Meeting Minutes

**Special General Meeting
30th April 2015
Manning Clarke Theatre 4, ANU**

Present: Maddalena Easterbrook, Benedicte O’Leary Rutherford, Rashna Farrukh, Mitchell Scott, Isaac Dugdale, Jacob Ingram, Louise Craker, Anne Murray, Andrew Cavenagh, James Damjanovic, Nathan Kerwood, Hudson Digby, Britta Van Tiel, Mark McAnulty, Michael Harrison, Michael Tung, Anita Moser, Joanne Leong, James Thompson, Abigail Widijanto, Sophie Jones, Liv Thomson, Alex Wells, Samuel Xiang, Rob Sarich, Finn Pedersen, Chris Wilson, Paul Dickson, Max Henshaw, Elsa Merrich, Ramon Bouckaert, Andrew McIndoe, Darcy Bee, Sylvia Gunn, Alex Sloan, Michael Pettersson, Ivo Vekemans, Isaac Brown, Benjamin Roberts, Ria Pflaum, Max Messenger, Rose Bruce-Smith, James Waugh, Sagar Joshi, Mark Dawkins, Kate Lawrence, Jillian Molloy, Nick Douros, Josh Bolitho, Leon Rebello, Gareth Chee, Riley Boughton, Tom Burgess, Jack Gaudie, Jordan O’Brien, Marcus Dahl, Scott Armstrong, Nicholas Simoes da Silva, Aby Shaw, Edwina Wintle, Andrew Mitchell, Ben Coombes, Merryn Christian, George Hibbard, Liam Rankine, Patrick Conney, Alex Catalan-Flores, Ross Caldwell, Gene Shirripa, Lachlan Matthews, Harrison Main, Jake Smith, Anant Mathur, Ewan Small, Kelsey Walsh, Jeremy Jones, Rory Jay, Subodh Gupta, Stephanie Willis, Clare Moore, Alexandra Bailey, Oliver Hood, Matt Kowaluk, Zofia Bryks, Matthew Baton, Tom Kesina, Loren Ovens, Ana Stuart, Rowan Rowlands, Stuart Herring, Paroksh Prasad, Simon Mishricky, Sukanya Anantharaman, Tom Lindenmayer, Bryce Robinson, Mani Seeber, Mark Saunders, Daniel Jacob, Claire Sheridan, Herschell Zarg, Lana Patterson, Ada Sarno, Chris Macoun, Shyoo Liam Osawa-Tyndall, Fergus Harrison, Megan Stevens, Kabir Chouksey, Eshwaraditya Mylaraiah, Tommy Randall, Henry Barclay, Monique Blasiak, Ben Creelman, Eben Liefer, Jessie Power, Freya Willis, Liam Fitzpatrick, Emma Henke, Hugh Evans, Mandy Chau, Alix Biggs, Izaac Smith, Karan Dhamija, Duncan Anderson, Kanish Oberoi, Sufyan Saleem, Hayley Keen, Hugh Edmonds, Ju-lian Wan, Giordi Borzuola, Jeevan Haikerwal, Darcy Pierce, Erin Andrew, Brad Upward, John Hartman, James Volis, Patrick Paton, Hana Ogilvie, Simone Proctor (Minute Taker)

Apologies: None

Jacob Ingram opened the meeting at 9am

**ITEM 1: Acknowledgement of Country**

Jacob acknowledged the Ngunnawal & Ngambr peoples, the traditional custodians of the land and paid respect to their elders, past & present.

Jacob Ingram passed the Chair to Waheeduddin Jayhoon.

**ITEM 2: Motion of no confidence in Mitchell Scott.**

Ben Creelman requested making the motion of no confidence in Mitchell Scott item 3 in the agenda as requested in correspondence with the ANUSM Board.

Waheed stated that as per section 1.03 of the Standing Orders the agenda would remain as it was set out.

Ben moved to consider the motion of no confidence in Jacob Ingram now.

