

VERMONT SOUTH BOWLING CLUB

MINUTES OF THE 30TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) HELD ON SUNDAY, 7TH APRIL 2024

Chairperson: Diane Agius
Secretary: Anne Staley

Chairperson Di Agius called the meeting to order and asked if everyone had signed the attendance register.

Chairperson Di Agius – Declared the 30th Annual General Meeting of the Vermont South Bowling Club open for business at 2.05 pm and thanked members for their attendance. She acknowledged the significance of this meeting being the 30th AGM and a remarkable milestone in the club's history. She also acknowledged the enormous contribution of past members to get the bowls section to where it is today.

Before commencing the formal part of the meeting, Chairperson Di invited everyone to stand to take a few moments of reflection in silence to remember our members who had passed away over the past year....1 minute reflection took place.

Chairperson Di thanked the members and the meeting commenced.

1. Apologies

Chairperson Di, asked the Secretary, Anne Staley to read the list of apologies – Anne read out the following names:

Trish Martin
Helen Selleck
Mike Petty
Martin Haines
David Fisher
Caz Fisher
Viv Bennett
Noel Bennett
Marj Walker
Lyn Bryant
Debbie Strybosch.

No further apologies were noted.

2. Notice of Meeting

Chairperson Di asked the Secretary, Anne Staley - "Has every financial member of the Club been informed of the AGM in accordance with Rule 32(a) of the Club's Rules?"

The Secretary, Anne announced - "A notice has been sent by post to the address of all financial members who do not have email addresses and emailed via eNews to all members who have email addresses and also posted on noticeboards."

3. Confirmation of Minutes - 2023 AGM

Chairperson Di announced - "The Minutes of the 2023 Bowls Section AGM have been posted on the noticeboard, emailed via eNews and copies made available to members. I ask for a Mover and Seconder that they be taken as read and accepted."

Moved: Geoff Bryant

Seconded: Pam Janssen

Motion Carried

4. Business Arising from 2023 Bowls Section AGM Minutes

Chairperson Di asks Secretary Anne Staley - "Was there any business arising from the Minutes that needed to be addressed by the Committee?" Secretary Anne responded "There's none."

5. Presentation and Acceptance of Annual Reports

- (a) Chairperson Di advised that financial accountability, both historically and currently is determined at VSC committee level. Di thanked the VSC for working in partnership with us around the operational needs of the bowls section.

Chairperson Di asked the Treasurer if he would like to speak. Phil advised even after the extensive renovation the club was situated in a good position and would be able to replace the top green when required.

Di asked if there were any questions for the Treasurer of the VSC - there were none.

- (b) Chairperson Di advised that the annual report has been published for all members to read.

Chairperson Di provided the following summary comments:

- She referred to the fantastic renovations and acknowledged the time it has taken. She said we are here now and we are certainly going to enjoy our new surroundings and the opportunities that the renovations will bring.
- She expressed gratitude to the Tennis section for sharing their clubroom with us....or maybe letting us take it over. On behalf of the bowls section, she thanked the Tennis section for sharing their clubroom enabling us to keep operating. The tennis section has been so supportive and accommodating.
- Di also thanked the VSC for their contribution and support, especially Ken George who has worked enormous hours, to get us to where we are today. She also mentioned that Ken is still following up the drainage problem on our west green. Di asked everyone to show their acknowledgment to the Tennis section and the VSC committee.
- Di advised that our membership is 190. 18 members recruited since the last AGM and four more since the annual reports were written. She stated that they have joined via a number of avenues – Jack Attack (thanks to John Temple and his team); Try Bowls and Barefoot Bowls (thanks to Ken George and Mike Petty); via phone enquiries; member referrals and transfers from other clubs. Di stated that this demonstrates that no matter where people connect with our club they are impressed enough to want to join. She said we should be so proud of how we showcase ourselves and our activities. Di thanked all of our members again for the way they represent our club and said most clubs would be envious of our recruitment numbers but as we know the work must go on.

- Di referred to our Pennant competition – and said it is just that, the competitive arm of the club striving to do the best we possibly can to get the best results. She referred to the situation this year with players lodging their availability forms after the due date, which had implications in the number of teams we submitted for the mid-week pennant competition being too little and the rotation that had to happen as a result. Di explained the process in registering teams for Pennant competition with Bowls Victoria. She said we usually submit the number of teams for each competition in June/July and we only get one more opportunity to change that before comps are closed and draws are published. Di said that to avoid this happening again, it is imperative that players intending to play Pennant, must lodge their forms by the due date or they may find that they cannot be guaranteed of a game and will be put on to the emergency list. Di stressed that if members intended to be in Pennant competition to please make sure their forms are in by the due date of 18th April.

