

AGENDA	MINUTES
<p>Date: 28 November 2024 Time: 5.30pm Venue: Point Lonsdale Boardroom / Online via Microsoft Teams</p> <p>Attendees: BCH Board of Directors: Fay Agterhuis; Tim Walsh; Rod Slattery; Robert James; John Lesser; Kristina Dimasi; Lucy Simms; Mark Harris; Virginia Todd</p> <p>Invited Guests: Mary Spencer - Department of Families, Fairness & Housing Simon Montgomery – Barwon Health</p> <p>Financial Members: Barbara Pontefract; Jan Farrell; Jacqui Pierce</p> <p>9 BCH staff</p> <p>Minute taker: Executive Assistant to the CEO & Board</p>	

Item	Point of Discussion	Resolution and/or Decision	Action Required Responsibility & Date
1. Meeting open	The Meeting opened at 5.30pm		
2. Welcome Apologies	Board Chair, Fay Agterhuis, welcomed everyone present to the meeting, and acknowledged the meeting was being held on the lands of the Wadawurrung people and paid respects to Elders both past and present, and acknowledged the presence of any First Nations People Formal apologies were received from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senator Sarah Henderson • Alison Marchant MP, Member for Bellarine • Mayor & Councillors, City of Greater Geelong 		

<p>Proxies</p> <p>Special Resolutions</p> <p>Conflicts of Interest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antony Barnett & Taylah Cooper – Auditors from Crowe Australasia • BCH Financial Members Jennifer Hocking, John Pontefract, Pam Davis, Renae Chapman, Paul Hemming, Michael Ross, Val Lawrence and Mark Edmonds • BCH Director Jean Paul <p>5 proxies were received by the cut off time</p> <p>No special resolutions were received</p> <p>No Conflicts of Interest were declared</p>		
<p>3. Confirmation of Elected Directors</p>	<p>The terms of Elected Directors Lucy Simms, Mark Harris, Tim Walsh and John Lesser were to expire at this AGM, in accordance with section 11.3.2 of the BCH Constitution, which states “Elected Directors shall retire at the third AGM after their election”. An election was held to fill these four positions.</p> <p>John Lesser made the decision to not re-nominate.</p> <p>Fay Agterhuis thanked John for his dedication and commitment to the Board and to the organisation of BCH over the past 3 years. She stated that his legal knowledge and insightful input has been incredibly valuable, as those on the Board would attest.</p> <p>On behalf of the Board Fay wished John well for the future. John has offered his continued support and sage advice at the end of the phone if ever needed.</p> <p>A call for nominations was made and 9 nominations were received. Ballot papers and supporting information regarding each nominee were circulated to members. A ballot count was held on Wednesday 20 November, in the presence of</p>	<p>Motion: That Lucy Simms, Virginia Todd, Mark Harris and Tim Walsh are formally confirmed as Elected Board Directors for a three-year period, effective from this AGM.</p> <p>Moved: Fay Agterhuis Seconded: Kristina Dimasi</p> <p>Motion carried</p>	

	<p>independent scrutineer Chris James, Manager of the Bellarine Training & Community Hub.</p> <p>Lucy Simms, Virginia Todd, Mark Harris and Tim Walsh received the most votes and were duly declared elected.</p> <p>The Board will determine Board office-bearer positions for the next 12 months at the December Board Meeting. This information will be included in future communication to members.</p>		
<p>4. Confirmation of 2023 Annual General Meeting Minutes</p>		<p>Motion: That the Minutes of the Bellarine Community Health Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 30 November 2023, as circulated, be confirmed as an accurate record.</p> <p>Moved: Fay Agterhuis Seconded: Tim Walsh</p> <p>Motion carried</p>	
<p>5. Board Chair Report for 2023-2024 – Fay Agterhuis</p>	<p><i>“It is both my privilege and my pleasure to deliver my report as Chairperson of the Board of Directors - Bellarine Community Health for the 2023/2024 year.</i></p> <p><i>I can’t imagine a better story to share because it is first and foremost a story of an organisation because that is what BCH is, but more importantly it is an organisation that is best described as a community of care: multi-faceted ,agile ,compassionate and most importantly BCH is a highly skilled and well respected community health service that wraps itself around and embeds itself within the communities and groups we service.</i></p> <p><i>I encourage you to really read the Annual Report to know what a great story we have to share.</i></p>		

That said, it is not without its challenges.

Whilst the purpose of an AGM is to celebrate achievements and acknowledge the disappointments it is also essential that we understand the times we operate in.

