

KALAMUNDA COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRE
Supporting the Community
General Meeting Minutes 1 November 2024

Present: Lindsay Goodwin (Chair), Bronwyn Pasotti, Deb Stone, Roger Jennings, Angela Corfe (Secretary), Brian Lawler, Judy Watts, Katherine Horne, Jenny von Gorkum, Katie Fairweather, Michelle Reynolds, David Wood, Alison Houlahan, Margaret Davidson, Bridget Hogarth, Gwynne Evans, Margaret Radice, Gerard Tonks, Caroline Badminton, Wendy Whearan, Jenny Beahan, Mavis Paskulich, Diane Fitzpatrick, David Storer, Kris Nunn, Meg Corsini, Sally McIlroy and Helen Carter.

(1) Welcome:

The Chair, Lindsay Goodwin welcomed all to the meeting and declared it open at 1205 hrs. Reminder to members to sign in attendance sheets.

(2) Apologies: Anne-Marie Botica, Annie O'Malley, Marilyn Bennett-Chambers, Chris Potter and M Roberts.

(3) Acceptance of Minutes:

That the minutes of the previous General Meeting of 22 March 2024 be passed:
Proposed: Roger Jennings, seconded. Brian Lawler.

(4) Business Arising: Nil.

(5) Agenda Items:

L Goodwin advised that due to possible issues arising from the reports that may affect the proposed By-Laws, it had been decided to change the order of the two items listed.

REPORTS:

COORDINATORS' REPORT - A-M Botica, A O'Malley and L Goodwin

The Kalamunda Community Learning Centre has had a busy few months since the last meeting, with the following happening in the Centre:

- **Morning Tea with the Premier** - The Kalamunda Community Learning Centre hosted a morning tea with the Premier, Roger Cook. This was a wonderful success, with The Mayor, City of Kalamunda and representatives from The Hub also attending. The Premier was amazed by our wonderful Learning Centre and spoke with a number of our members.
- **Open Day:** A wonderful and successful day. Thank you to all our amazing volunteers who spent many hours through the year organising this Open Day.
- **47th Birthday luncheon** - A lovely luncheon celebrating our wonderful Learning Centre. Thank you to all who help organise all our luncheons throughout the year and it was lovely to see so many people attending. The new CEO, City of Kalamunda, Mr Anthony Vuleta also attended and was extremely impressed by what we have created, having had a tour of the Centre when he spoke with our members.
- **Floor replacement – Green and Orange room** - Good news with The City of Kalamunda advising that the floors in the green and orange room are to be replaced over the break - work commencing the last week of November, finishing by 20 December 2024.

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- **Registrar** - Our very hard-working Registrar, Bronwyn is off on a well-earned holiday. She has worked extremely long hours over the past few weeks/months to have the new programme and website ready for viewing shortly. This is a huge job, and we are incredibly grateful to have her on board.
- **Thank you.** - There are so many people to thank. Every job no matter how big or small is important and an integral part of the Learning Centre.

TREASURER - D Stone

Presentation of the year to date financial statements for 2024 with comparisons to last financial year - for the period 1 January to 28th October.

Reported an increase in Income of approx. \$15,000 compared to previous year, mainly due to Grants received, fundraising efforts, increase in interest rates and a slight increase in course fees received.

Open Day was a success with sales slightly higher than previous year by \$400 and expenses for the day a little less than previous year by \$879.

D Stone advised an Open Day profit of approximately \$1,500.

As to the Centre's overall expenses, they have been kept under control to date with the main reduction in expenses compared to previous year being \$16,000 in Crèche costs. *Previous year Crèche loss was \$30,000, this year expected to be around \$15,000.*

Our year to date Profit is looking healthy at the moment but there are still some large costs to come out between now and the end of the financial year but we should be heading for a small profit at the end of the year.

Regarding the Crèche, it was announced the Executive have thoroughly reviewed the demand for its services and costs associated with running it, regrettably making the decision for it to be closed from next year.

The Crèche is currently only open 2 days a week with only 1 child attending a Monday session and 5 a Thursday session, often not turning up all. The number of days has gradually been reduced from 5 to 4, to 3 and now 2 over the past few years and this has resulted in no wait lists or requests for it to be open any other times.

This should not come as a surprise to most as you realise how much the environment for mothers has changed over the past 47 years since the Centre was created by a group of mothers, and which, the Crèche was a central part of this organisation.