Di referred to our results this season....and stated “aren’t we proud”. Six teams in finals across Saturday, Tuesday and Thursday.

Saturday results – 1st team promoted to 1st Division; 2nd team promoted to 3rd Division; 3rd team finishing 4th; 4th team finishing 3rd.

Tuesday results – 1st team finishing 4th and maintaining their position in 1st Division.

Thursday – 4 teams, 1 in finals - finished 4th.

Tuesday Night Pennant – both teams just finishing outside the four.

Di went on to say that for all other teams, it has been an effort the club can be proud of and a challenge to better those results next year. She congratulated all players, coaches, selectors and all the supporting roles needed to enable us to play, for the outstanding pennant season we have had. She expressed how proud everyone was of their efforts.

Di stated that some of our new members were involved in the finals activity and some players played in their first grand final.

Di asked everyone to acknowledge our efforts in our Pennant season with 3 cheers.

She then said that it’s about now we could launch into a theme song....and suggested that maybe someone, might like to think about that and see what they can come up with.

- Di highlighted our sponsors being actively involved in partnerships with the club via tournament prizemoney and social prizemoney. Ladies Day with Kieser and Mark Kainey; KCL sponsoring their tournament; Kieser being involved in Monday social nominated pairs; Balmoral sponsoring the Balmoral Cup. Di said we need to acknowledge the hard work by the sponsorship committee very capably led by Spiro Agius. Over \$60,000 has been raised by this committee and plays a huge role in our future and the opportunities we can create for members and the community. Our tournaments have been a huge success up to now and that will only continue into the future.
- Di referred to our Tournaments, KCL last April, the Balmoral Cup in its first year and Ladies Day stating they have all been successful. She said we have been able to showcase our greens, our presentation, our catering, our organisation and now our clubrooms. We really lead the way for other clubs to admire.

Di went on to explain how she has been approached to run a 5-week ladies’ tournament in September. A team of 5 players from 6 clubs in the Eastern Region. The players would be just starting out in bowls or having minimal experience in bowling.

It will be run here at Vermont South teaching the ladies all aspects of the game on the green and with guest speakers off the green after the game. She said we may have started something big in the development of women in bowls.

- Di made some special acknowledgments:
 - Our greens team, they keep our greens in immaculate condition and are an integral part of the success that we have been able to achieve this year.
 - John Temple and the vital role he undertakes in keeping everyone informed about what's happening across the VSC and especially our bowls section via eNews. He and his team also do a magnificent job with the Jack Attack program every year and its success just keeps growing and growing.
 - Alex Blundell for running the bar and keeping our drinks and bowls items stocked up and ready to help us enjoy each other socially.
 - Pam Janssen for her roles in well-being, social media and new memberships.
 - Ray Evans for his project work, cash handling and the enormous effort it takes to put the handbook together every year.
 - Pam Barnhill who leads the catering teams for club functions, tournaments, corporate events and then there is the catering rosters for pennant. Di referred to the number of ladies that work supporting Pam to showcase our catering professionalism. She referred to the fact that a lot of clubs are now not using their kitchens but buying in their food because they just don't have the volunteers and the team that we have.
 - She thanked the convenors of both social and pennant competitions who have taken up the leadership role of running their days without any interference from me. Our social comp numbers are very strong and continue to grow.
 - Again, Di thanked her committee who have supported her for the past 3 years and have undertaken their responsibilities with due diligence and integrity always mindful that they are representing all of the members of this club.
 - She then referred to the members in the room...."To you, our members, the heartbeat of our club, we are a volunteer club....you are our future. To everyone here I also say thank you, it has been a privilege and an honour to represent you as your chairperson again this year."
 - Di then advised that we are holding a thank you afternoon tea after this meeting to acknowledge each other and all that we do, working together for the club. We will also be running the reverse raffle during that time. Please make sure you stay.

Chairperson Di announced -"I now ask for a Mover and Secunder that the Reports as circulated, be taken as received, read and accepted."

Moved: Ian Heatley

Seconded: Tony Bennett

Motion: Carried

6. Election of Chairperson, Secretary, 4 Committee Members and all Sub-Committees and Support Roles

Chairperson Di referred everyone to the document handed to them when they arrived titled “Bowls Committee, Sub-Committees and Support 2024/25” which will be an attachment to the minutes.