If I had the gift of a crystal ball, I would hazard to predict that Community Health is at a turning point as governments, communities and families all grapple with the financial constraints of day to day life.

But with challenges come opportunities we can be the wellness touchstone for and within our communities.

If we get it right, we will, more and more, be looked to for the delivery of local and timely health services, services to support people to live well at home for as long as possible, more and more we will seek opportunities to do it better. But we do to operate in an uncertain financial environment with much of our work at the whim of government funding cycles and constraints.

Hence the continued and needle like focus the Board has on financial management.

I said last year that the turn around strategy had proven effective but we could not lose sight of the end game or become complacent...my message remains the same today.

It has been a busy year ... a year of farewells and welcomes, new programs, expanded programs, re-imagined programs and even the end of some that were attached to time limited funding streams.

We said goodbye to our CEO Garry Ellis as he transitioned to retirement and after a rigorous recruitment process welcomed Kathy Russell as our new CEO .

Job searches are long processes and as a board we stayed true to our promise to members and the broader community that we would go to the open market when Garry's term as CEO ended – and that is what we did.

We thank our members for their patience as we worked through this and know we have got it right , the right person in the job, for the job and at the right time.

The Ocean Grove Hub is our next milestone to reach and has been front and centre of the board's oversight throughout the past 12 months and I stand here knowing that it is almost complete and waiting for our child and youth team to move in. We are incredibly grateful to the Corless family who gifted the land to us, the Federal Government for the funding and all the donors who have contributed to the project along the way. Moving in and a formal opening in 2025 will be another milestone truly realised.

It is a fantastic building, purpose built, to suits the needs of all who will engage with the space.

The Board is keenly interested in the collaborations and opportunities and partnerships that arise from working collaboratively in all manner of ways.

The sharing of ideas, resourcing and 'door opening' through ARRCH is both invaluable and timely. Certainly, the ARRCH Conference provided opportunities for directors across community health to come together and share ideas and network.

Staff and volunteers are the heart of BCH they are what ensures that BCH holds such a special place in the minds of those across the Bellarine. The staff are front facing and most likely the people you can name because of the uniforms that are recognised. But... our volunteers are special. They are out and about with clients, in the buildings supporting programs and clients, working alongside staff and doing a myriad of volunteer tasks too numerous to mention.

It's not an AGM without highlighting the work of Portarlington Auxiliary – they are the stayers and stalwart supporters of BCH. Op shopping anyone? This is the place to go, not just to shop but to be on a BCH site and just feed off the buzz that comes from being in a space with people who are passionate about the work they do and most importantly BCH's. So once again, thank you ladies!!!

In closing I would like to thank and acknowledge my fellow directors, Lucy Simms, Rod Slattery, Kristina Dimasi, Rob James, Mark Harris, Tim Walsh, Jean Paul and John Lesser, who did not seek re-election. Each Director works tirelessly for the organisation and takes their responsibilities seriously. Being a director is not simply a matter of attending the monthly board meetings. There is plenty to be done behind the scenes and we all know that is often where the real work of any organisation sits.

Please also make sure you have a look at the BCH Annual Report on the website. I'm going to encourage everyone to read it. We have taken a 'storied' approach this year. It's not a boring annual report. It brings the human face of community health and the BCH way to you in an accessible and engaging format. This simple storied form has the power to shift and change the hearts and minds of readers, because that's the power of story telling. If you're out there, encourage other people to read it so

	<p><i>they also know who BCH is but also what BCH can do for them and their community.”</i></p>		
<p>6. Financial Report 2023-2024 – Rod Slattery, Treasurer</p>	<p><i>“This is my fifth AGM as Treasurer and I am pleased to report that the strategy, that the Board and the Executive Team, have been focusing on and revising over the last 4 years is reaping rewards and our goal of being financially sustainable as a community health business is getting closer despite many ongoing challenges.</i></p> <p><i>I am pleased to present the Annual Audited Financial Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2024 which was recently signed off by our Auditors, Crowe, and approved by the Victorian Auditor-General’s Office.</i></p> <p><i>The opinion confirmed the Financial Statements as giving a true and fair view of BCH’s financial position and that we are complying with the Charities and Not-for-Profits Regulations. The Auditor presented to the Finance Committee on 19 September and advised:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>○ The audited accounts reflected our management accounts – no material adjustments</i> <i>○ Provisions and disclosures are in order, and the</i> <i>○ Control environment is sound</i> <p><i>Profit & Loss Statement:</i> <i>The Operating Result was a surplus of \$125k which on balance was a good result given the budget was a forecast deficit of \$21k – the pleasing aspect is that we have continued the trend of recent years of stabilising the business and breaking even on an operational level.</i></p> <p><i>This table, which we call a waterfall table, highlights the movements in the key areas of the business from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 illustrating an operational improvement of \$183k</i></p>	<p>Motion: That the Audited Financial Accounts for Bellarine Community Health Ltd for the year ended 30th June 2024 be accepted.</p> <p>Moved: Rod Slattery Seconded: Tim Walsh</p> <p>Motion carried</p> <p>No questions were raised in relation to the 2023-2024 Financial Report.</p>	

over the 12 month period. Some key observations on increases and decreases over the period:

