



PARSA
ANU postgraduate &
research students'
association

Postgraduate and Research Students' Association Special General Meeting 15.06.2021

Date: 15th June 2021

Venue: zoom

Number of attendees: 29

6:01 pm – members are let into the zoom meeting room.

6:07 pm – formal start

Part 1: Procedural items

The President starts with thanking members who have joined the meeting. She gives an acknowledgment of country.

The President notes that the Policy and Research Officer and Disabilities Officer are responsible for monitoring the zoom meeting, and that the Queer Officer will be taking minutes.

Note: When participants enter the room meeting, they are put into a waiting room until their student numbers can be noted. This is to ensure that everyone present has the relevant voting rights.

Part 2: Open forum for members to ask questions

The President begins by explaining the background of the SGM. She explains that roughly two months ago, an SGM was held where both the resolutions passed by a majority. However, the following Monday, the President was removed from her position by the board.

In the following weeks, the ANU took over responsibility for managing PARSA's administrative and financial responsibilities. As the ANU needs to maintain its third party status in relation to governance issues, the results of the first SGM will not be considered valid, and are dependent on the governance review's findings.

The President continues by mentioning a post emailed to several members by the former board Chair and posted on the Facebook group 'ANU Schmidtposting'. She opens the floor for discussion.

PARSA's Welfare Officer suggests clarifying the allegations put forward by ex-members of the board

The President clarifies the validity of the SGM being held. She mentions the Constitutional mechanism that allowed holding the SGM. If this motion were to fail, the President will need to appoint a new board by herself, meaning she is in an ethically questionable position. She also mentions that previous members of the board would continue to be liable for any action during their tenure, in addition to during the handover period. She mentions that an AGM has to be called soon.

A member asks the President how the 2017 Constitution would ensure accountability in the absence of a board.

The President notes that accountability would be maintained and enhanced if Constitution is changed back. The elected representatives will be directly answerable to the members. There will be regular consultations with members. EY and the ANU will produce policy recommendations following the governance review, and she is willing to adopt them before the end of her term. Under the board system, the board would take action on misconducts. However, this process was not transparent for the membership.

Part 3: Resolutions

The Policy and Research Officer reminds the PRC that a Woroni reporter is present, meaning the validity of the vote may be called into question. She is assigned to the waiting room for the voting period.

Resolution 1: PARSA reverts to the 2017 constitution with the necessary amendments to act as a bridging governance document while the external governance audit is completed.

The proposed amendments are that the role of the treasurer will be removed. The role of General Secretary will be maintained. An amendment would be made to remove the possibility of lifetime membership. The President welcomes any suggestions regarding governance reviews and any other feedbacks that the membership may have.

6:21 pm voting starts.

Results: yes – 26, no – 0, abstain - 0

Resolution 2: All current officers of the association are held to maintain their position under the new constitution

6:27 voting starts.

Results: yes- 24, no – 0, abstain – 2.

One person formally voted to ‘abstain’ while the other failed to vote during the allocated time, despite warning, and was considered to be an abstained vote. Three members left the group since the session began.

Part 4: Other business

The President opens the floor to questions. Over a period of roughly 5 minutes, the President attempts to solicit questions from the members in both the chat and with the ‘raised hand’ function. No questions were raised. The President acknowledges the support of the membership during this time and notes that it will take time to rebuild their trust.

Meeting is formally closed at 6:33 pm.