nsw Federation of
Housing Associations inc

ABN 86 488 945 663

Minutes
Board of Directors Meeting
Held 14th August 2009

Meeting opened 9:18 am

Welcome

Present: Toni Comber, Mohamed Ibrahim, Bobbie Townsend, John Nicolades, Nick Sabel (10:30am)
Apologies: Nazha Saad, Karen Andrew
In Attendance: Adam Farrar, Wendy Rockwell

1. Actions from previous meeting

Adam Farrar went through the actions from previous meetings:
(There was a request to group all actions together by subject, rather than separating recent meeting from earlier meetings)

ACTION: Get a copy of the protocol around the tenants being relocated in community housing during redevelopment of public housing.

John Nicolades reported that SEPP funds will be directed to the Centre for Affordable Housing for boarding house use – Objections have been raised, that this use of funds is too narrow. The money is no longer directed to individual community housing providers. We would hope that it would continue to be targeted to areas of high need.

ACTION: John Nicolades to do a brief on this SEPP issue.

Police MOU –Following on from the police MOU issue - led to further discussion regarding common access tenants. It was reported to the board that all information in a tenants file will not be released to community housing providers, due to privacy policies. We need to be clear with what we can expect regarding privacy protocols. Perhaps the Federation could do some project work around this.

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President:	Date:

ACTION: Privacy issues, and information exchange. Do be discussed further at the HAM

ACTION: give each board member a new CD with Federation policies, at the same time as the induction kit goes out to new board members.

2. Minutes of the last meeting (12 June 2009)

Motion: That the board approves the minutes of the meeting from 12 June 2009 as presented.
Moved: Toni Comber **Seconded**: Mohamed Ibrahim Accepted

3. Business Arising

All items dealt with earlier in the meeting.

4. Correspondence – for noting

Adam highlighted the "Working Together for NSW" agreement letter for the board's attention.

ACTION: Put copies of correspondence at the back of the board papers, as an appendix (leaving the corro briefing paper at item 4).

5. Audited accounts 2008-09

The draft audited report from Haywards was tabled. It shows an overall surplus of $36,267 for 2008-09.

Motion: That the board accepts the Directors Report in the financial audited report 30 June 2009, and agrees to the President and Treasurer signing it:

DIRECTORS' REPORT

Your directors submit the financial report of NSW Federation of Housing Associations Incorporated for the financial year ended 30th June 2009.

The names of the directors throughout the year and the date of this report are:

Nick Sabel	*President*
Bobbie Townsend	*Vice President*
Mohamed Ibrahim	*Secretary*
Karen Andrew	*Treasurer (appointed on 21/11/08)*
Nazha Saad	*Director*
Greg Budworth	*Director*
Toni Comber	*Director (appointed on 21/11/08)*
Nicola Lemon	*Director (appointed on 21/11/08)*
John Nicolades	*Director (appointed on 21/11/08)*
Beverly Wiggins	*Ex-Vice President (resigned on 21/11/08)*
Patrick Yeung	*Ex-Treasurer (resigned on 21/11/08)*
Coral Garratt	*Ex-director (resigned on 21/11/08)*
Kelvin Allen	*Ex-director (resigned on 21/11/08)*

Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

Signed in accordance with s(28) of the Associations Incorporation Act

President: Date:

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were Community Housing assistance and training.

Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year. No significant changes in the association's state of affairs occurred during the financial year

Operating Result

The surplus of the association for the financial year amounted to $36,267.

Income Tax

The association is exempt from income tax.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:

Moved: Bobbie Townsend **Seconded**: John Nicolades Accepted

Motion: That the board accepts the Directors Declaration in the financial audited report 30 June 2009, and agrees to the President and Treasurer signing it:

DIRECTORS DECLARATION

The directors have determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The directors of the association declare that the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 7:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of NSW Federation of Housing Associations as at 30th June 2009 and its performance for the year ended on that date.

2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that NSW Federation of Housing Associations will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.