- Wage costs, as a result of CPI, increased by \$403*
- Continued growth of our Home Care Package service (net increase \$428k)*
- CHSP increased activity of \$470k was partially offset by the filled vacancies of \$140k*

As mentioned last year, almost 70% of expenditure relates to staff salaries which is the most significant driver of the financial outcome – we must deliver good services at an appropriate productivity rate to ensure the most efficient use of resources related to funding levels... this is not always easy!

Looking forward. As noted earlier, the ongoing challenge is to make BCH a financially sustainable Community Health business. Given ongoing funding pressure our FY25 budget depicts a small deficit of \$6k which means the Board and Management must continue to focus on and improve BCH's financial performance and also lobby government for improved funding.

Statement of Financial Position:

The Net Asset position has improved by \$6.9m which is largely attributed by the gain on the revaluation of land and buildings.

The current ratio increased slightly compared to last year due to payment of Other Liabilities (certain contract liabilities and capital grants relating to Portarlington and Ocean Grove). When we adjust the investments of \$4m from non-current to current assets, given they are relatively easily converted to cash, the current ratio would be 1.34 which is a healthy position.

BCH is currently holding surplus cash of approximately \$2m.

	<p><i>Thank you everyone for your interest. I'd like to thank Dillon Butten and Sam Charleville for their ongoing efforts in managing the affairs of BCH. The reports they provide to the Finance & Audit Committee and to the Board are comprehensive and the support they provide to Kathy and the management team is invaluable. So, thank you."</i></p>		
<p>7. Appointment of Auditor</p>	<p>In accordance with Section 9.2.4 of the Bellarine Community Health Constitution, the appointment of the Auditor is to be confirmed at the Annual General Meeting.</p> <p>Bellarine Community Health Ltd is required to complete the annual financial audit under the control of the Victorian Auditor-General (VAGO).</p> <p>VAGO appoints an agent to conduct the audit on their behalf. For 2024/25 this agent is Crowe.</p>		
<p>8. CEO Report for 2023-2024 – Kathy Russell</p>	<p><i>"There is so much to be proud of in the year that has been. As outlined in the annual report and more recently we can see from the results of a consumer sentiment survey, BCH has had an enormous impact on the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities who live on the Bellarine. To this point, I would like to acknowledge and thank our dedicated staff and volunteers who have worked tirelessly to make a difference.</i></p> <p><i>It is clear community health on the Bellarine has never been more critical to meeting the needs of this community. With continuing challenges facing our health system and the escalating cost-of-living crisis placing more and more pressure on Victorians, community health provides a critical safety net to ensure access to affordable health care and to alleviate the strain on our hospitals.</i></p> <p><i>But lack of investment is driving long waiting lists for services which means the community sometimes struggle to get the support they need in a timely manner.</i></p>		

Funding from the State Government for the Community Health Program has not increased for over a decade, despite record population growth and escalating health care issues.

Further investment is urgently needed to ensure that the burden on our hospitals doesn't increase further, and all Victorians can access a healthcare system that focuses on keeping them healthy, no matter who they are or where they live.

Some of you may not be aware of some of the subtle differences between community health and hospitals. BCH is registered under the Health Services Act as opposed to hospitals which are incorporated under the Health Services Act.

Hospitals are owned and controlled by the Government. Bellarine Community Health on the other hand is a public company incorporated under the Corporations act.

Under the Corporations Act, directors are personally liable for any debts incurred by the organisation. Hospitals being incorporated under the Health Services Act means their Directors are not personally liable for the same acts and omissions. Which means in essence if Hospitals run at a deficit, the shortfall will be covered by Government. The same cannot be said for community health.

Therefore, the financial viability of community health organisations is paramount to their longevity and their ability to continue to provide low-cost services to the community.

This is why we are disappointed with the limited recognition of community health in the current Health Services Plan, particularly Recommendation 9.1, which underscores a lack of current government understanding of our role.