As a Mum 50 years ago, she said at that time there were no Day Care Centres where she lived and a centre such as this would have been a god send to her. In reality that was a time when the majority of mothers stayed at home with their young children and didn't go to work. In fact, she could remember there being discrimination against young mothers going to work at that time. Fast forward to today where mothers are actively encouraged to be in the work force with paid maternity

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leave, equal pay and rights, flexible work arrangements, many subsidised day care centre options and next year there will be free day care for families earning under \$80,000 per annum.

In fact, in the early 1970s less than 40% of mothers worked whereas today that figure is 75% plus. The environment for working mothers and the demand for a Crèche, of our type, has evolved significantly over the past 50 years and as an organisation we need to evolve as well. We all want our organisation to survive for many years to come and offer our excellent services to everyone and to do this successfully we must evolve as an organisation as well.

Also, we are the only Community Learning Centre in WA that still has a Crèche, possibly in Australia. In fact, Mundaring and South Perth closing their Crèches in the past few years for the exact same reasons that we are.

In addition to the lack of demand for the Crèche services, the costs of the Crèche are going to increase significantly over the next two years with wages increasing by 12% and also superannuation and workers compensation rates increasing as well. These are all factors that make the Crèche an unsustainable service going forward.

D Stone reported during her 2½ years of Treasurer the Crèche has sustained a loss of \$75,000.

Acknowledgement needs to be given to the evolution in the demographics at the Centre over the past 47 years. Originally, when started by mothers, the average age would have been in their 20s and 30s and now 47 years on the majority of our members are in their 70s and 80s. Some of these members live only on the Aged Pension and have to save and budget to be able to afford to come to the Centre. This Centre provides opportunities for social engagements, friendships and companionship and courses to keep the brain active and healthy. Some senior members would love to come to the Centre 2 to 3 times a week but can only afford 1 session. It is therefore, imperative that our fees be kept as low as we can so this majority group of members can attend and to assist with this we need to minimize our expenses.

However, the mothers are not being forgotten and we are currently looking at options for small children next year with courses which include 'Songs with Bubs', plus Katherine Horne is looking at setting up a no cost child minding service run by volunteers.

A lot of thought and consideration has gone into this decision, also addressing what this organisation needs for ensuring its success going forward for years to come. D Stone advised she was happy to take any questions.

K Horne – referred to the suggestion of free childcare being available for families earning less than \$80,000 and suggested that this would take at least two years to put in introduce and in fact, there may be an election before this was possible. She accepted there had been a decrease in demand but referred to there being 60,000 more babies in 2023 than 1997. Another member advised that she had not been aware of the Learning Centre or the availability of the Crèche.

C Badminton confirmed that there had been extensive advertising in the area, together with promotion of the Crèche on social media although accepting 'Mum's Free Time' had been a different concept to promote, suggesting Mums needed to spread the word.

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Pointed out that even if the Crèche was full, being 8 children per session, it would still be losing money with a cost of \$264 for every session. If the Crèche was open for just one child the cost would be \$150 for the session.

J Beahan queried whether the Centre is offering courses on the program targeting younger members? The closure of the Crèche is a serious decision and suggested that the Centre may be turning into an 'aged care centre'. Therefore, the decision to close the Crèche should be put to all members as she felt it was a change of direction for the Centre.

B Lawler disputed these comments and took exception to the reference of an aged care centre. He said he was proud to be part of the KCLC and the courses it provides.

However, it was believed the program was varied and did attract younger people. Tutors running the courses were also volunteers and therefore there was some limitation to choice.

D Stone confirmed that the decision was a business one made by the Executive who represented the members of the Centre. As legally five weeks' notice was required for the employees, the decision had to be made.

K Horne – referred to her marketing comment confirming that it in no way reflected previous efforts. She reported a meeting had been arranged with herself, D Stone and A O'Malley next week. She believed closing the Crèche was a different one from the employment issue and mentioned that it was rare for a Crèche to have paid employees. She referred to the KPI outlined in the last General Meeting minutes, which had proposed to 'Limit the loss of the Crèche to less than \$15,000'. She advised there had been no consultation and hoped there was an alternative way to run it.

B Pasotti advised the Centre could no longer offer a funded Crèche but would support a Crèche being run by volunteers, but would need to ensure there was a team of dedicated volunteers.

K Horne believed there would be enough volunteers, and that this distinguished the Centre from others by being the only one to offer the Crèche.

It was agreed to proceed with a model run by volunteers.

D Storer – reminded the meeting that things were different now with more childcare centres available, more people going back to work and fewer 'stay at home' mums. Unfortunately, there are no longer the children or income to keep the Crèche open.