**Motion:** That the SGM consider agenda item 3 before agenda item 2.

**Moved:** Ben Creelman

**Seconded:** Michael Turvey

**Motion not passed**

**ITEM 2: Motion of no confidence in Mitchell Scott.**

**Moved:** Ben Creelman.

**Seconded:** Michael Turvey

**Ben Creelman:** The motion is that the association recognises no confidence in Mitch Scott.

“Noting that Mitchell Scott approached Waheed Jayhoon in proposing that Mr Waheed Jayhoon would be supported for Editor-in-Chief, in return for attempting to limit Ms. Maddalena Easterbrook’s influence and position on the Board in 2016.

Recognising that Mr Scott’s conduct on Sunday 25 October on the online forum “ANU Stalkerspace” was unacceptable as an Executive Officer of the Association.

Recognising that these actions constitute breaches of the ANUSM Constitution section 3(f) “to promote best practices in professional journalism”, in particular points 1,2,4 and 8 of the Press Council Principles.

With the meeting noting that these actions are in breach of the members’ view and understanding of s7.1(c) “has power to perform all acts and do all things that appear to the Board to be necessary or desirable for the proper management of the affairs of the Association.

My sources are reliable and thorough, although sometimes for everyone’s safety they are kept anonymous. I will state that my source for the first claim was not Mr Jayhoon, although the discussion did happen.

Regarding the Stalkerspace post I note that false claims of blackmail can constitute slander. While I do not intend to take these claims further, I consider it highly unprofessional for a post to be made in such a fashion, on a public forum, and that doing so demonstrates extraordinary lack of judgement unbecoming of a Director of Student Media. While I recognise that the post was quickly removed, and that Mr Scott may regret that it was posted, this does not, in my opinion, invalidate these arguments.

To clarify, the ‘draft email’ referred to in this post was an email that I had composed to advise the Board that I intended to move motions of no confidence against Mitch and Giordi Borzuola, As Giordi has since resigned, that section became irrelevant.

I reject almost all claims made, particularly of blackmail. I reject the characterisation of abuse of power, and I note that I acted within my constitutional rights of membership. I reject claims that I wanted motions voted on in a certain way, particularly as there was no possible way for this to happen. I reject Mr Scott’s request for students to ‘not allow’ the motions of no confidence to be put. These are students’ constitutional rights.

Mr Scott states I am doing this for my own ends. My own ends are clear; a clean, open and functional Woroni. I note that despite naming Ms Farrukh and Mr Jayhoon, there was no consultation with Ms Farrukh and minimal consultation with Mr Jayhoon prior to the publishing of the post.

**Waheed Jayhoon passed the Chair to Isaac Dugdale**

**Waheed Jayhoon:**

Since I was named, I do not support motion against Mitch. In

my opinion, he did not do the things he has been accused of.

**Ben Creelman:**

Can I have a point of clarification?

**Waheed Jayhoon:**

I don’t think so.

**Ben Creelman:**

Can I call a witness?

**Ana Stuart moved a motion.**

**Motion:** To make someone who is not involved in the situation but has experience Chair of the meeting, considering the way this meeting is currently being run. This is a procedural motion.

**Moved:** Ana Stuart

**Seconded:** Loren Ovens

**Waheed Jayhoon:**

Who is not going to be biased?

**Jacob Ingram moved a friendly amendment to make Alex Catalan-Flores Chair of the meeting**

Ana Stuart accepted the amendment.

**Motion Passed**

**Isaac Dugdale passed the Chair to Alex Catalan-Flores**

**Alex Catalan-Flores:**

I was the previous Editor-in-Chief. I have some experience with these standing orders. I wrote them but haven’t enforced them for a long time.

Ben had just finished speaking for the motion. Michael does not wish to speak.

Do we have speakers against?

**Mitchell Scott:**

I move to have 10 minutes to speak.

**Moved:** Mitchell Scott

**Seconded:** Josh Bolitho

**Motion passed**

**Abstention:** Loren Ovens

**Mitchell Scott:**

I never expected to be standing here today, facing an open public forum. I can guarantee that almost none of you know who I am, and there’s a very good reason for that. I’m the treasurer. I manage the books. I try to stay clear of politics, and I’ve hated every second of our recent public implosion. It’s affected me on many levels, including my love for this organisation. Up until this point, I was able to continue to do my job to the best of my ability, and steer clear of the semester’s drama. Not many people know this, but I’ve single-handedly turned the finances of Woroni around. We were on track to be delisted as a charity, money owed to sub-editors hadn’t been paid for months, large bills had been forgotten so long that we were days away from the electricity being turned off. I sorted these problems, and have tripled our advertising revenue this semester. I single-handedly created our SSAF funding bid for next year and am currently deep in negotiations with the Chancellery and other student organisations, whilst juggling being no confidence by Creelman.