She pointed out that this was very detailed and demonstrated the huge number of roles and responsibilities required in running the Bowls Section.

Di announced that we would now move to the election of Chairperson, Secretary and members to serve on the Bowls Committee. “In accordance with the Rules the Chairperson, that’s me! has 1 year of my second term to serve. She announced that the rules state that a chairperson has a limit of 4 terms and she has no ambition to be that person. This will be her last year. She asked if someone has any interest or desire to take up this position please come and talk to her.”

Di advised that Deb Strybosch had to step down from the Secretary position during the year for health reasons and Anne Staley took up the position. This does not align with the rules where the Secretary’s term should commence in an even numbered year so Di advised that Anne Staley has nominated officially for the role of Secretary and will complete a term of 2 years.

Di went on to say that the following Committee members have 1 year of their 2-year term left to serve – Rhona Bastiani, Jann Laurence, Sharon Hedrick. John Ispanovic has decided to take a break off the committee but will continue on in the Green’s Director role.

- Chairperson Di advised – “We will now address the vacant positions to be filled.”

Chairperson Di announced:

“Firstly, for the role bearer positions we have one nomination for the Secretary position – Anne Staley.” There being no other nominations for this position, Di stated that it gave her great pleasure to declare Anne Staley officially as incoming Secretary and thanked her for nominating to this key position.

- Chairperson Di advised – “We will now address the 4 vacant general Committee positions, to be filled.”

Chairperson Di announced:

We have Pam Barnhill, Mike Petty, John Strybosch and Peter Morgan nominating for the 4 vacant positions. “As there were 4 nominations for 4 vacant positions, Di declared Pam, Mike, John and Peter elected – she thanked them all for nominating for these positions – Congratulations!”

Di went on to give a big thank you to the one member leaving the committee this year. John Ispanovic who has contributed considerable experience, knowledge and support to the operational demands of the Bowls Committee and will continue on with our green’s maintenance as well as corporate events and other involvement opportunities around the club. Quite possibly some good bowling as well. She thanked John for his contribution. She thanked him especially for his support to her and asked everyone to show their appreciation for John’s contribution to the administration of the club.

Di talked about her idea of getting people involved in knowing how the club runs and what duties are required prior to taking up a position formally - via what she called succession planning recruits. She explained that this meant, the recruits will come to bowls committee meetings and be bound by all the rules and regulations the committee. However, they will be there to learn about all the operational aspects of the bowls section with the view that in the future they will be more willing to volunteer for a role in an area where they feel they can add value and get more involved in the running of the club.

Di thanked the 5 people – Rick Nelson, Sue Morgan, Tony McCardle, Leanne Bourke and Dean Stubleby for willingly accepted her idea of getting this group started. Di encouraged any other members who want to take up this open invitation to join this group, to please do so and talk to her about it.

Chairperson Di announced – “And now it gives me great pleasure to invite **your new Committee** - to join me.”

Di announced we will now move to....

Sub-Committees and Supporting Positions 2024/25

Di stated that it is very pleasing to note that majority of members involved with the various sub-committees and support positions last year, have renominated; decided to continue for another year or we have seen some new members starting to get involved in the running of the club.

She announced that the Head Coach position is now vacant with John Strybosch not continuing. She advised that she had asked John to speak to the members about his experience of the past 2 years.

John Strybosch speaks....

John apologised for not being perfect or the greatest orator or verbal conversationalist. He knows he is blunt and forthright and is sorry for any angst he may have caused anybody, but one thing he will not apologise for is sharing his faith.

The effort over the past 2 years has been a difficult task, turning up for training, writing weekly reports and keeping people motivated.

When John requested a show of hands, mainly from top team members, they indicated a club coach needed to be appointed (20 for 1 against). John stressed, we do not need to be a premier club, just a strong club with a strong committee which prompted thanks to Di for all her assistance while he was coach.

If we go ahead with a new coach they would need to be young and be required to guide the club. We have advertised for a coach and received two applications. One from a fellow in Scotland and the other from a previous applicant who when appointed pulled the pin at the last minute. The committee is to look at what is best for the club as we would need to pay a coach between \$15,000-\$20,000. We do not want a paid player we want a coach who will keep the club strong.

Rich clubs have poker machines and they can pay players \$400,000 to come in from interstate to play pennant. We are a community club and the strongest club in the district. There are clubs in the district who are struggling and in one case their top team is now in Division 4 and finding it really difficult to attract new members.