B Hogarth – advised that the Centre at one time received a subsidy towards the running of the Crèche but unfortunately there are no longer any funding options available.

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REGISTRAR –

Once again difficulties were experienced with our site when semester two enrolments first opened but after the original onslaught, enrolments ran smoothly. We are very grateful for the team of enrollers who assisted so willingly through the week.

To mitigate these problems for future enrolments our web host is initiating diagnostic testing and amendments to our website, being hopeful for a much smoother start to enrolments in 2025!

It has been a busy semester for the Assistant Registrar, Sally McIlroy who puts in many hours of voluntary work, and B Pasotti. There have been updates to the creation of class lists which now include dates (thanks also to Sally's daughter Orla), our website database has been cleansed of inactive accounts, etc, we have done lots of testing with orders and coupons and enrolments continued to flow in. The 'Registrar's Rambles' included in Centre Talk this semester will give an insight into some of the other matters that have been dealt with.

Our current membership is: 808

- Community Membership: 725
- Tutor Membership: 76
- Volunteer Membership: 3
- Support Worker Membership: 4

This semester we have processed 746 orders including 40 new orders for term 4.

Courses for 2025 have now been timetabled and thanks to our tutors who responded to the call for an early commitment as B Pasotti will be taking leave until the New Year. These will be available to be viewed online shortly although changes might occur before enrolments open in 2025. Semester one enrolments will open Tuesday the 4th of February and courses will commence Monday the 17th of February.

WHS OFFICER – Roger Jennings

Thanked members for adhering to the WHS requirements at the Centre, with thanks to M Davidson and A-M Botica for their assistance.

Reminder to members to have electrical items tested and tagged prior to the start of the 2025 Semester.

Advised that following an incident where a vehicle went over the edge of the entry road into the Centre, a request has been forwarded to the City of Kalamunda to instal some type of barrier.

CRECHE LIAISON – Katherine Horne

On Friday 11 October K Horne reported she had been told by the Principal Coordinator and Treasurer that the Executive had decided to close the Crèche at the end of the semester because of the anticipated cost of running it next year.

She advised being shocked by this news – side-swiped in fact - as there had been no consultation about the matter.

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In an attempt to save the Crèche she is proposing a model staffed entirely by volunteers (including herself). Being 'untrained' volunteers would not be able to change nappies or assist children with toileting. Mothers would be called from their class to perform these functions but there would be no charge for parents to have their children minded in the Crèche.

Current mothers interested in using the Crèche next year do not have a problem with the volunteer model.

She advised having contacted members who volunteered in the Crèche this year, to explain the situation to them and to ascertain the level of support for this venture. This is a work in progress, but she is optimistic that it will be possible to run the Crèche on Thursdays in 2025 using the volunteer only model.

Meanwhile, Debra, Sally and Nina have continued to care for the Crèche children in their usual exemplary fashion. These staff members have a very long employment history with the Learning Centre. She thanked them wholeheartedly for their dedication and hard work – in Debra and Nina's cases, over nearly two decades. The wonderful bunch of volunteers have also given much appreciated assistance and she expressed her heartfelt thanks to them as well.

Three children will be starting either full-time school or three or four-year-old Kindy next year and mothers are also moving on with their lives to take up new ventures. We wish them all well.

With the employment of paid workers ceasing, this is the end of a phase in the history of the Crèche.

She sincerely hoped that it is not the end of the Crèche.

She confirmed that this year's mothers were happy with the new model, similar to that introduced in 1997.

POSTED BOOK HIRE GROUPS 2023 – Gwynne EVANS

Advised that it was a wonderful thing to hire book sets, already read by our own KCLC book clubs, to Book Clubs for what is a nominal rate. The hire rate of \$4/copy covers the post and packaging, sometimes with a little left over. This depends on the size and weight of the books. We have two groups collecting from the Centre, which means their payment is all profit, balancing out the cost of postage on some of our heavier books.

The posting of books to groups, too far from KCLC to collect, continues. It is a busy time of year trying to get books up until December sorted and aiming to pass the Post Office accounts to the Treasurer before the end of November. As some groups meet 12 months of the year the job continues over our break.

There are 13 groups continuing into 2025, with Minganew and Kununurra taking a break, although staying on our list for the moment. The teachers from Boddington are changing their system due to fewer members and several using Kindles together with staff transfers affecting numbers.

The Blue room has been booked for the two Thursdays following the end of year closure 29/11/24. Gwynne confirmed she would continue to attend on Thursday mornings during Summer in the Centre as books will continue to arrive throughout the summer. She visits the PO daily to ensure the box is cleared regularly while the Centre is closed.