As I’m sure everyone is aware from our ordeal this semester, no confidence motions aren’t to be toyed with. All the fallout, all the heartbreak, can be traced back to that one moment. We’ve had one successful motion in the history of Woroni, and I can tell you that the grounds for that motion were far more substantial than a Stalkerspace post and an alleged third party testimony to a private conversation.

I’ll start with Creelman’s first allegation. Ironically, my post about Creelman’s bullying and intimidatory conduct is the first reason he wants to move his motion of no confidence. In my post, which was online for approximately 8 minutes, I outlined the events of Saturday the 24th where Creelman blackmailed me. I used the word ‘blackmail’ fully aware of its definition in the law. I suspect the reason he so graciously offered not to sue me is that he has very little idea of what defamation involves.

He made threats to move no confidence in me and Giordi if he was not satisfied with our conduct, was approved access to board minutes and was let sit in on the board meeting on Wednesday. I told him that these were threats, to which he replied by threatening to send his draft email straight away. Creelman said he’d be sending through both requests shortly, and only had until Tuesday to decide if he would move the motion or not. Funnily enough, the motion of no confidence was sent in just three hours after I informed him that I would be taking the bullying matter to Chanecellery during a meeting on Monday.

Creelman’s initial claims, of financial misconduct and conspiracy to stall an SGM, were fabricated and he has since withdrawn them. He’s stated on many occasions that he believes I’ve brought the organisation into disrepute, and he’s just trying to find a constitutional breach to hang it on.

For the sake of completeness, I should also mention that Giordi’s resignation earlier this week was a direct result of Creelman’s bullying conduct and that he intends to also make a bullying complaint to the Dean of Students.

I understand that Stalkerspace is not the appropriate forum to address bullying complaints, and I regret my brief 8 minute stint. It was not a wise decision and I admit that. But is it such a gross constitutional breach that it warrants a motion of no confidence? Other editors have made the same mistake, however we’ve managed to deal with these matters internally where they were deemed to not warrant removal.

Creelman’s second allegation, concerning a private conversation alleged to have occurred between myself and Waheed is untrue. It’s ironic that he’s relying on anonymous sources for safety reasons, yet he seems to be the one making all the threats. Waheed has since denied any such conversation took place. I hope that no one here intends on voting me off the board based on mysterious unnamed sources when the two primary sources accused have denied the allegations.

Though private conversations between myself and Waheed are in no way relevant to any constitutional breach, and in fact are an invasion of privacy, I will say that I met Waheed to talk about the next board. Since the events of last semester, I have had trouble working with Maddi due to unresolved personal issues. I have talked to Waheed about these issues and how he sees them being resolved going forward. Since this, Maddi has approached me and made a genuine effort to overcome these issues. We’re well on our way to having a professional relationship, and exaggerated allegations like this are extremely detrimental to our ability to have a functioning board.

I said it in my Stalkerspace post, and I’ll say it again. Calling a vote of no confidence has real human implications. Creelman’s actions have hurt me and had severe repercussions on my mental health. I haven’t slept all week, and my assessments have suffered considerably. These issues should not be solved through a public lynch mob but through private dispute resolution to respect each person involved. You, the students, have a right to know about what’s going on behind closed doors but this is not the way to go about it. As I understand, our Grievances and Disputes Panel will soon release their final report to the public, and I encourage everyone to read it.

 Please don’t let this motion pass.

**Isaac Dugdale:**

I have worked closely with Mitch and have found him to be highly competent. I think it would be a ridiculous decision to approve motion of no confidence.

**Alex Catalan Flores:**

Ben Creelman, you have a right of reply.

**Ben Roberts:**

I was a witness to the conversation between Mitch and Waheed.

