

**Minutes of the Australian Health Economics Society  
Annual General Meeting  
6pm, 29 September 2012  
THE WESTIN HOTEL, DARWIN**

**(Subject to ratification at 2013 AGM)**

The President of the Society, Rosalie Viney, declared the meeting open at 6.38pm.

**Present:** Jenny Watts, Rosalie Viney, Lisa Gold, Mike Shields, Joanne Epp, Bonny Parkinson, Michelle Evans, Allison Clarke, Emily Lancsar, David Johnston, Nicole Au, Chun Zhou Mu, Richard Norman, Jane Hall, Beverley Essue, Alison Hayes, Merel Kimman, Alison Pearce, Rachael Morton, Caroline Watts, Kim Dalziel, Yuanyuan Gu, David Rowell, Rohan Sweeney, Duncan Mortimer, Brett Doble, Denzil Fiebig, Virginia Mumford, Julie Ratcliffe, Gang Chen, Chunlok Li, Diana Contreras.

**Apologies:** Marian Vidal-Fernandez, Henry Cutler

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was moved by Jane Hall and seconded by Richard Norman that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted. The motion was carried.

**President's Report**

The President thanked the AHES Executive and their Committee for their support and assistance over the past year. Particular thanks to Yuejen for conference organization, to Joanne for assistance with this year's policy forum and to Henry and Jing Jing who have been working on the AHES website update. AHES has delivered four issues of the AHES electronic Newsletter in 2012, with other material distributed by Lisa Gold in the interim.

The President thanked the organizers of this year's conference - Yuejen Zhao, Margaret Foley and Rosalyn Malyon, with special mention to Margaret's daughter Jakki for designing the banner and the program cover, and to Kaylene Pomeroy for her assistance. We are very pleased to have received sponsorship from the Northern Territory Department of Health for the conference this year. We have been able to offer travel scholarships to three early career researchers - all from within Australia. One issue to note is that it may be valuable to review the criteria for the travel scholarships and also prepare a form to be submitted along with the paper for the prize to ensure that all the criteria are met and that the applicants are aware of these. We have slightly lower attendance at this year's conference, perhaps due to travel as a factor. Another issue to consider for future conferences is the impact of late withdrawal of papers on budgeting and on the conference program - we have had several papers withdrawn in the last two weeks and some in the last few days.

Four papers were submitted for this year's Early Career Researcher Prize (one later withdrawn). Thanks to Michael Shields for organizing this prize. One issue for consideration here is whether a later submission deadline may be appropriate - the deadline is currently the abstract submission deadline and it may be appropriate to have this be the deadline for an EoI, with the full paper required 6 weeks later (still well before the conference).

This year AHES has continued to participate in the organisation of the 2013 iHEA conference, this will be discussed in full later, as will options for AHES conference next year.

In terms of other activities, AHES had supported the third Australian Workshop on Econometrics and Health Economics (AWEHE) through a sponsorship of \$1,500; the Executive supports similar sponsorship of this event in 2013.

Following on from decisions made at the 2010 AGM, AHES has continued to be involved in the policy arena promoting health economics issues. In particular, in the past year the Society prepared a submission to the McKeon Review of Health and Medical Research (circulated in an earlier email). We also wrote to the Review to request a private meeting and were invited to participate in a meeting along with representatives from the Health Services Research Association of Australian and New Zealand and the Sax Institute. The President and Philip Clarke represented AHES at this meeting, which was a valuable opportunity to raise issues for health systems research. We also received a reply to our letter to the Hon Nicola Roxon MP regarding the need for capacity in health technology assessment (to be posted on the website).

The President gave a particular vote of thanks to Bruce Hollingsworth who has continued to be an active member of AHES in his new position in the UK and to represent the Society (and other regional health economics societies) on the iHEA Board. In particular, Bruce has been working very hard with other members of the Board to increase the transparency of decision making and financial reporting by iHEA, and for the first time at the iHEA meeting in 2013 the members will be presented with summary accounts similar to those presented at the AHES meeting, as well as activity based accounting for the Association. In addition, Bruce has very capably organized what will be one of the highlights of the opening plenary - an interview with Kenneth Arrow, whose seminar paper is the inspiration behind the conference theme of Celebrating Health Economics. In Bruce's words:

I had the pleasure and honour of meeting up with Ken Arrow at Stanford and interviewing him for the conference. He was incredible (he is 91 now) and a real gentleman. Hopefully what Ken had to say will be of great interest for the delegates in Sydney.