We may not need a new coach with Bowls Victoria running sessions for a well-known coach to come out to the club once a month and hold a 3-hour session both on the green and in the clubroom. In the past similar sessions have been well attended.

All members have talent and we need to stay strong as a bowling club and out on the green and retain the number of pennant teams we have.

Encourage your family to come along and bowl and enjoy the facilities.

So, in summary Di advised:

She had placed the ad for the Head Coach position prior to today to make sure we were in the mix with other clubs looking for Head Coaches. We are not looking for a paid player as some other clubs have done....if we are to proceed to employing a Head Coach we want a fully accredited coach with experience. We have until early May to see if we draw that person but if we don't we will proceed without a coach and the committee will determine another program of coaching that she has been exploring and talked to John Strybosch about. The committee will determine the way forward in consultation with the coaches and selectors.

Di also referred to paid players and asked for feedback from the members in the room whether they supported the committee's direction not to have paid players at our club. There was significant support in the room.

Di then talked about John Strybosch. She said....

"Well, what can I say about John Strybosch. He is direct, some might say blunt at times, he always tells you as it is and sometimes that is not received well. He loves a good time and the occasional glass of red! He is not so good at impersonating ABBA. He is totally committed to his keto diet and he is a religious man"

However, what I know about John is this....

When this club was in turmoil 3 years ago and I needed support he was the first person to step forward and commit to whatever was needed.

He took on the Head Coach position and Chair of Saturday selection in the same year.

He nominated to the bowls committee and played an active role in our Tournaments and Club Championships.

He dedicated himself to the wellbeing and future of this club and has worked so hard that I have had to worry about the implications for his health.

He is genuine, honest and he cares about every single member of this club. He wouldn't have contributed in the way he has over this past 2 years if he didn't.

I know that we would not have achieved the success we have this year without John's experience and know how about bowls. It has been invaluable and we have been very fortunate to have him at this club.

John...I thank you....your support has been one of the reasons I have been able to do my role.

I salute you for everything that you have given to this club. Everyone, John isn't going anywhere but please show your appreciation for his commitment and hard work in the Head Coach position.

Weekend Selectors

Chairperson Di announced:

Spiro Agius and Derek Hale have 1 year remaining of their 2-year term. Mary Farley and Rob Graham have renominated for another 2 years. John Strybosch and Tony Bennett have nominated. This results in 6 selectors for Saturday Pennant.

Denis Quintal leaves this selection panel. She asked everyone to acknowledge Denis's contribution and hard work and advised that Denis will continue in his role on the greens team.

Midweek Selectors - Tuesday

Chairperson Di announced:

Three selectors have 1 year of their term remaining – Gillian Horlock, Pat Andrew and Barbara Carroll. Graeme Buntrock is renominating. John Strybosch and Chris Holland are nominating. This results in 6 selectors for the mid-week selection panel.

John Deegan and Derek Hale leave the panel. Derek remains on Saturday selection and John Deegan is looking for a new job!!

Di asked everyone to please acknowledge John and Derek for their contribution to selection.

Di stated that the 5 positions are not a rule but a guide and we consider that if people want to be involved in any aspects of the club we should encourage and support them to make that happen.

Midweek Selectors - Thursday

Di announced that Spiro Agius has nominated for Thursday selection. She will not be continuing in this role. She advised that there have been a lower number of players indicating they are wanting to play Thursdays so we already know we will be entering less teams into this comp. She asked for another person to volunteer to work with Spiro in this competition.

Tournament/Club Championships

Di advised that the Bowls Committee have made the decision that Tournaments and Club Championship responsibilities are far too big for one person and therefore these events will be run as 2 separate portfolio responsibilities.

Graeme Durrant, David Fisher and Mal Walker have volunteered to run the internal club championships. Mike Petty will remain as the Tournament (external) Director.

Social Committee

Di advised that Faye Blundell and Gill George have had to resign from the Social Committee explaining why, which leaves only 4 members. Social functions are a big part of our culture so we need volunteers to get involved in this area.

John Temple raised the issue of changing the rules to allow Gill and Faye to continue. Di took this on to explore our options.

Club Uniforms

Di advised that Deb Banner cannot continue with uniform responsibilities due to a personal commitment, and that Sue Morgan and Caz Fisher have put their hands up to take on this responsibility.