**Ben Creelman:**

Mr Roberts was privy to one of the conversations. It happened in front of Maddi and Rashna, though I don’t intend to call them. I understand that internal board conflicts may make that uncomfortable. I want to state that there was no ambiguity. Waheed told us that Mitch had offered support for the position of Editor-in-Chief in return for limiting Maddi’s influence on next year’s board. They struggle working together. I have had this confirmed by Waheed and it was witnessed by Ben Roberts. If there is now some retelling, that might be the case. But if that’s the case, either myself and Mr Roberts were grossly misled by Waheed as well as Maddi and Rashna or all of you are. I move that the vote be private. I need five people’s support.

**Alex Catalan-Flores:**

Can you point me to the standing orders? I just don’t know which one.

**Ben Creelman:**

Section 14.6 of the Constitution.

**Alex Catalan-Flores:**

Can we have the current Deputy Editor-in-Chief to confirm interpretation? Yes?

**Motion:** That the vote be private.

Five in the meeting indicated their support.

**Alex Catalan-Flores:**

Ok, and as the returning officer I will determine the result of the election.

Vote was taken, and ballots taken outside to count, with Roxanne Missingham to supervise.

**ITEM 3: MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE IN JACOB INGRAM**

**Seconded Michael Turvey**

**Ben: Move that I be given 8 minutes**

**Seconded:**

**For: 35**

Against: 50

Abstentions:1

Motion Fails

**Ben:** This motion is in particular for breaches in the Press Council Principles and Code of Conduct. I would note that if you’re interested in full text of speech due to this being blocked, you will find it on Stalkerspace as of 3 seconds ago. This has been one of the worst semesters in Woroni’s history. Mess in ANUSA election because of Mr Ingram placing politics above Woroni. Leaked article to Megan Lane, who then intimidated, trying to sway election, Mr. Ingram then provided comment to Canberra Times despite the fact that both factions agreed not to contact the media. Made worlds most understated claim that it was ‘worth noting growing discontent with student politics and student factions at ANU’. Later, Woroni published article about elections. These actions are a serious breach of the role of a public officer of the association as well as public interest in full disclosure. Made a number of approaches offering Labor votes in return for being given space on the board. Put to board meeting on Friday 22nd May after which Ellen and Sophie resigned. Not in best interest of association, I see a lot of people, Labor students whose tickets was destroyed by infighting. Last night manning phones drumming up support – disappointing.

**Alex:** Time is up

**Seconder: Michael Turvey speaks to motion**

Interests best served if everyone is fully informed. I’m going to finish what Ben was going to say. Mr. Ingram has not met the expectations of the student body. Newspaper should be free of political interference. Making mistakes are not grounds for dismissal. Each board member has been tainted by their own actions over the past few months. Why so close to end of term? Not allowing Ingram to finish time in Woroni on his ‘own terms’. I believe it sends a powerful message about the power of the student body and expectations.

**Speakers For: None**

**Against: Jacob**

**Jacob:** Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for coming and giving me the opportunity to correct claims put at this meeting and elsewhere. Can I also just say that the motion against Mitch was a complete disgrace.

**Discussion of motion to give 10 minutes**

**Point of order section 4.01 –** motion needs to be moved before you start speaking. Unfair to give right to motion in own speech.

Already made interpretation on Ben’s speech.

**Ben**: Also interpretation that time has started

Procedural motion to suspend standing orders to move to result of previous motion.

Moved: Eben Leifer

Seconded: Rashna

Motion passed

Results read: Motion of no confidence in Mitchell Scott

90 against

31 for

Motion Fails

Motion to resume standing orders

Moved by Eben Liefer

Seconded by Tom Kesina

Eben: If Jacob moved motion in own speech, then interpretation has happened.

