

## Minutes of NZIP AGM 19 October 2011

4pm Rutherford House, Victoria University of Wellington

**Present:** Ben Ruck, Geoff Willmott, David Housden, Michele Governale, Jenni Adams, Marcus Wilson, Raymond Neal, John Clare, Matt Visser, Stuart McDonald, Laurie Christian, James Quilty, Mike Reid, Tony 'Haggis' Henderson, Terry Devere, John Bennet, Syamal Das, Nathan Mehrtens, Doug Johnson, Daryl Crosby, Catherine Low, Dave Thrasher, Paul King, Peter Cottrell, Cather Simpson, Terry Scott, Michele Governale

**Apologies:** Stuart Bradley, David Wiltshire, Roger Reeves

**Minutes** of the 2010 AGM to be circulated to attendees via email following the meeting for certification.

**1. The President's Report** was presented by Ben Ruck (BR), attached as Appendix 1. Matters arising:

- Tony Henderson (TH) queried what the International Year of Light would mean in terms of activities within New Zealand. BR noted that the promotion is being run from overseas and planning is in an early stage, but for example there would probably be some media opportunities. In particular, 2015 represents the anniversary of several light-related physics achievements which will be celebrated.

**2. The Treasurer's Report** for the year ending April 2011 was presented by Michele Governale (MG). The accounts are attached as Appendix 2. MG noted the following:

- Subscriptions were unusually high in 2011 (and low the previous year) because some requests for subscriptions in the previous year were sent out late.
- The cast for the Dan Walls medal is a one-off cost
- Most other costs were usual, including a number of educational sponsorships and prizes.
- MG acknowledged the assistance of administrative staff at Victoria University's School of Chemical and Physical Sciences with respect to GST returns.
- MG expressed the opinion that the level of membership fees is adequate.

Discussion followed:

- Laurie Christian (LC) enquired and MG clarified that the membership numbers about 250 at present.
- BR noted that the Royal Society of New Zealand (RSNZ) was trying to promote more representation of its affiliates (such as NZIP), and BR attended a recent meeting with this aim. Affiliation fees were \$1611.46 in 2011.

BR moved that the financial statements be accepted

Seconded by Cather Simpson (CS)

The motion was carried

- An enquiry was made regarding the 'Associate Member' status, which technically does still exist. MG noted that some (but few) people were still paying for this

subscription. Geoff Willmott (GW) noted that this level of membership confers no benefits (other than the name), and following relevant discussion at the 2010 AGM, he had been discouraging applicants from this level of membership.

BR moved that the membership fees be unchanged  
The motion was carried

**3. The NZIP Education Section** report was presented by David Housden (DH). He noted:

- NZIPES is in a strong financial position. It aims to break even and typically runs at a small profit each year.
- NZIPES typically sponsors the NZ International Young Physicists' Tournament team, but no NZ team was sent to the 2011 competition (in Iran), so no related cost was incurred.
- NZIPES continues to support professional development clusters for teachers, and were looking to expand regional meetings and support using some accumulated funds.

Discussion followed:

- TH expressed appreciation for the web-based subscription service for teachers. It was further noted that this service is far superior to what is available for NZ chemistry teachers. DH noted that contributors to this service include about 15 people working on providing exams, and various others on a short-term or contractual basis. It is basically self-sustaining.

DH moved that the NZIPES report be accepted  
Seconded by TH  
The motion was carried

**3. The 2011 Dan Walls Medal** will be presented to **Jeff Tallon** at the RSNZ annual awards dinner. BR announced the award, reminded the AGM of the criteria, and noted that the ongoing annual cost for casting the medal will be around \$200.

**4. The Rutherford Trophy.** This award is for novel, simple teaching demonstrations. BR circulated a handout detailing the award, and called for nominations prior to December 1, with the award to be made prior to Christmas. It was noted that this award is made irregularly, apparently depending on whether there is a suitable award winner in any particular year.

**5. Association of Asia-Pacific Physical Societies (AAPS).**

- BR had raised at a recent council meeting that the NZIP should consider being linked to this body at a cost of \$200. He can see no clear benefits but thought the affiliation fees were low enough that the NZIP should join.
- Mike Reid (MR) and Jenny Adams (JA) noted that the NZIP had previously paid multiple years' membership in a lump sum, but these payments were probably in arrears by now. MG confirmed a payment of \$828 in 2009.
- John Clare (JC) noted that the AAPPs runs conferences, and used to send out a bimonthly publication. BR noted that this publication had not been received recently,

but that issues may have been lost in the post (given the transient nature of the President's mailing address).

There was further discussion regarding the NZIP's relationship with the Australian Institute of Physics (AIP):

- MR and BR noted that it would be generally worth keeping in closer contact with the AIP, and that there have been occasional joint meetings in the past.
- JC noted that the 'Wagga' solid state meetings had previously been organised under the joint auspices of the AIP and NZIP.
- Matt Visser (MV) noted that the AIP run a conference, and there was general agreement that it would be good to touch base with the AIP there. MV further noted that an AIP satellite meeting on high energy physics and cosmology is due to be held in Auckland in June 2012.
- TH enquired whether the AIP included an education section. This was not clear, but the consensus was that the (schools') educational and research arms were probably more distinct in the AIP than in the NZIP.
- It was noted that, in dealing with the AIP, the NZIP can leverage the recent defeat of the Wallabies by the All Blacks in the World Cup semi-final. One idea was that Graham Henry should be suggested as a plenary speaker for the next AIP conference.

## **6. AOB.**

- Marcus Wilson (MW) has recently spoken to Peter Griffin at the Science Media Centre (SMC), who had noted a deficiency of physics specialists available on the SMC database, and the need to train (a) young physicist(s) to put in front of camera when required.
- BR suggested sending the conference programme to the SMC.
- BR noted that the MacDiarmid Institute has engaged with the SMC, e.g. via the 'media kit' available on their website.
- TH noted that National Radio appearances by Shaun Hendy and Alan Gilmore were very positive with respect to physics in the media. BR also noted Paul Callaghan's widespread public activity.
- MR asked if the conference presentations would be made available online. BR confirmed that they will, but all presenters will first be asked if they'd like to update their powerpoint files.
- BR also noted that there will probably be a conference exit survey combining questions from Conferences and Events (who ran the conference) and the Ministry of Economic Development, who are conducting a study regarding the value of conferences.

## **7. Election of Officers.**

### **President.**

- BR noted that Massey University was the due to provide the next NZIP president, in accordance with historical rotation of the presidency. Peter Derrick has indicated to BR that he is happy to stand as NZIP President *in absentia*.
- No other nominations were received.

BR moved that Peter Derrick be elected NZIP President  
The motion was carried

**Other Officers.**

- BR will become immediate past president on the NZIP council.
- Massey University will organise a new Secretary. GW has agreed to continue in the interim.
- Massey also suggested that an administrator will be used as Treasurer. MG will continue until this is organised.
- MV suggested an email vote for election of these officers once suitable people have been found.
- MR noted that it is appropriate for the Treasurer to change over at the end of the financial year, and suggested it is fine for 1 of the 3 positions (President, Secretary, Treasurer) to be held by an administrator rather than a professional physicist.
- BR noted that it is preferable for the President and Treasurer to be located in the same building to facilitate payment of bills.

**The AGM was declared closed at 4.42 pm.**