recently released report, *Change Is in The Air*. This landmark work carefully documents the state of play in the innovation, modelling and predictive tools, industry by industry in the quest to adapt to climate change.

We revised our strategic plan in a facilitated board workshop which gives clarity to our work in three key areas, climate smart agriculture, renewable energy for regional development and mobilising regional communities to influence their member of parliament.

Our new CEO Wendy Cohen took the reins during the spring and began the process of putting her considerable skills into the planning and execution for the different parts of the business of FCA, fund raising, communications, campaigns, education and outreach. Wendy relocated to Canberra and has developed a strong relationship with the National Farmers Federation, which is our key pathway to influencing climate, drought, energy and water policy, all of which are connected.

We have had two key wins in this policy space. Last November, the council of agricultural ministers, AGMIN, agreed unanimously to a National Strategy for Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change with representation from every state. Our team had been quietly working on this for nearly two years.

Secondly we were delighted to see the National Farmers Federation adopt a Carbon Neutral 2050 policy in August 2020. Both of these decisions are in no small part due to the work of FCA and I congratulate our team and supporters for these impressive achievements.

Our key policy piece this year is the release of *Regional Horizons* and the subsequent webinar program. This document has been carefully crafted by the team to include the major policy platforms that will build recovery in Regional Australia. It is a wonderful platform for the conversations about climate smart agriculture, resilient leadership, renewable energy and environmental stewardship.

I also wanted to highlight the resilience workshops held since the fire catastrophe at the beginning of the year, virtual online meetings that have been very well attended and targeted at communities that were massively affected by the fires. These include Wagga Wagga, Bega, Bairnsdale, Shepparton, and Lismore.

A measure of our success is the number of invitations we receive to address conferences, provide strategic advice and collaborate. Our CEO is formalising our collaborations so that we do not stretch ourselves too thinly across the myriad of organisations that wish to work with us. For my part this has involved quite a lot of travel speaking with diverse groups such as The Australian Fodder Industry Association, NRM Australia, Landcare Australia, CRISPI, ACIAR and many community organisations.

Our governance has been strengthened to make sure we are operating at best practice for a small, non for profit company. I would particularly like to thank Brett Hall, Chair of the Finance Audit and Risk Committee for his work during the year, Michael McDonald for his wise counsel and advice and Charlie Prell, Deputy Chair, for his work over the last few years. This Executive has worked very effectively to guide the governance and work with the CEO.

I would particularly like to recognise our team in this difficult year, our Deputy CEO Fiona Davis, campaigns director Cam Klose and wonderful support from Claire Boyle. These three are all located in Victoria which has presented particular challenges. James Atkinson in fund raising came on at such a challenging time and it is terrific that he and Wendy are co located in Canberra. Peter Holding, a practising farmer keeps the team grounded. And at the end of June we farewelled Verity Morgan Schmidt in her role of Partnerships and Collaboration. Thank you all, a team of champions.

Our retiring board members include Christie Kingston, Robert Purves and myself. Thank you to Christie and Robert for your energy, counsel and commitment. We have had a careful succession conversation within the board and this will continue to make sure we bring on people with the right skills to guide FCA forward.

It has been my honour to lead the organisation since we founded in 2015. My style of leadership is to work through others and enable all voices recognising that it is leadership in the challenging times that gives us courage and credibility.

Thank you to all the board for your support through this year of transition and change.

Lucinda Corrigan
Chair

Appendix Three: CEO Report

Baptism of fire

Coming into the CEO role over 12 months ago, I knew that Farmers for Climate Action would be using the credibility and influence it had built over the past three years to help rural and regional Australia connect the dots with climate change, while also supporting farmers tackling the worst drought in living memory, and staring down the barrel of a long, hot and damaging summer of dust and fire.

But what was to unfold from late September tested the most resilient communities, with devastating bushfires across the entire country, smoke haze for days, followed quickly by storms and floods. Black Summer made us all rethink how effectively and quickly we needed to mitigate, adapt and ultimately drive climate action both on and off farms.

