

PRESENT: **Sui-Linn White (Chair), Leeroy Chapman (Vice Chair), Councillor Ben Whiting, Keryl Collard (MRAG Interim Caretaker), Alasdair Smart (Treasurer), Sally Denmead (ARTEL Secretary), Holly Fisher-Bidwell (MRAG Member), Olivia Sophia (Secretary), and Leah Riches**

APOLOGIES: **Holly Fisher-Bidwell (MRAG Member), Andrea Pugh (Events Coordinator)**

ITEM 1: Acknowledgement of Country

The Chairperson acknowledged the Wonnarua People, the traditional custodians of the land on which the MRAG Committee meets.

ITEM 2 Update from General Manager of MCC David Evans

General Manager of MCC, David Evans, updated the Committee on the recruitment process for Gallery Director. The selection committee has progressed through two rounds of interviews for the position, but unfortunately has not been able to find a suitable candidate. As it does not give a good impression to embark on a third recruitment round, David Evans has decided to install Kattie Bugeja in a new role of 'Gallery Coordinator' that reports to Keryl Collard, and will allow Keryl to take on a more strategic role. This arrangement will be in place for 12 months before the recruitment process begins again.

David Evans asked for the Committee's support, through its wider Member network, in disseminating the message that MRAG is in a strong position, and there is no need for questions (particularly to the media) regarding its future.

ITEM 3 Creative Arts High Achievers Grant

Richard Hershman has undertaken a review of Council's Section 356 Community Grants Program, and has proposed significant changes to the High Achievers Grant Program. Historically there has been a big discrepancy between the numbers of recipients in the sports categories and arts categories. This is due to factors such as the application form, promotion and community awareness. The Creative Arts High Achievers Grant offers up to \$750 to anyone, of any age, who is based in Maitland Council, and has an opportunity to present their work or participate in an

event at a high level. Eg. Interstate or international exhibitions, art fairs, art prizes etc.

Richard Hershman requested the Committee's assistance in assessing applications and communicating the details of the grant program among its networks.

The MRAGM Committee supports this project by assessing applications as proposed by Richard.
Moved: SLW | Seconded: OS | Carried

ITEM 4: Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous Committee meeting held on 10 April 2019 are accepted as a true and accurate record pending correction of spelling mistake.
Moved: SD | Seconded: SLW | Carried

ITEM 5: Business arising from the minutes

- Tegel visit - Cheryl is finding us a date in September that will coincide with the Nola Tegel exhibition.
- Marketing communications strategy to be discussed under marketing

ITEM 6: Correspondence

Out: None

In: Resignation of Events Co-ordinator, Andrea Pugh, who has indicated that she is currently unable to fulfil the commitments for this role. The Committee acknowledges the significant work that Andrea has done over more than three years to strengthen and build the MRAG Members' position from a marketing perspective, and we also acknowledge the wonderful legacy she has left by creating a comprehensive Strategic Marketing Plan. A vote of thanks was offered for that wonderful work.

SLW has received interest from a person who would like to help the Committee in the Events area, but be in a supportive role. Discussion noted that this position is actually very large and could easily utilise two people. The Committee discussed bringing people to the position on a project basis that have start and end times rather than recruiting for ongoing or yearly commitments. Moved: SLW | Seconded: AS | Carried

ITEM 7 Update from MRAG Interim Caretaker

- Keryl Collard reported that the gallery is preparing for it's next opening on Saturday 25 May, which

includes unveiling of exhibitions by David Griggs, Cutler Footway and Alesha Fewster.

- Gallery Graphic Designer Clare Hodgins has won a national award for her exhibition catalogue design.
- The gallery team has been working very hard on Create NSW acquittals.
- Around 30 of the AGNSW Members visited the gallery for a tour.
- The event *Where Song Began* was quite a magical experience, with about 80 people in attendance.
- The gallery is in the process of receiving a significant donation of artworks from Penelope Siedler's collection -163 works in total.
- Artist Nell has been commissioned to install a fluorescent light work on the exterior of the gallery.

The MRAG Caretaker's report is accepted
Moved: KC | Seconded: OS | Carried

ITEM 8: Financial Report

AS reported that there has not been many transactions in the last month. The Member's position is currently \$91,952, although there are probably some more costs that will come through in June. We are not getting the detail from Council's new accounting software that we were before. AS will prepare a more detailed report in July. Overall, the MRAGM are in a very comfortable position for the end of the financial year.

AS will open a bank account for the Committee by the end of July, organise a point-of-sale device and prepare guidelines so that the Committee can make sales and receive funds.

Moved: AS | Seconded: SD | Carried

ITEM 9: ARTEL Magazine Secretary's Report

SD reported that approximately 100 copies of *ARTEL* are about to be sent to local businesses. When the second free copy of the new *ARTEL* is sent to local businesses later in the year, a letter will be included that explains the benefits of Business Memberships. Maree Skene has done social media push for the Autumn competition. SD will begin planning the next issue in June.

Moved: SD | Seconded: AS | Carried

ITEM 10: Membership Report

LC reported that current Financial Memberships number 769 with 1,076 expired members, and 6 new

members in April. Discussion of three-year trends to be carried over to the next meeting.

Membership drives: upcoming events are Olive Tree markets, which will be held at the gallery on Saturday 11 May and the Exhibition Opening on Saturday 25 May. The Members will have a table/presence at both these events to promote MRAG Memberships. SD will request a redesign of the membership form from *ARTEL* designer and the committee will look into gift cards and other ideas for packaging a gift membership.

Moved: LC | Seconded: BW | Carried

ITEM 11: Leah Riches introduced herself to the Committee and discussed her love for MRAG and the support the gallery has offered in recent years. Leah is interested in filling the casual vacancy in the position of Events Coordinator for the remainder of the current term.

ITEM 12: **Announcements**
Next Meeting: Wednesday 12 June 2019, 5:00 PM

Meeting closed at 7:25 PM