Social Convenors

Di advised that Barefoot Bowls is one of our major avenues for attracting new members. However, Ken George and Mike Petty cannot be the only 2 involved in this program. She advised that we need others to get involved on Wednesdays. We are looking at starting earlier to attract people who can come straight from work. She said "Please, if you can manage getting involved, it could mean that we get a pool of people and we can start a rotation which would mean that you may only have to be there every 2 or 3 or 4 weeks."

Chairperson Di advised that Graeme Durrant has offered to also continue his work off committee as club CCO. She acknowledged Graeme's excellent representation of us into the bowls community. She said his recent efforts in organising and showcasing our club for the ERBR Over 60's competition was exceptional and recognised by the ERBR officials.

Di advised that Ray Evans who has been carrying out the cash handling and creating the Club Handbook each year has given us early notice that he will be moving to Berwick in June and will not be able to continue in his roles beyond that time.

Jann Laurence has volunteered to a handover of the cash handling role.

Therefore, we are looking for someone to volunteer to work on the creation of our yearly handbook because if we don't get someone then we won't have one.

Di thanked everyone for volunteering because whether you are long term members or new, we need everyone to contribute in some way to the running of our club, especially if we want to have a future.

Di asked everyone to please acknowledge each other....

7. General Business

- Volunteers/vacant roles/responsibilities – what's vacant and still needs to be filled:
 - Thursday Selection
 - Social Committee
 - Greens Team
 - Handbook
 - Barefoot Bowls convenors for Wednesdays from 6 to 9pm (if we could get a pool of people we could create a roster and you might only have to do it once every 2 or 3 or 4 weeks).
- Di advised that she became aware of a program where we can register as an approved voluntary organisation. So, she did the paperwork and after a bit of the usual bureaucracy our application has been approved. This means that Centrelink customers who may want to take up voluntary work as part of their mutual obligation requirements can be referred or refer themselves to come and work for us while they are being paid by Centrelink. We get to interview them and approve what they might be able to do.

So hopefully this program, although a little unknown at present, becomes a positive option for us going into the future, but until then Di asked that people think about whether you can contribute to these roles in any way and let her know.

- Green Fees

Di advised that it has been raised that we should be looking at ways to pay green fees in another way not using cash. Do people have an opinion?

A number of people gave their views and were not confident it would work with the workload involved. Graeme Durrant and Phil Staley offered suggestions for exploring as options.

- Local Legend Award Presentation – Di explained the background of nominating for the Local Legend Award and our submission to Bowls Victoria. When we did not hear back from them the Bowls Committee decided that we should proceed with our own Club Local Legend Award every year. She announced the winner for this year and John Molloy came forward to accept his award to a standing ovation.

Our submission....

John Molloy has been a member of the Vermont South Bowls Club for 18 years. He has been a quiet achiever for our club contributing as the Mr Fixit man doing many jobs around the club over all these years. John has saved the club thousands of dollars in maintenance costs. He has shown his craftsmanship ability in clubhouse maintenance as well as building many items required to update our clubrooms. He has also shown his flexibility and adaptability building and maintaining equipment for our greens team. John is over 90 years now, competitive as ever and still plays a great game of bowls. You can always see John practising on the green most days of the week. There are not enough words to describe what he means to our members, he is so loved and we could not do without him. He is a gentleman and he truly deserves the title of Local Legend.

Chairperson Di then opened the meeting up for any questions from the floor for a few minutes.

Garry Simmons raised concerns about what he had read in the Bowls Committee minutes of us getting samples of uniform. He talked about our reputation and the recognition our uniform has received.

Di explained referring to the survey when she first came into the job, the issues we are experiencing with our current supplier and the costs versus a local supplier and reduced costs as well as the copyright issue. Garry asked that we consider keeping to an Australian supplier versus the cheaper versions from overseas.

Gwen Baker raised the issue that members found the uniform to hot and sweaty.

Di reassured everyone that nothing will change without referring to the members.

8. Next Annual General Meeting

Chairperson Di advised that the next Annual General Meeting of the Club will be held on **Monday, 21st April 2025** and the first meeting of the new Bowls Committee will be on **Monday, 6th May 2024**.

She then advised that just prior to afternoon tea and the reverse raffle getting underway, we have an opportunity to hear from one of our members.

However, first...

There being no further business she thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the 30th Annual General Meeting closed at 3.03 pm.

New member Steve Gatt then gave an interesting talk on his involvement with the Australian Paralympic team which is currently preparing for the Paris Olympics later this year.