Farming communities were still reeling from summer, when the global pandemic hit, putting livelands and livelihoods across Australia into jeopardy. During months of lockdown and social distancing, our farmers continued to feed and clothe the nation. The iconic Australian industry had again stepped up in a time of crisis, and delivered.

I could have never anticipated so much challenge and so much disruption to agriculture and FCA in my first year, but through this entire period I was completely inspired by our farmers – they were so strong, so committed to climate action and so key to the solutions.

Managing the demands, delivering the goods...

As these dramatic events were unfolding, I was finding my feet at FCA and building relationships with the exceptional team, visionary board and passionate supporters who make all our work possible. Meeting our amazing donors was a highlight of my first year and hearing first-hand their passion for climate action and protecting our farming future gave me even more energy to take the farmers' fight to the nation's leaders.

My first day on the job was spent joining a delegation of farmers at Parliament House where together we met many MPs to call for a national strategy on climate change and agriculture. The *Change in the Air* report, which FCA commissioned the Australian Farm Institute to produce, was launched at the same time. That day, as snow fell in Canberra and bush burned in northern NSW and south east Queensland, the voice of farmers calling for climate action was heard loud and clear.

I'm proud to say my first year at FCA was one of consolidation, ensuring the significant work undertaken since 2017 was supported by a strong and sustainable organisation, leveraging a talented team, a sound operating plan and a healthy balance sheet into our next period of growth.

Now, when I reflect with the team on our strategic plan and our impact it is extremely satisfying to say we've not only delivered on our vision but we've managed a 'in the black' budget at the same time.

Our growth strategy has continued to support our strategic objectives. We've grown the number of farmers we work with and support, we've employed new, energetic team members and

increased our ability to build climate literacy across rural and regional Australia. We've improved processes and systems internally and continued to punch above our weight in media coverage, and access and influence with key political leaders. We've also strengthened relationships with industry bodies including the National Farmers' Federation (NFF).

... with some wins along the way.

Our milestones and wins have been significant. In October last year AgMin endorsed the national work plan on climate change and agriculture, which is a key pillar of the national strategy for climate change and agriculture which we have been calling for. Then in March, when the severity of the pandemic became clear, we pivoted towards online education and engagement, running a series of popular online webinar series, including resilience forums to support various bushfire impacted communities.

In late June we launched our stimulus ask program, Regional Horizons, many aspects of which have already begun to progress. While technically after 30 June, I do want to note that Agriculture Minister David Littleproud has since announced the roll out of resilience hubs, a key recommendation in our Regional Horizons program, and NFF has released its climate change policy which supports net zero emissions by 2050.

Alongside these developments, we also launched our new website and brand, and escalated our social media engagement.

We also grew capacity within our team, bringing on James Atkinson into the Donor Engagement Coordinator position, and confirmed existing team members' Claire Boyle and Peter Holding in permanent roles. We now have a dedicated resource within the Climate Media Centre, which has helped us to increase our media output. We also set the path for our regular giving plan and continued to meet with our valued donors and source new funding opportunities.

Farmer numbers continued to grow steadily, while we built the foundations for significant expansion in the new financial year, via an exciting state-based campaigning and organising strategy, and plans to launch an ambitious and comprehensive series of climate-smart agriculture fellowships.

The COVID pivot: the recovery plan.

All of this was being achieved as we adapted to a virtual way of conducting business and the magnificent FCA team did not miss a beat. Through webinars, podcasts and virtual meetings we continued to connect with farmers and rural parts of the country.

Regional Horizons is our vision for the future: a map for rural and regional Australia to lead the recovery through climate solutions, innovative investment and policy, empowered farming communities and supported and effective transition to a renewables future. For this to happen our farmers need to be heard, the national work plan implemented and some effective and bold leadership decisions to be made. I am so excited for the next 12 months and I thank all our supporters, donors, farmers, partners and the team for their role in getting FCA to this point.

