



**nsw Federation of
Housing Associations Inc**

ABN 86 488 945 663

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

Held 11th April 2008

Meeting opened 9:15am

Welcome

Present: Coral Garratt, Mohamed Ibrahim, Patrick Yeung, Nick Sabel, Nazha Saad, Bobbie Townsend, Kelvin Allen

Apologies: Bev Wiggins

In Attendance: Adam Farrar, Wendy Rockwell

1. Declaration of Conflicts of interest:

none.

Another item to be discussed in Business Arising (from the teleconference) – Adam Farrar has a conflict of interest around this item.

2. Minutes of previous meeting(s)

Motion: That the Board accepts the minutes of the meeting held 15th February 2008 as presented.

Moved: Bobbie Townsend

Seconded: Nazha Saad. Accepted

Motion: That the Board accepts the minutes of the Teleconference held 10th March 2008, with the following correction: The second motion – remove patrick’s name as seconder and replace with Nazha’s name.

Moved: Nazha Saad **Seconded:** Patrick Yeung

3. Business Arising

Aboriginal Advisory group – minutes tabled. Nick Sabel reported on the meeting.

CHLP review – Adam Farrar is meeting with Maura Boland next week.

“New players” in the sector – this issue arose out of the teleconference. The board needs to have a discussion and become more strategic, and then respond to Mission

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Australia. This will be discussed at the HAM, (however Adam Farrar declared he should not lead this discussion due to conflict of interest).

One side is about member's perceptions. The other side is that new players could be good for the sector in the future.

Members need to consider that the future may be that NSW does not have enough players to deal with all the new opportunities, rather than the past situation of a scarcity of funds and stiff competition.

How will the Federation fit in to the new trend?

ACTION: The Board agreed that Adam Farrar should lead the discussion at the HAM, and speak about the issue in a general sense without bringing up any specific names or organisations.

4. Correspondence

Senate Select Committee – the Federation has not made a submission, however Adam Farrar made a presentation. This got some media coverage.

AHO – This has been positive for strengthening relationships.

CHAC nominee – error has been dealt with. The Federation has been asked to put forward a list of names from the Board to be considered for the CHAC.

ACTION: The Federation board to nominate (subject to being allowed): Nick Sabel, Nazha Saad, and Bobbie Townsend.

5. Financial reporting

Motion: That the Board accepts the financial reports for the period ending 31st March 2008 as presented

Moved: Patrick Yeung **Seconded:** Mohamed Ibrahim Accepted.

Auditor requested that the board sign off on the 'future contracts' report at the end of each meeting, so the board is aware of all contracts entered into – ie; future liability.

Noted and accepted.

6. Business plan monitoring

The Federation has been accepted as a preferred provider for DOCS services, as a training provider.

Staffing gaps have impacted on research and development – this should be amended when the policy position is filled.

7. Summary of service evaluations

For information – noted.

Congratulations to the staff for achieving such a high level of satisfaction.

8. Members service usage

The Board accepts the Audit & Risk management committee's recommendations:

- Establishing usage benchmarks as a flag for targeted promotions.

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- Establish and publicise services the Federation can provide around growth providers – including brokerage – noted new commission for referral.
- Publicise services through Director’s Network

ACTION: Seek information from members on their training and consultancy budgets to establish the Federation’s current market share.

Moved: Nazha Saad **Seconded:** Kelvin Allen Accepted.

9. Audit & Risk Management committee – pricing review

1.Face to Face training

New issue was raised– pricing of off-site group training: Recommendation that the rate be raised to 2 times the daily rate, so the group would receive a discount after the first 5 participants, (instead of the current discount after the first 3)

2. Membership fee increase

Recommendation that a rounded inflation increase and a lifting of the ceiling from 750 to 900 properties be implemented.

The Federation needs to really promote the benefits and value that members are getting with their membership – particularly discounts on training. Also present a summary of what the Federation is doing over the next 12 months to remind people of the value of having a peak body.

3. Daily charge out rate

- The charge out rate has been calculated using a formula that only counts 5 days of staff development. The committee recommends this be increased to 15 days.

- In addition it is recommended that sick leave be calculated into the formula, increasing total entitlements to 13 days.

- Supervision/ staff meetings and ‘other’ general responsive time is not factored in, and the cost is shared half OCH and half Federation. The committee recommended that the rates should be held constant, but that the actual cost should be noted to monitor future changes. Since then further calculations and assumptions about increased business and increased OCH funding would require further staff which would cost an additional \$25,000 under ‘other’. As a result it is recommended that the OCH fee be increased by 5.2% to \$705 (from \$670). This would free up time for staff to earn an additional \$35,000 to produce a surplus of around \$10,000.

Motion: that the 3 recommendations are accepted as presented (see above)

Moved: Coral Garratt **Seconded:** Kelvin Allen Accepted.

ACTION: increase membership fees on June renewals and implement new pricing structure for training in OCH funding bid.

10. 2008-09 Draft budget

An indicative budget based on assumptions that will be discussed under the item on 2008-09 business planning.

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Assumes a \$20K increase from OCH, which means we would have to win the argument on indexation (ie increased funding for same services/ rather than same funding for less services)

Conference income includes sponsorship and AHO income (risks involved).

Noted.

11. Initial 2008-09 business planning

Many of the larger associations have more commercially based board members. The Federation has a real strength in inducting them into what the sector is all about.

The Federation needs to do more detailed analysis about what areas of business consultancy to increase skills in, or drop, or outsource and work together with an external consultant. Emphasis on resourcing organisation around new directions (ie; development work) rather than actually doing the development work.

Also increase promotion of Federation's strengths (ie knowledge of the sector).

First do more analysis of what areas the Federation work directions might take, then reassess staffing requirements.