Moved: Mohamed Ibrahim **Seconded**: John Nicolades Accepted

ACTION: investigate/review financial arrangements (ie fixed interest rates, vs current business acct) with regards to banking and cash management.

6. Financial Monitoring to 31 July 2009

The Treasurer is on leave, and therefore has not seen the attached financial reports.

The report does not include the budget dissection which is not yet available.

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Note: We have received the 1st quarter core funding from Housing NSW, but the funding agreement has yet to be negotiated or signed.

ACTION: For reporting, add a column with a short commentary against line items in the proposed budget, particularly where a large variation occurs.

ACTION: Move I.T. development to a separate line item from capital equipment purchase.

Motion: That the board accepts the financial reports to 31st July 2009, and the proposed budget, as presented.

Moved: Mohamed Ibrahim **Seconded**: Toni Comber Accepted

ACTION: Board to sign the table of contract work at each meeting.

7. Business Plan Monitoring – exceptions report to July 09

Tax treatment – meeting with FHACSIA. They are considering what they do with the third round of NRAS, which would not be covered by the current exemption for charitable organisations. They put up a number of options. The Henry review needs to be finalised before some of the options can be considered.
At the very least, the only option that will work is to extend, and broaden, the existing exemptions. The second preference (which would still not be workable) would be a mixture: set up separate structures, *and* compensate those for the tax benefits gone. It would be helpful to have a look at the costs of setting up a subsidiary company compared to the tax benefits lost, and minimising risk.

ACTION: undertake particular work to cost setting up a separate, for-profit, entity (subsidiary company) in order to partition the work.

8. Progress report on major projects

Noted.

9. Service evaluations

Noted.

ACTION: Set an internal benchmark for the training evaluations.

Adam reported that the RTO underwent a private assessment prior to the official audit.

ACTION: The board recommended putting the RTO assessment report on the website.

10. Community Housing Advisory Committee

Nazha is on annual leave, Adam reported on information given by Nazha.

11. Executive Director report

Third round of NRAS has been announced informally (not on website yet, as they haven't announced round two outcomes).

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Homelessness - In future homelessness organisations may choose to outsource the housing management side to community housing providers.

Complex needs clients – who will provide funding for the support of these clients? Also this raises additional OHS issues for community housing providers.

ACTION: Do a case study or cost analysis: what are the costs of keeping the person in community housing (with support?), compared to them being evicted? ie; costs to other services: corrections, ambulance, police, etc.

A couple of associations are doing modelling based on Housing First model.

Common Application System – Certain elements of the implementation have not been agreed upon, which is holding up the development. There is a workshop next week with CHD.

In future the governance of the entire social housing sector, including public and community, will need to be addressed, (partnerships, decision making, information exchange)

Staffing – need to identify a pool of casual trainers to take the load off permanent staff.

Communications contractor – question was asked whether this person could be used by member organisations in the sector. This would depend on the skill capacity of the contractor.

12. Major policy position discussions

Items dealt with earlier in the agenda.

13. 2009-10 Business Plan

The Draft Business Plan 2009-10 was tabled and major new initiatives discussed.

ACTION - consider developing "self-learning" modules, for example, so a new staff member of a provider organisation could go online and complete a module, without having to wait for future calendared training to be held.

Motion: That the Board approves the draft business plan 2009-10, as presented, including the recommendation that outcomes be included, and reported against, to the board.

Moved: Mohamed Ibrahim **Seconded**: Bobbie Townsend Accepted

The Federation is developing a members' section of the website and is considering making publications, currently sold as printed material, available electronically.

Motion: That the Board agrees that Federation publications be made available free to Full members of the Federation, under password protection.

Moved: Bobbie Townsend Seconded: Mohamed Ibrahim Accepted

After further discussion the board agreed that electronic (pdf) versions of publications could be made available to non-full members at a reduced rate (from the printed version).

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14. MARSH insurance broking

To sign the agreement would provides no risk, and is only for this financial year.