A team effort... and some goodbyes

FCA is blessed to have an incredible team of professionals leading the way, Fiona Davis, Cam Klose, Peter Holding, James Atkinson, Claire Boyle, I 'dips me lid' to you all. Thank you for your wisdom, energy, passion and hard work. The FCA Board is exceptional, led by the formidable and visionary Lucinda Corrigan. I would like to thank Lucinda for all her support, counsel and trust. A true champion for Australian agriculture, she will be sorely missed by us but I know she will remain a steadfast ambassador for farming and FCA going forward. Also thanks to the amazing board members who will be stepping down this year as well, Christie Kingston for all her passion and commitment to our purpose and Rob Purves for his strategic and forward thinking ideas which have greatly enhanced our sustainability as an organisation.

I'd also like to acknowledge the incredible contribution made by my predecessor Verity Morgan-Schmidt, who left us earlier this year. The achievements and reputation of FCA since inception are a direct result of her fierce and intelligent leadership. I'm sure there is not a more genuine and committed advocate for farming and farmers in this country. Thank you and good luck in your future endeavours.

And finally...

I look forward to working with you all over the next 12 months. We have so many opportunities now to maximise our impact, create a climate-smart farming sector and put our farmers at the heart of the climate change solution.

Wendy
Cohen CEO

Appendix Four: Finance Report

The Finance, Risk, Audit & Remuneration Sub-committee, (FRAR) continued to monitor the organisation's financial management and review the risks for the organisation and staff. The committee generally meets monthly prior to board meetings and the minutes circulated to the board. These minutes include current financial reports, actions and any recommendations for the board to consider.

The membership of the FRAR Committee this year included: Mr Charlie Prell, Ms Lucinda Corrigan, Ms Anna Rose, and Mr Brett Hall (Chair). The finances are also overseen by our CEO, financial advisor, bookkeeper and auditor - we thank them and our FRAR Committee for their hard work over the past 12 months.

We have again ended the financial year in the black, helping to build our working capital and secure sufficient reserves to meet our obligations, which is in accordance with the Board's strategy. It is particularly pleasing to achieve such a result during a very challenging time in the world over the past 6 months. Most importantly, FCA has also delivered the outcomes promised to our many donors across all the various programs conducted over the year.

Audited Financial Report.

The 2020 AGM documents circulated to members included the audited 'Farmers for Climate Action Limited', Financial report for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

Highlights of the report include:

1. Unconditional Audit
2. Revenue: \$1,027,691
3. Expenditure: \$852,945
4. Net operating profit/(loss) after income tax: \$185,191.
5. Net assets: \$936,675

Board Recommendation: ***That the Membership of Farmers for Climate Action accept the provided audited financial report and express confidence that FCA can meet all obligations as they fall due.***

Appointment of Auditor

The FRAR Committee & Board were very pleased with the quality of the audit conducted by Mr Jeff Ryan of Thomas Davis & Co for Farmers for Climate Action for the 2019/20 financial year and recommend their engagement for another year.

Board Recommendation: ***That the Membership of Farmers for Climate Action appoint Jeff Ryan of Thomas Davis & Co as auditor for the 2020/2021 period.***

Appendix Five: Director nominations

Board Nominations for Farmers for Climate Action Ltd 2021

Please note: nominations for the Farmers for Climate Action Board closed on Monday, 14 September, with the new Board to be formally elected on Wednesday, 15 October 2020 in accordance with the Amended Constitution approved earlier in the AGM.

Anna Rose	Sydney NSW	Term 1 year
Anika Molesworth	Griffith NSW	Term 3 years
Charlie Prell	Crookwell, NSW	Term 3 years
Angus Emmott	Longreach, Qld	Term 2 years
Brett Hall	Hobart, Tas	Term 3 years
Dale Park	Badgingarra, WA	Term 2 years
Michael McDonald	Gerroa, NSW	Term 1 year

Under clause 90 of the Farmers for Climate Action Constitution, the number of Directors comprising the Board will be at least 3 and no more than 10.

With 7 nominations received for these positions, all candidates will be declared elected.