The Board agrees with the main parameters for the business plan.

12. Community -Housing Advisory Committee

Nothing to report.

13. Executive Director report

Policy Environment:

NRAS – COAG has already signed off on some of the steps. Agreed it will be in different phases. Tender will need to come out in May – expressions of interest by 30 June. Growth phase will start in beginning of 2010/11, but proposal by end of 2008. Technical paper is due out at the end of April. Ambiguity about whether part could be grants. Not clear if it will be allocated proportionally via states.

Affordable Housing Agreement – no further input (watching brief).

NSW Policy environment – there are some important changes:

- Agreement to begin work on transfer of equity issues – ie costs and benefits.
- Strategic Framework for Homelessness is being developed by Premier's.
- New rent policy is about to be announced.
- No action on CHLP funding. Will be discussing with Maura.
- Limited tenure still preferred by Minister. This will be an issue for us.
- No sign of change in the level of public investment in NSW. The board will have to consider whether this should be a major advocacy push.
- There is now in-principle agreement to explore the introduction of a Common Equity structure into the co-op sector. This would be a major change to the role of ARCH.

National Stakeholders/ events:

- Homelessness – Adam met with Anna Boodle (part of group advising government on Homelessness Green Paper). She expressed an interest in seeking appointment on an association board when green paper is completed.

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- National Housing conference – was attended by staff, and the Federation had a stand promoting CTISH. Adam was part of the panel and Laurel presented on professional development.
- ACOSS conference – Adam will attend and sum up the housing and homelessness stream, next week.

Key NSW/NGO stakeholders:

- Met with AHO Board. (see item 4).
- Attended 2 CHFA board meetings, focusing on their proposal for a nationally funded brokerage service.
- Met with new ACOSS policy officer to provide input into the ACOSS submission to the Senate Inquiry, and to the agenda for the ACOSS conference on social inclusion.
- Council of homeless persons – met with Sue Cripps to discuss concerns related to the impact on CRA maximisation on partnership arrangements with homelessness services.
- Attended farewell dinner for Lesley Wyatt, Hume community housing.

NSW Government stakeholders:

- Ministerial staff – We continue to maintain good relationship with the Minister’s office. Fiona has recently visited to discuss the NRAS and other matters.
- Homelessness – (in addition to points mentioned above) the Supported Accommodation Advisory Council has been wound up. Adam will meet with Fiona Townsend to pursue a wider Ministerial advisory body on homelessness.

Government led strategic initiatives:

- Regulatory code – is going ahead.
- IT – Have participated in all 3 provider workshops. KPMG report is being finalised.
- The Common Access Strategy – Have met with Mark Nutting, and attended work groups, and a workshop on choice based letting with seems to be within scope. The Federation has taken on a new project as part of CAS on current tenant transfer processes.
- Attended the seminar held by the Centre for Affordable Housing on UK regeneration experience.
- Have had 3 meetings with Andrew Larkin/OCH on the detailed development of the sector led parts of the action plan for *Planning for the Future*.
- Held a consultation meeting with the PWC and Premiers on the current review of Housing NSW.
- Stock transfer round table – meeting held
- Have held the first meeting with Maura and Andrew on the respective roles of the Federation and OCH. Will need further discussion.

Strategic sector considerations.

The most important issue for the sector is how to take up the opportunities presented by the NRAS and how to manage growth.

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Business Strategy:

- Accreditation – tender has still not been released.
- Review of the Community Housing Standards – the Federation will undertake the NSW part of the review.
- Have met with OCH officers re progressing our project management and looking towards the development of the next funding agreement.
- Commissions from consultants – first instance of the Federation taking up this new business approach.
- Federation’s Aboriginal Advisory Board has met.
- Audit & Risk committee has met.

Organisational:

We have recruited a secondment from the sector for a 3 month GPU appointment. However it is proving more difficult to appoint a 3 month policy officer.

14. Strategic plan review process

Ongoing.

15. HAM

Noted.

16. Sector issues (raised by directors)

Stock transfer round table held - a process is being put into place to have a small working group to look at stock transfer process changes.

Lower North Shore experienced problems particularly when theirs was joint management with Housing NSW and the associations. Coral also raised issues about inconsistency in information provided to her from various Housing NSW staff.

More clearly on the agenda now is the issue of being able to fully assess the viability of taking on large stock portfolios (ie long term liabilities).

ACTION: Raise discussion around stock transfers at the HAM, and then organise another stock transfer forum for members.

17. Members survey

Not ready yet.

18. Quarterly report

Noted.

19. Policies & procedures

(new policy)

Eligibility for senior position status policy

Add for clarification: This does not include any financial remuneration. This also does not include any change in responsibilities or benefits.

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Policies for review:

1.8 Recruitment and selection

Change wording so that the policy does not preclude the use of recruitment agencies for permanent positions as long as EEO still occurs.

1.7 Anti-harassment

1.9 EEO and affirmative action

1.14 Personnel files

1.16 Grievance procedure

2.4 Recycling

2.7 Privacy policy

Motion: That the board accepts the policies as presented subject to the minor changes indicated above.

Moved: Patrick Yeung

Seconded: Mohamed Ibrahim

Accepted

20. EO performance appraisal

The board discussed the feedback on the appraisal. Nik will meet with Adam and will get him to do the self-appraisal

21. Options for Workplace Agreement

22. Membership

(Adam Farrar noted his conflict of interest)

Motion: That the Board approves Mission Australia as an Affiliate member.

Moved: Coral Garratt

Seconded: Mohamed Ibrahim

Accepted

23. Code of practice report

Noted.

24. Any other business

None

25. Next Meeting(s)

June 13th

August 8th

October 10th

(AGM) November 21st

December 12th

Meeting closed: 3.20pm

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