

MINUTES OF THE 2016 ORSNZ ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Chair: Dr Geoff Pritchard (Vice President)

Present:

Geoff Pritchard; Tony Downward; Mark Wilson; Sarah Marshall; Andrea Raith; Stefanka Chukova; Thomas Adams; Regan Baucke; Ari Angelo; Valery Pavlov; Tava Olsen; Kim Frew; Kevin Ross; Sam Caldwell; Andy Philpott; Grant Read; Mahbubeh Habibian; Oscar Dowson; Bob Grún, Jon Créquer; Andreas Kempa-Liehr; Michael O'Sullivan; Wouter Coppickers.

Apologies:

David Robb; Vicky Mabin; John Paynter; Thomas Liddle; Cameron Walker; Golbon Zakeri.

MEETING OPENED AT 5:16PM, NOVEMBER 29, 2016

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the previous AGM
2. Matters arising from the minutes
3. President's report
4. Reports from regional contacts
5. Honorary Treasurer's financial statement
6. Membership
7. Website improvement project
8. OR News-blog
9. Credit card processing
10. Conference 2017
11. Support for research travel / workshop attendance
12. Future leadership
13. Election of officers and auditor
14. Other business.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes from the previous meeting were considered. A motion was proposed by Geoff Pritchard (seconded by Tony Downward) that the minutes of the previous meeting were true and accurate. This was passed unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Royal Society, of which we have been a member at reduced rates, was not willing to continue these rates. We are no longer a society member of the Royal Society of New Zealand.

The idea of branches was discussed, and Grant states that he sees this as an old fashioned concept, and would like to see these abolished. The idea of interest groups could encompass 'regional' interest groups in a new communication structure.

Golbon Zakeri will be resigning as president of the society by November 2017. Michael O'Sullivan is tentatively happy to be president, but made the point that in the long-run interests of the society we should have a succession plan to have a president outside the University of Auckland; or at least outside of Engineering Science.

Golbon recently presented at the Optimization, Statistics and Data Science Workshop at UC, and approached several researches to join the ORSNZ.

Geoff states that we currently have 198 people signed up to the mailing list.

TREASURER'S RERPORT

The current balance of \$99338.63 contains conference income from 2015, which needs to be paid to the NZSA, but had not yet been invoiced. Much of the \$36,266.50 excess will be paid to the NZSA.

Andrea asked where the was a YPP sponsor for 2015, since she was never asked to send out an invoice. Grant did not believe there was. Tony stated that on the 2015 conference website the proceedings page stated that Derceto sponsored the conference, and on the main YPP page no sponsor was mentioned. It was agreed that no sponsor had been arranged.

The society is continuing to pay for an IFORS subscription.

Andrea thanks the new auditor Lloyd Austin for promptly auditing the accounts.

The conference organisers were asked about any payments to cover Invited Speakers' costs. It appears this is being handled by the President of ORSNZ directly.

Tony asked whether there would be any objection in changing the post box to a single box, since we received limited correspondence, and would have a savings of ~\$100 per year. It was agreed that the secretary would look into this.

WEBSITE

Michael O'Sullivan had circulated a document proposing enhancements to the website around council. This proposal is that \$3000 be spend on the following functionality:

- Searchable documents.
- Events managed through Eventbright.
- A link into Mailchimp to announce new content.
- News blog.
- Credit card processing.
- Mailing list sign up.

Michael stated that it seems that we would need to migrate content ourselves whether or not we use the aforementioned service.

Andy stated he was not convinced that the upgrade for searchable documents is necessary, and can easily navigate the current site, but Michael believes that ORSNZ's digital presence needs to be improved.

Andrea stated that we should sort out credit card processing regardless – she does not believe that we should manage this ourselves.

Grant says regardless of whether we employ a company to enhance the website, we should have a system whereby announcements of events that would be of interest to the members are posted, and could be sent to the mailing list.

It was agreed that the two most important things for the website to have are an archive of documents, and communication of recent / upcoming events. It is possible to implement these in the current Wordpress site that Andrew Mason has set up.

Mark Wilson brought up item (4) on the president's report, which suggests that Council members should contribute at least one item for this blog. Grant supported this idea.

Michael stated he is able to get more details on the benefits / features of this new \$3000 website enhancement if there is interest, but is happy to not proceed.

Geoff proposed a motion that Council explore these options for the website and make a determination. This was seconded by Michael. The motion passed – Andy Philpott was the only member present who opposed this motion.

The issue of credit card payments was again raised by Andrea; she put forward a motion that we look to find an external credit card payment provider (e.g. Eventbrite) when it is required, but in the meantime cancel the current credit card facility. This was seconded by Kevin Ross, and passed unanimously.

CONFERENCE 2017

NZSA is hosting their conference next year in Auckland with the IASC (International Association For Statistical Computing), honouring Ross Ihaka's retirement. Michael stated that they are happy for us to partner with them, but noted a higher fee structure. [At the time of this meeting the price was not known, but was later revealed to be \$540 for the earlybird rate.]

Mark suggested that if the conference were not linked with NZSA, ORSNZ could approach NZMS to arrange a separate event.

Kim Frew and Grant Read stated that whatever we choose it would be good to increase industry participation. This could be achieved through organising sessions around a theme, and publicising these sessions (but perhaps not the specific talks) a month in advance. This would mean that industry participants can plan to come to the conference for a half-day or a full-day. [Furthermore, if the concept of interest groups takes off, then ORSNZ researchers could invite their industry partners / clients to the conference.]

Andrea supported the idea, and said in a recent transportation conference in Melbourne there was a lot of industry participation, and attributed that to the fact that it was focused and therefore businesses could justify sending people to the event.

Andy stated that he would be in favour of continuing the partnership with NZSA, and would be interested in the Statistical Computing (e.g. R) presentations.

Andrea stated that if we are partnering with a much larger conference we'd need to renegotiate the financial split of the costs and revenue.

OTHER MATTERS

Andy wishes to congratulate Andrea on her recent award of a Marsden Fund grant.

Mark brought up item (6) in the president's report, which states that the ORSNZ could support researchers wishing to travel to workshops around the country, and perhaps stay for a week, this would support more collaboration within the society. Tony stated that in a conversation with Golbon she proposed that a short proposal ought to be submitted in order to be considered for such a grant. There was general agreement that this would be a good thing to support.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND AUDITOR

Michael will assume the role of President elect in the new year.

Grant moves for the abolition of Branch chairs, and resigns from any Christchurch regional duties; stating that if there is another group in Christchurch that wish to take on that duty, he would support that.

It was proposed that absent Council members will be contacted by the Secretary to confirm their continuation on Council, if there is no reply within 30 days this will be taken as a resignation. Mark seconded this motion, and it was passed unanimously.

It was also proposed that all present Council members will continue on Council. Tava seconded this motion, and it was passed unanimously.

MEETING CLOSED AT 6:28PM