We are equally disappointed with the government's decision not to provide indexation for Community Health to reflect rising costs and sustainable service delivery.

Government mandated award increases, introduction of the Portable Long Service Scheme, WorkCover increases and accreditation burdens just to name a few, affect our service delivery capacity.

There is also the financial strain due to government recall of funding across the community health sector – this lack of flexibility is hindering our ability to meet community need effectively and calls into question the future viability of community health in general.

Despite all this, we continue to advocate for increased services for the Bellarine at both a State and Commonwealth level and through our alliances with both ARRCH and Community Health First, we are putting forward to government some exciting new models of healthcare delivery to address the multiple challenges facing our healthcare system.

We are recommending funding community-based services that provide care closer to home, reduce emergency department visits and emphasise prevention and early intervention.

One such exciting program we are advocating for is the CP@clinic, otherwise known as the Community Paramedic Clinic, where paramedics use their knowledge and skills beyond emergency health responses to focus on preventative and rehabilitative health. McMaster University in Canada have a well-established evidence-based CP@clinic program which La Trobe University has co-implemented and evaluated with Sunraysia Community Health Services in Mildura.

	<p><i>Paramedics who are currently working in a similar trial in Wodonga were part of a pop-up CP@clinic at the recent community health showcase in Parliament during a sitting week in October. The politicians all bee lined to the paramedic stand for their personal checks and consultations. The concept appeals to all, so our hope continues for the opportunity to bring this service to the Bellarine.</i></p> <p><i>At BCH, we understand we can't be everything to everyone, so that's where partnering and social prescribing networks are critically important to fill other identified need in the community. And we are very much aware of the importance of partnering as a way of bringing more services to our community.</i></p> <p><i>BCH is proud to be a part of and in some cases lead a number of networks, including Bellarine Wellbeing Connect, which brings about meaningful connections to help communities navigate the sometimes-complex pathways to service.</i></p> <p><i>The community health sector generates significant economic and social benefits and BCH is proud to say we have been doing that on the Bellarine for more than 50 years."</i></p>		
<p>9. Staff and Volunteers</p>	<p>Fay Agterhuis, on behalf of the Board, acknowledged and commended the continued dedication and hard work of the BCH staff and volunteers over the past 12 months.</p> <p>A number of employees reached significant years of service milestones 2023-24.</p> <p>A number of employees reached significant years of service milestones in the 2023-24 financial year. We also have several staff who have already well passed 25 years of service. This shows that BCH is an employer of choice.</p>		

	<p>A number of volunteers also reached milestone years of volunteering with BCH in 2023-24.</p> <p>Volunteers make an enormous contribution to the services we provide at BCH. Several volunteers also reached milestone years of volunteering with BCH in the 2023-24 year. Three volunteers reached and incredible over 20 years of volunteering service.</p>		
<p>10. General Business – Questions and Answers</p>	<p><i>Question 1 – Jacqui Pierce:</i> The gym - I think it was raised at last year’s AGM. Garry’s response was that some figures had been done and that it wasn’t viable to open it to the community. I wasn’t happy with that answer. What piece of work has been done around the fact that there was significant state and commonwealth funding that went into that gym and to have it open only during business hours for the community, from my perspective is a complete waste of resources?</p> <p><i>Response from Kathy Russell, CEO</i> In terms of it not being complete waste of state and commonwealth money, the programs that we run through the gym during the weekdays are very much valued by the community and our waitlists are extreme. We are looking at ways we can increase that service from a paid perspective (not hugely nominal – but at least a contribution) to be able to extend that during business hours. The cost outside of business hours is still prohibitive. Outside of having a specific grant to run it, to be able to pay staff out of hours for them to be here to supervise (which is necessary), and also from the point of view of having security to cover it as there’s no direct external access at this site, the cost is still prohibitive. We have progressed in terms of what we are looking at what services we can provide on top of the normal community health and CHSP funded</p>		

	<p>programs, during business hours where we will have private sessions as well.</p> <p><i>Question 2 – Jacqui Pierce:</i> So is there an actual business case because I’m still not convinced that not opening it to the community outside of business hours would become a revenue income stream for BCH if we charged appropriately and I still have not been able to see any figures?</p> <p><i>Response from Kathy Russell, CEO</i> Given we’ve gone through another 12 months, why don’t we catch up to discuss this?</p> <p>No further questions were posed so the Chair closed the meeting.</p>		
Meeting closed: 6.06pm			

Adopted as a true and accurate record of meeting:

Fay Agterhuis
Board Chair
XXX (AGM 2025)