Alex: motions to extend cannot be made half way through speech. But motion has been put

Motion: to extend speaking time by 8 minutes

Moved by: Jacob

Seconder: Josh

Motion passes

**Jacob**

For you to walk in here and move no confidence and not give me time is shameful. Noting where I voted in favour of Eben’s original article. **Tabled as Appendix 1**. Eben withdrew article himself, which had nothing to do with me. When the second article came up, I was also in favour of approving that article, which is **tabled as Appendix 2**. When it was sent out, it was voted on very quickly, which I thought was odd. I discovered that Rashna had sent out a group Facebook message (**Appendix 3**) stating that a “good article” was coming, and that “Just a warning Jacob will probably tell the [Labor] Right about it and they will probably get it removed.” 4 editors voted on it within 3 minutes, which I raised concerns about. I forwarded the article to the ANUSA lawyer who got back in half an hour and said you can publish the article, but the screenshots are legally very dubious. One of my main roles as Editor-in-Chief is to defend Woroni from liability, to make sure people aren’t running around making legal threats against us. The student body can’t on one hand say we want Woroni to be of as high quality as possible and then say why didn’t you publish immediately when situations like this arise. If you read to the end, I am in favour of the article being published. I have apologised to Rashna for heartache and grief caused by the motion of no confidence, but these actions were entirely justified. You can go through minutes and read every comment I had on the article. The Appendix Document finishes, it’s a 70 email thread and it’s agreed on unanimously that the article is *“*being edited and ready to be published tomorrow” while these things were happening online. Ben has been saying for weeks that he has evidence and you’ll see it in advance, but this hasn’t surfaced. What he’s done is put a motion of no confidence and then has searched for evidence, which is ridiculous. We have had a tumultuous semester but we have held it together. We have worked together, we’ve moved on. We’re not all best friends, but we understand that main job is to provide good content to students. In moving on it was important that we all put aside what happened and get on with the job. We’ve been in SSAF negations, and we have been doing the work. Cloud of no confidence is bit of a joke. I’ve put a very long claim before the Grievances and Disputes Panel and I don’t understand why Creelman or others think that the process is inadequate. If I’ve done the wrong thing, I’ll own up and it will be in the report. Calling this sort of public meeting which is extremely mentally harmful without bringing any evidence at all. A no-confidence motion based on a Canberra Times article where I’ve given very moderate comments which was hardly an endorsement of the Ready ticket, quoting Stalkerspace which is public misinformation, not calling malice or putting down others’ motivations, but it is misinformation. I don’t see how it is fair to have the panel doing its’ job, working hard on it, and then having him come in here and offer all these allegations without evidence. If you want to read evidence, come in and read it. I have no trouble in defending myself, instead of how you’ve been publicly dragging up deceit, and discussing rolling people. There is no proper process, except in the panel. This is not proper process and especially so with no evidence.

This semester has not been one of worst for Woroni. I am going to spend rest of the term to make sure rubbish like this doesn’t happen again.

**Speakers Against:**

**Isaac**: have worked alongside Jacob and believe he has not breached constitution and has performed well in role. All forms of media have improved this semester testament to functional leadership of Jacob. To see if job has been done, look at what Woroni has been publishing.

**James Waugh 1.04 A –** Editor in chief may transfer to board member, 1.4 E requires opening of meeting standing orders explained. Contesting legitimacy of chair.

**Alex:** Explanation of why he is chairing.

Big kerfuffle at the beginning of the SGM – need a chair to keep debate flowing. I am happy to remove myself if a board member willing to take over.

**Ben:** After I spoke, and seconder spoke, speakers against and then more were called for against. People would be happier if speakers went for and then against.

**Motion: That Mitchell Scott replace Alex as the Chair.**

**Moved: Rashna.**

**Seconded: Benedicte.**

**Motion Fails**

**Alex:** I will now give it to another speaker against motion then I will move to you

**For: Bene and Maddi**

Benedicte: I didn’t plan on speaking so I have nothing prepared. I would say that Jacob has history of being quite manipulative. Pushed me to run so I would vote for EIC. Refused to talk on Facebook, had to have meetings in not public places. Encouraged me to act immorally. Maddi spoke out against behaviour in elections, and then problems on board last semester. I think that Jacob has influenced the way other board members see Maddi and has influenced how other people on board have seen her. Jacob created culture of board segregation– entirely dominated by guys. Particularly would squash out Maddi – not way to run horizontal board. We felt uncomfortable. Jacob was first person to bring Eben’s article to Labor, encouraging labour factionalism which breached his duty of care to Eben, and led to bullying against Eben. He then pushed motion of no confidence against Rashna to cover up the fact that he was heavily involved.

