Deaf Aotearoa New Zealand INC.

Annual General Meeting
10:00AM – 12:00PM 16th November 2024
Pūtangitangi Greenmeadows Centre, Nelson

Minutes

Present in person: Members: Joanne Klaver, Craig Findsen, Ryan Cassidy, Jake LaBerge, Oliver Ferguson, Shona McGhie, Becky Hadfield, Jorja Steele, Zoe Ferguson, Ryley Yates, Meghan Coppage, Elizabeth Hines, Michael Hines, Theresa Cooper (DAHL Chairperson).

Lachlan Keating (Deaf Aotearoa CEO)

Present via Zoom: Members: Monica Leach, Sara Pivac-Alexander, Lara Draper, Richard Hay, Peter Barker, Jasmin Taylor.

Helen MacKay (Associate Member).

Minutes: Elsa Vincent

Meeting commenced: 10:10am

1. **Opening**

Joanne Klaver (JK) opened with a Karakia at 10:10am.

- Each EB member introduced themselves and their positions on the Executive Board. Joanne Klaver (President), Craig Findsen (Vice President), Ryan Cassidy (Chairperson), Oliver Ferguson (EB member), Jake LaBerge (EB member)
- Patron Shona McGhie (SMG) introduced herself.
- Lachlan Keating (LK) introduced himself (Chief Executive)

2. **Apologies**

Craig Findsen (CF) advised of apologies received:

- Anton Sammons
- Steven Wilson

3. **Confirmation of Agenda**

Joanne Klaver (JK) confirmed that there were no changes to the agenda that was sent to members on 17th October 2024.

4. Confirmation of Quorum

CF confirmed that there are sufficient members present to ensure a Quorum, and so the AGM can proceed.

A moment of silence was given for the community members who have passed in 2024.

5. Review and accept minutes of 2023 AGM.

CF advised minutes from the AGM 2023 were sent out to members on 17th October 2024.
CF asked for any question or matters arising from the minutes of the 2023 AGM.
No questions or comments were received.

Oliver Ferguson moved that the 2023 AGM minutes be accepted as true and correct; Ryan Cassidy seconded.
2023 AGM minutes approved unanimously.

6. Patron's address – Shona McGhie (SMG)

SMG presented her speech and gave highlights of the past year:

- Attended the New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) Week Awards at Parliament. This was a great success. I met Anne Hawker at the awards who is leading a group for disabled and Deaf older people. Meeting her again soon and will continue to have discussions will be involved in group.
- Well done to Erica Dawson for her work leading NZSL Week. NZSL Week Hero, Jon Tai-Rakena was an amazing and great NZSL Hero. We can see NZ on TV more often now and this is different from the past which is positive.
- Lachlan Keating (LK), Lara Draper (LD) and Shona McGhie (SMG) went to Whaikaha to speak about Deaf Seniors. Important to include and consider the needs of Deaf people of all ages. It was a very valuable discussion.
- It is important to celebrate NZSL and Deaf culture, and to show that Deaf people in NZ have rights to do everything they wish to do as part of society.
- Congratulations to Chanel Kaa'Luke who was a semi-finalist for Young New Zealander of the Year.
- Thanks to DANZ President JK and Vice President CF. Thanked all DA staff for their efforts in supporting the Deaf Community.
- Acknowledge the passing of Stephanie Awheto – the first Trilingual Interpreter and a passionate advocate for Turi Māori. She made a huge contribution to Turi Māori and Deaf culture.
- Thanks everyone. Wished everyone a good 2025.

7. DANZ President's report

JK summarised her report:

- Sad passing of Stephanie Awheto this year. Many years of commitment. She received a special award (Te Panekiretanga o te Reo Rotarota) at the NZSL Awards at Parliament. The award was presented for strength, leadership and over 30 years of service to the Deaf community, Turi Māori and interpreters. Stephanie has always supported the next generation of tri-lingual interpreters coming through and we thank her for all her work.
- Cha'nel Kaa-Luke - Young New Zealander of Year nomination. Thanks for your commitment and hard work for each of the many roles you play in the community. I look forward to watching you put this into practice at the Frontrunners leadership programme.
- Erica Dawson and NZSL Week Hero Jon Tai-Rakena, amazing work – thank you both.
- Continue working with and supporting Deaf organisations in the Oceania region. It is good to see the Deaf Education in the Pacific programme funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This programme will improve education and employment prospects for Deaf people across the region.
- This year for the second time the two boards (DANZ EB and DAHL) and CEO and General Managers came together for a two-day strategic retreat, facilitated by Jo Cribb who is an experienced Governance Advisor. Our aims include to refine and improve governance and develop our long-term strategy.
- We look forward to working closely with Deaf community in future. We want to speak authentically on behalf of our members, so Government understands the needs and aspirations of Deaf people.

Joanne Klaver moved that her report be accepted, seconded by Craig Findsen, President report accepted unanimously.

8. DAHL Chairperson's report

- Theresa Cooper (TC) Chairperson of Deaf Aotearoa Holdings Limited Board introduced herself and that she is representing DAHL Board at the AGM. TC shared that the other DAHL members were Gail Stevens, Steven Wilson, Kevin O'Neill, Lachlan Keating, Joanne Klaver and Craigo Findsen.
- Explained to members why there is a deficit. A lot of our own funds goes towards graduate interpreter programme. An investment for the future with benefits for Deaf people and interpreters.

- The DAHL Board has many discussions and reviews the accounts every month. We have tough discussions and review the budget vs actual. The budget is very tight.
- We are now focussing more on fundraising and have employed a new fundraising manager. Trying to find new creative ways to increase revenue for the long term.
- Commitment for DA to be a sustainable business.

Theresa Cooper moved her report be accepted; Oliver Ferguson seconded. Accepted unanimously.

9. Chief Executive's report

Lachlan Keating (LK) summarised the key details of his annual report.

- Thank you to Daniel Harborne and Jenny Reid – they played an instrumental part in preparing our annual report.
- It is no secret that many not-for-profit businesses are having some big challenges at the moment. We have strong relationships with our funders so we can continue to provide the important services and advocacy that we have provided since 1977.
- We haven't had a strong fundraising focus in the past. Looking to bring increased fundraising income so we have appointed a new Fundraising Manager. Important to keep in mind that all fundraising income goes straight back into the community via services or additional staff and initiatives.
- We have been doing significant ongoing advocacy on Deaf education. Deaf students need to be able to access education in NZSL. The Deaf community and DA are unhappy that this isn't the case. Working with the Ministry of Education on a new strategy and development map, including with representatives from Ko Taku Reo and other members from the community and sector. Darryl Alexander is part of this work, and we thank Darryl for his support. This work is far from finished.
- Thank you to Shona for coming, important to have the focus on Deaf seniors. Lara and her team are engaging across the country with Deaf seniors. Making service accessible for Deaf Seniors. Thanks to the NZSL Board for their support and funding to help with this.

- Incorporated Societies Act. We want to ensure that all Deaf organisations understand what the changes mean and what changes they must make to their Constitutions. We have employed Angela Sew-Hoy as our project lead until around June 2025.

Appreciate the support from NZSL Board to allow this work to be done around the country. Want to ensure all Deaf organisations are vibrant and remain going forward.

LK opened the floor for questions.
No questions received.

Lachlan Keating moved that the CEO report be accepted, seconded by Jake LaBerge
CEO Report Accepted unanimously.

10. Youth Board Report

Youth Board Chairperson Zoe Ferguson (ZF) introduced YB members.

ZF summarised the YB report.

- Acknowledged Kyle Cloete stepping down from the YB and thanked him for his support.
- Cha'nel's YB work is on hold.
- Two new Co-opt members accepted on the Youth Board.
- We are focussing networking and advocacy
- International engagement

International Engagement

- Jorja Steele (JS) – it has been a great year for engagement. WFDYS Camp coming up in 2025. Tight deadline to get everything ready – there are people applying to attend as participants and to be Leaders at the WFDYS Deaf Children's Camp.

Networking and Advocacy

- Ryley Yates (RY) – we are talking and planning about the future. Being on the YB is a great networking opportunity and inspiring.
- Meghan Coppage (MC) - Emilo (WFDYS President) came over for NZSL Week and he visited communities and Deaf clubs NZ. Great to hear a different perspective from overseas e.g. how to work together better with other youth groups and engage with NZ. First time someone has come from the Youth Board. Great to see what's going on overseas.