Motion: That the board agrees, subject to final response by our legal advisor, to sign the Mere Referrer Agreement. And that we begin to work with the sector to identify a preferred group insurance product for 2010-11. (Get a committee, develop criteria, measure a number of products against those criteria.)

ACTION: Develop terms of reference for next board meeting.

Moved: John Nicolades **Seconded**: Mohamed Ibrahim Accepted

15. Power Housing report

Noted earlier in the meeting.

16. 2009-10 Membership fees

Motion: That the board agrees to an increase in full member fees as follows: base rate, and per property rate be increased by inflation (rounded). Base = $365, per property = $2.90, to a ceiling of 1080 properties (up by 20%, from 900 properties). Affiliate and Associate fees would remain at $135 and $70 respectively. All figures include GST.

Moved: John Nicolades **Seconded**: Bobbie Townsend Approved

ACTION: Hold a more detailed discussion about future membership fee structures, at the October board meeting.

17. New members & renewals

None.

18. Expertise requirements for board/skills audit

The board needs to identify any desirable skills to be sought at the board election in November, in addition to looking at overall board 'health'.

It was recommended that the board not assess itself. Another recommendation was for each board member to do an online survey, then, the board discuss the outcome at the following meeting.

The overall assessment should include:

1. Look at our strategic plan and see what our needs are in going forward
2. Board skill audit
3. Board evaluation – more about how the board is working, strengths and weaknesses. What does the board find useful as far as reporting goes.

The Federation can administer the survey, but the analysis and discussion coming from that information should be done by an external consultant.

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ACTION: Schedule a teleconference prior to the October meeting to finalise the board's desired skills to be sought for board elections in November 2009.

Motion: That the board agrees with the above methodology for identifying board expertise requirements and analysis.
Moved: John Nicolades **Seconded**: Bobbie Townsend Approved.

19. Review Board reporting calendar

If the Federation is going to do a review of the board (see item 18.) this should probably be a part of that process.

Did we actually achieve the items in the calendar? Recommendation that the internal audit and risk committee assess each year, if these have been achieved.

ACTION: The Audit and Risk management Committee annually assess whether the items to be covered on the Board calendar have been completed.

20. New Hotline policy

- It needs firmer guidelines, particularly with regards to response times. For example, calls will be returned within xx hours. (Definition of "timely manner").
- Board also requested some feedback on statistics, including content of enquiries.
- Redraft the policy to be consistent with other policy documents. (ie using standard format)

Motion: That the Hotline policy be approved subject to above suggestions being incorporated.
Moved: Mohamed Ibrahim **Seconded**: Bobbie Townsend Approved

ACTION: Final, amended, Hotline policy to be tabled at board meeting.

21. New co-ordinator positions

The board agreed that this structural development should be up to the Executive Director, (except, the current table of delegations shows the authority for salary levels sits with the board).

ACTION: Board recommends the table of delegations be amended at the next review time, to give the authority for salary structures to the E.D. as long as it's within approved budget figures.

Motion: That the board agrees with the staffing changes as described in the briefing paper, which includes new coordinator positions, and an increase in salary to a higher step.
Moved: Toni Comber **Seconded**: Bobbie Townsend Approved

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22. EO performance review

Performance review of the EO, will be done via a simplified template. Setting targets for this financial year needs to be done with some urgency.

Recommendation – simplify the review process for last year (08-09), and develop a template for this year's target(s). Adam to draft these.

Second issue is remuneration, and the committee can make a decision on this (committee being, President, VP, and Treasurer).

ACTION: Adam to draft a template for this year's EO performance targets.

ACTION: Report back at October meeting on outcomes of EO performance review and setting of targets.

23. Any other business

Nick reported that his tenure as President will end this year.

24. Next meetings – for discussion

October 9th *(Mohamed gave apologies for next meeting).*
AGM 20th November
11th December (new board)

Meeting closed 2.35pm

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