Speakers against:

**Ross** **Caldwell**: I have found him to be someone who has always put Woroni first. I don’t know if allegations are true. No one knows - we shouldn’t be casting judgements. We should be allowed to consider the evidence of the Grievances and Disputes panel. Coming here on a Friday morning is not proper process. We should consider Woroni as a proper organisation, not a student organisation. We need responsible governance.

**Alex article 5 501 subsection 4 – speaking time 2 minutes.**

**Eben**: Point of order – changing interpretation during debate

**Ben:** Point of order – article 5 section 501 A part 4 – time – it was already 2 minutes

**Right of reply all other speakers 2 minutes.**

**Alex:** I’m just letting everyone know I was letting them speak for 3 minutes and now I will let them for 2.

**Speakers For:**

**Tom Kesina –** Speaking about mental health about people within room. To state that this is not proper forum to move motion of no confidence is incorrect. Numerous speakers have discussed mental health and yet people here have jeered speakers and laughed. If you want to care about mental health you have to respect everyone’s mental health. I believe this was a point worth being made.

**Against**

Andrew: I’m an SR at Ursula Hall. Trial by Stalkersapce and allegations without evidence has to end on campus. It’s not just hurting editors and the people in theroom. This semester has been appalling because public trials, the culture sucks, and ANU is better than this. This is a bit of a joke, Jacob has already done so much this semester. We should acknowledge that Jacob lives and breathes Woroni, and it is unfair to kick him out at end of semester.

**Speakers For:**

**Maddi:** I’m Maddi, I did not plan on speaking. Thought would be in my best interest to keep my mouth shut considering the trouble that has already come about. I am speaking for because I think that Jacob cannot be held - this is very hard. This motion should pass although I believe I’m speaking in vain to this audience. I am passionate about journalism and the news. And I’m so sick of political interference on this board. You deserve better. I spoke out because I thought it was in your interest to know what was happening. You asked me for evidence. I am putting to you that I was subject to his bullying. After I made these claims, Jacob threatened to sue for defamation with the ANUSA lawyer. I believe this room is stacked but I’m going to speak up.

**James: I move to vote.**

**Seconded: Rashna**

**Motion Passes**

**Ben:** Right of reply

Thank you all for staying so long. I applaud all of you for turning out to exercise your right to have a say in how Woroni is run. First, Grievances and Disputes has been looking in to actions of board members since ANUSA elections however I also claim inappropriate conduct dating back to well before that – to state the panel has already covering that is factually incorrect.

Jacob just used 8 minutes to talk about ANUSA elections instead of what I’m speaking to. This is my right. You have power to call no confidence. I’m curious as to why people talking to his character and not to the actions in question. You’ve heard members from political parties against him.

I intended for Jacobs motion to be considered first because considering Mitch wouldn’t be effective without considering evidence against Jacob as well. Last night I intended to withdraw the motion against Mitch.

**Ben: Moved for private ballot**

**Passed**

**Secret Ballot**

**ITEM 4:** Other Business

**Ana Stuart:** On 27th August Jacob said that he would amend the constitution so that editors must not engage in partisan activity while members on the board.

**Motion: That Woroni board moves to accept this in its’ constitution in a timeframe. Motion to discuss.**

**Seconded: Eben Liefer**

**Ana: waives right to speak, invite Jacob to speak**

**Jacob: T**oo late to for a change in the Constitution, but we can make these changes under constitutionally binding policies. That will be one of the things I’ll be doing before the end of my term. I intend to spend the last 21 days of my term writing policies to ensure that this doesn’t happen again

**Motion to suspend standing orders to hear result of vote**

**Moved by: Ben Creelman**

**Seconded: Rashna**

**Alex:**

116 people casted votes. The motion needs a 2/3 majority to pass, which is 77 votes.

For: 51

Against: 61

Informal: 4

**Motion fails**

**Alex:** We will return to the prior discussion.

**Ana:** I would like to move that the Board makes priority and gives timeline for this policy.

Alex: Can move motion to instruct board to give this priority.

Motion: To instruct board to give political interference policy priority.

**Moved by**: Ana Stuart

**Seconded**: Jacob

Motion passed.

**Alex:** Other business?

There was no other business.

**Meeting closed at 10:49**

**ITEM 3**