Online engagement

- Zoe Ferguson (ZF) advised it has been a bit quiet but picking up again.
- Focusing online. Seeing more people at online events, which seems the best way to go these days. Deaf youth tell us they want Q&As, video blogs etc. We are trying to match the demographic and what they want in the future.
- Want to bring on more members also. We would love to have more people involved. Please get in touch if you are interested in joining the YB or one of our events.

Zoe Ferguson moved that the Youth Board report be accepted, seconded by Joanne Klaver. Youth Board Report accepted unanimously.

11. Annual Report

CF advised there are copies of the Annual Report here to take home with you, and we will arrange for them to be distributed at DA offices. You can also access them on DA website: https://www.deaf.org.nz/publications/annual-report-2023-2024/

12. Confirmation of Auditors, Solicitors and Patron Auditors

Auditors

CF proposed that RSM remain as Deaf Aotearoa's auditors

Joanne Klaver accepted; Jake LaBerge seconded, Accepted unanimously.

Solicitors

CF proposed that Duncan Cotterill and Watermark Employment Law remain as Deaf Aotearoa's solicitors.

Oliver Ferguson accepted; Jake LaBerge seconded, Accepted unanimously.

Patron

CF proposed that Shona McGhie & Governor General Dame Cindy Kiro remain as Deaf Aotearoa's Patrons.

Oliver Ferguson accepted; Jake LaBerge seconded, Accepted unanimously.

13. Statement of Accounts and Auditor's report

LK summarised the 2023/2024 Financial Report.

- We were given an unqualified audit, which is positive and means there are no ongoing conditions or concerns.
- Thanks to our Finance Manager Joanne Key for many years commitment to Deaf Aotearoa. She appreciates questions from DANZ members about finances any time of the year. Her favourite time of year is audit as this is when her work is tested and examined externally.
- We had a result of a deficit of $414,000. Result of investment (self-funded) in new roles including the Fundraising Manager role, and the Graduate Interpreter Programme.
- Deaf Aotearoa has good financial reserves of several million dollars. However, these will run out quickly if we continue with deficits each year, so we are looking to return to surplus.
- Flights and travel costs have increased so we are doing more work online. But face to face is sometimes more beneficial when engaging with community and individuals accessing our services.
- Funding grants and contracts are less flexible and more prescriptive these days. Previous funding for sponsorship or donations may not be available.
- The Auckland building is our major asset, and we need to ensure it is well looked after.
- Funds from the sale of the land that the Christchurch building was on, and the insurance money from the building being damaged is still in the bank.

LK opened the floor for questions.
No questions received.
LK reminded members that they can ask questions at any time of the year, not just at the AGM.

Lachlan Keating moved that the Financial Report be accepted; Ryan Cassidy seconded,
Accepted unanimously.

Membership Levy

CF proposed that membership of DANZ would remain free.

Jake LaBerge seconded,
Accepted unanimously.

Strategic Direction - Ryan Cassidy (RC) DANZ Chairperson

- Thanks to all members who have sent feedback or contributed to work on the strategy.
- The world changed after Covid 19, and we needed to initiate a refresh of the strategy. The new strategy will have a shorter timeframe of around 2025-2028. We started the refresh in August – also included feedback from the regional reps meeting at the 2023 AGM in Hawke's Bay. Will ask for community input also - draft to be sent out to members.
- Acknowledge Sara Pivac-Alexander who said there's no note of Deaf youth or leadership mentioned in the draft strategy. We want these explicitly acknowledged. We'll work on this at EB in December.
- Making separate section in the strategy for Turi Māori - working on this want to ensure the voices of Turi Māori are heard. Hoping to start this engagement in early 2025. EB responsible for overseeing this path – we want Deaf Community to thrive.

Ryan proposed to move his report: Elizabeth Hinds accepted: Seconded by Oliver Ferguson.
Accepted unanimously.

Ryan Cassidy closed the AGM with a Karakia

Annual General Meeting officially closed at 11:18am.