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RECEPTION DESK RELIEF – Alison Houlahan (read by R Jennings)

Our desk receptionists have carried out their duties with a smile and a welcome word this Semester and adapted to any new changes that were asked of them.

There have been quite a few shifts in Term 2 and 3 that were covered by our Desk Relief members and this was very much appreciated.

Unfortunately, Hella Hackett our Thursday morning Receptionist will not be returning in 2025. She has said it is time for her to retire and on behalf of you all thanks are extended to Hella for her many, many years contributing and volunteering at the Kalamunda Learning Centre. She will be missed and the members wish her all the best as she continues her retirement.

Alison wished to personally thank both the Desk Receptionists and Desk Relief members for their continuing excellent contribution to the smooth running of the Kalamunda Community Learning Centre this Semester.

ACCEPTANCE OF NEW BY-LAWS:

As a result of changes to the Constitution together with some other changes, draft By-Laws were circulated to all members prior to the meeting.

The Executive propose the changes as circulated.

K Horne proposed a change to the last sentence of the first paragraph of the introduction of the By-Laws be extended to read:

They should be read in conjunction with the current KCLC Constitution as well as the KCLC Mission Statement, Values and Objectives as found in the current Members' Handbook.
(Proposed K Horne, Seconded M Corsini).

She reminded the meeting that the Values reflect the core of what the Centre is about and although included in the Handbook, suggested they needed to be mentioned.

Proposal seconded by the Executive and endorsed by all present.

K Horne proposed change to By-Law 1. Second sentence of Inclusivity, to read:

Sexual harassment, racial harassment or any form of discrimination based on the grounds listed in the current State and Federal legislation will not be tolerated.

She believed it to be important that all issues are covered and that the full list would read – Sex, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, breast feeding, race, religious or political conviction, age, family responsibility or family status, gender history, publication of relevant details of Fines Enforcement Registrar's website.

M Davidson queried current sentence and was advised it read – Discrimination of any member of another person (member or otherwise) on grounds of race, sexual orientation, religion, or disability will not be tolerated.

By referring to the current State and Federal legislation it ensured the By-Laws would not need continual updating when legislation changed.

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Proposal seconded by the Executive and endorsed by all present.

K Horne proposed an additional point to By-Law 4 (Executive Committee Procedures) to read:

Dates of forthcoming meetings are to be made available to the general membership through publication in Centre Talk.

(Proposed K Horne, Seconded M Corsini).

K Horne suggested that due to Covid and the move to the new building, members no longer had a clear idea of what the Executive was undertaking and requested meeting dates be included in Centre Talk.

C Badminton suggested the dates be included on the Centre's calendar, concerned that members may believe they could attend meetings if published in Centre Talk.

D Storer queried why the meetings needed to be advertised? The Chair advised that minutes were available to members and that outcomes were published in Centre Talk, although the minutes would not become available until being endorsed at the next meeting.

It was felt that confirmation of the meetings being held was a positive move.

C Badminton confirmed that an article was proposed outlining the structure and link of the meetings held at the Centre with the Secretary providing a brief update and proposal that the Centre Liaison Group was being opened up to all members after the Christmas break.

R Jennings reread the proposal and a vote took place resulting in 6 for and 12 against.

Proposal not carried.

R Jennings then proposed that the By-Laws be changed with the proposals previously circulated and K Horne's as endorsed above.

Carried unanimously.

(6) General Business:

K Horne put forward the following motion:

That the Crèche room remains available for its intended use while models of delivery of this service to members are explored.

(Proposed K Horne, Seconded M Reynolds).

She explained that while investigating the proposed new model with volunteers the room needs to be available.

B Pasotti confirmed that working in liaison with the Course Scheduler, the Centre was currently paying rent on the room. Thursdays would definitely be retained and Mondays for the 'Songs with Bubs' six week session. She confirmed support would be provided if more sessions are organised. Dressmaking for Pleasure and an IT course would be making use of the room, as the Centre is currently paying for it.

In response to K Horne's suggestion, B Pasotti suggested:

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That the Crèche room can be used if available and in liaison with the Registrar.

Amended proposal carried unanimously.

M Davidson queried whether the current Crèche policies and procedures will work for a volunteer model and was assured that they would. Next semester one volunteer session per week to be held.

J Beahan thanked all the Workgroup Leaders and the Executive for the work undertaken on behalf of the organisation.

(7) Future Meetings

General Meetings 28 March 2025 & 19 September 2025
AGM 6 June 2025.

(8) Meeting closed by Chair at 1315 hrs.