We look forward to seeing Bruce in Sydney in 2013. Bruce has also noted that he is very happy for members to raise issues that they would like raised with the iHEA Board.

Other activities that have been important over the last year has been the re-development of the website. This has proceeded through discussions at the Executive and development of proposals from Jing Jing and Henry, and we now have quotes from web developers so expect this to proceed in the very near future.

Finally, 2013 will be the year when the next AHES Research Prize is awarded - all eligible papers published in Health Economics and the Journal of Health Economics will automatically be considered, and there will be a call for nominations of other papers in early 2013. Jane Hall noted that AHES should use this process to shortlist the Research Prize paper each time for the international Arrow Prize.

The votes of thanks were supported by acclamation.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Jenny Watts tabled the 2011/12 financial report and presented the 2012 Treasurer's report (see Appendix A).

The Treasurer reported that the finances of the Society were not as healthy as this time last year, due to a combination of two international speakers and less sponsorship received in the last year (and some of this came in under the 2012/13 FY). However, the finances are still healthy, the Treasurer is not concerned by the changes in the financial situation, we have a bank balance of around \$41,000 at end of financial year and \$74,000 today so expect a balance of around \$50,000 once all outstanding commitments have been cleared.

Rosalie Viney noted that this year's conference is a bit more expensive than some other locations, but that the Executive see it as important for the AHES conference to move around the country.

Denzil Fiebig raised the idea that AHES should move some balance into a term deposit account.

It was moved by Denzil Fiebig and seconded by Julie Ratcliffe that an amount of funds (to be determined by the AHES Executive) be moved into a term deposit account in order to improve the interest earnings of the Society. The motion was carried.

### **Election of Office-Bearers**

Nominations for candidates for election as officer-bearers of the Society were called for in the third issue of the 2012 newsletter. By the due date of 21st September 2012, the following nominations had been received by the Secretary:

- President: Rosalie Viney
- Vice-President: Michael Shields
- Secretary: Lisa Gold
- Treasurer: Jenny Watts
- Public Officer: Joanne Epp
- General Committee: Jing Jing Li
- General Committee: Julie Ratcliffe
- General Committee: Bonny Parkinson

According to the rules of the Society, these positions were declared elected.

The President thanked Henry Cutler and Yuejen Zhao for their contribution.

### **AHES Travel Scholarships**

Michael Shields noted that this year we had five applications, of which four were all of a reasonable standard. One of these applicants had been a previous recipient, so three scholarships were offered. Initially these scholarships were aimed at international students. We don't get a lot of applications for these awards and have ongoing queries about what "Asia and Pacific Region" covers

There followed some discussion about the travel scholarships. The three successful applicants this year were all domestic applicants. The Executive made the decision to offer a lower amount (\$1,000) to successful applicants this year, to reflect their domestic status. One option is to restrict these awards to PhD students only in the future (they are available to both junior staff and PhD students at the moment). It was noted that many conference participants are involved in research in Australia but are pre-PhD in their careers, so restricting the awards to PhD students would exclude these people. There was a concern that the scholarships were substituting for workers' departmental funds (or lack thereof); while others noted the prestige attached to these awards, in that these awards can fulfill a need noted at previous AGMs for junior staff to have awards to put on their CVs. We also need to make sure that people clearly meet the criteria for scholarship - suggestion is to put a form on the website that applicants will complete and sign to demonstrate that they meet criteria. The Executive was urged again to re-visit advertising policy for these awards, in order to increase the number of applications.

It was moved by David Johnston and seconded by Alison Pearce that the scholarship awards be split: that AHES offer up to two international scholarships to the Asia-Pacific region (that

region to exclude Australia and the USA) and up to two domestic postgraduate student scholarships (of \$1000)

### **Conference 2013**

At the previous AGM, Canberra was discussed as a possible venue for the 2013 AHES conference. Julie Ratcliffe has offered to host either the 2013 or 2014 conference in Adelaide.

There was some discussion about whether we should hold a conference in 2013 given that iHEA will be in Sydney in July 2013. While some members argued that we should not hold AHES at all, others argued that many people would attend both iHEA and AHES, that AHES would provide a place to present material given the highly selective nature of iHEA, and that July and September were suitably far apart for members to do both. Bonny Parkinson spoke to reinforce that AHES is different to iHEA, with longer time to talk to papers and a more collaborative environment, and that therefore many members like both. Jane Hall raised concerns about splitting the attention of sponsors and potential conflicts of interest between AHES and iHEA if both staged a conference next year; therefore one suggestion would be not to focus on international speakers for 2013 and have less emphasis on plenary sessions. Michael Shields noted that we could re-visit the points made at previous AGMs and invite some great young economists to be plenary speakers.

It was moved by David Johnston and seconded by Duncan Mortimer that there be a 2013 AHES conference at the usual time. Votes for: 16, votes against: 6. The motion was carried.

It was then moved that AHES explore different formats (along the lines of previous discussions) and focus on policy at the 2013 AHES conference, to distinguish this from the more traditional iHEA, including an Australian focus on plenary speakers and possible junior keynote speakers. The AHES Executive to be empowered to find a local organizer to hold the conference in Canberra. The motion was carried.

### **AHES and iHEA in two parts:**

#### **AHES representation on iHEA Board**

Report from Bruce is included in President's Report, above.

#### **iHEA World Congress 2013 in Sydney**

Jane Hall and Denzil Fiebig updated the membership on progress for the 2013 iHEA World Congress in Sydney. The venue has been booked, deposit almost paid and two international keynote speakers have accepted: Peter Smith (UK) and Michael Kramer (USA). The social program will include a welcome to country, opening reception at the Convention Centre and "Event" at the Powerhouse Museum. The local committee are trying to get new ways of doing things into the conference program, such as organized sessions around what we think are key themes and interactive poster sessions. The strong Australian dollar and low university funding are creating some financial issues and we need to strongly promote iHEA throughout the Asia-Pacific region. It will also be important to have an Australian keynote speaker.

AHES needs to make final decisions about the support it will provide through scholarships to iHEA 2013. Michael Shields suggested that we transfer our usual travel scholarships for 2013 from AHES to iHEA. Rosalie Viney asked the AGM if they were happy with this transfer and this was agreed.

Rosalie Viney then asked the AGM if they were happy for AHES to co-sponsor (with other Australian health societies) the opening reception or similar and this was agreed.

### **Junior Research Prize to Early Career Researcher Prize**

The Executive reported back to the AGM with their summary of definitions of ECR (see agenda for 2012 AGM for definitions). David Johnston noted that, given one of our ongoing problems is a lack of applicants, it may be better to just make a criteria that all authors are below Senior Lecturer level.

The AGM agreed to proceed with the Bazeley definition (see below), with a form to be submitted wherein applicants would state why they fit the Bazeley definition of ECR, with the experience of this process to be fed back to the next AGM:

*"An early career researcher is one who is currently within their first five years of academic or other research-related employment allowing uninterrupted, stable research development following completion of their postgraduate research training."*

### **Any other business**

Following a request by publishers to publish the proceedings of the AHES conference, the Executive asked for confirmation that the AHES conference remains a conference where proceedings are not published. This was agreed; therefore AHES papers will continue to be internal documents circulated for the purpose of those attending the conference sessions only. They are not published documents.

The President declared the meeting closed at 7.15pm.

APPENDIX A **AHES Treasurers Report 2011/2012FY**

<b>Opening Bank Balance (1/07/2011)</b>		<b>\$61,081.22</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Interest		\$19.76
membership 2011/12 (N=148)		\$4,480.00
2011 Conference (Registrations= 119)		\$49,890.00
Sponsorship (Pfizer Australia)		\$5,500.00
Sponsorship (DHA \$10,000 total amount)		\$3,321.00
Adjustment		\$830.29
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$64,041.05</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
<b>2011 Conference Total</b>		<b>\$64,970.33</b>
- Venue	\$32,495.08	
- Dinner	\$8,035.25	
- Other	\$2,739.00	
- Speakers (Currie & Drummond)	\$20,610.00	
- Executive dinner	\$1,091.00	
2011 research prizes Total		\$7,000
- travel scholarship x4	\$6,000.00	
- ECR prize	\$500.00	
- AHES prize	\$500.00	
2012 Conference Dinner Deposit	\$960.00	\$960.00
2012 Conference Deposit	\$5,816.75	\$5,816.75
Sponsorship - Health Econometrics Conference 2011	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
Internet Hosting 2011	\$328.00	\$328.00
Bank Fees and Charges	\$1,940.84	\$1,940.84
Refunds (4)	\$1,580.00	\$1,580.00
Other	\$92.94	\$92.94
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>-\$84,188.86</b>
<b>Closing Bank Balance (30/06/2012)</b>		<b>\$40,933.41</b>

<b>Closing Bank Balance (26/09/2012)</b>	<b>\$74,343.69</b>
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