

**SUBIACO CHURCH OF CHRIST INC**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**Held at Subiaco Church of Christ, 260 Bagot Road, Subiaco**  
**On Sunday 26th November 2023 at 12.15pm**

**Opening and Prayer**

Sean Kum opened the meeting with a word of prayer and a reflection on Colossian 3:12-17.

**Present**

141 members were present.

The chairman, Sean Kum, declared the meeting open with more than the minimum quorum in attendance (being 10% of members).

Apologies – Anne Taylor

**Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting**

Minutes of the annual meeting held on 13 November 2022 were accepted as presented.

Moved – Stuart Beattie.

Seconded - Brian Hamilton

A vote for/against the motion was not voted on, but no objections were raised.

**Election of Elders**

Wayne Luce and Michael Keong have been re-elected for a two-year term, gaining the minimum requirement of 75% of votes.

**Chairman's Report**

Sean advised that the Elders are not perfect and on behalf of the Elders, Sean apologised. Sean said that there has been hurt and loss this year. When Sean prays for the church he empathises with them. Please accept the Elders' apology for this. Sean explained that we did not have a Senior Pastor this last year and this has been hard for the staff, Elders and congregation. Sean shared that he has taken a personal vow not to take a day of leave in the first 12 months of being elected as the Chairman. He confirmed all the Elders have been working hard throughout the year.

Sean reflected on the 125 year anniversary dinner. The staff worked very hard for that evening and it was well received by all. Indeed the staff work very hard and Sean thanked them for their service throughout the year.

Sean said that he thanked each and every person for attending the meeting.

### **Senior Pastor Search Update**

Stuart Beattie provided the update that this time last year we had just started the Search Process mark 2. In the end the Search Committee (SC) had candidate 1 and 2 or no one at all. The SC decided that no one was suitable. Close to the start of the year we had the opportunity to allow David and Chin to go through a mentoring process. It took some time for the mentoring process to start. The Elders spent time with David and Chin talking about how they might be able to co-lead. We appreciated that this might be very difficult. Chin made the decision to step aside. Stuart thanked members of both Search Committees for all their work.

### **Ministry Reports**

Reports as presented were approved and adopted and questions were then invited.

Moved : Brian Hamilton

Seconded Rob Falls

A vote for/against the motion was not voted on, but no objections were raised.

### **Financial reports**

Michael thanked Tim Elkin for highlighting the error in the first instance which has since been corrected. Michael thanked all for their gracious giving to the work of the Lord through Subi church.

Rob Falls asked - why is there an increase of approx. 15k in other ministries in the Budget for 2023/24? It was answered by Amanda Tan that Subi church is currently supporting the local Chinese Church ministry, hence the increase.

Nathan Yap asked two questions

- 1) Can you confirm that we only have fixed deposits and real estate.

- Michael Keong confirmed that this is correct.
- 2) Why we liquidated the investments.
- Michael advised that we had heard the concerns expressed from the congregation and changed where our investments are kept.

James Gosling asked why we have 2.2 million in Total Current Assets, and what are we doing with that money? Do we have plans to use the money? What are we doing to help others?

Sean advised that this year we have been looking inwards. He agreed with James that it is God's money. We do need to think more about how we are going to use it

Jacky Edwards asked – in this inflationary environment, have we reviewed the salaries of staff?

Sean advised that in the past we have set our wages based on COCWA rates. However this year we have reviewed and increased staff wage rates, which are higher than COCWA rates and we will make this review a regular activity.

The financial reports for the year ended 30 June 2023 were accepted.

Moved: Stuart Beattie

Seconded: Brian Hamilton

A vote for/against the motion was not voted on, but no objections were raised.

### **Other business**

Sean advised the congregation that the contract for the part-time role of a Youth Director has been drawn up. The person concerned has finished their studies and ready to commence ministry. In due course this person may progress to become a Youth Pastor.

Sean shared the proposal for David Skirving to be put forward for Senior Pastor, he said:

- As you are aware from the Senior Pastor Search update, we have not found a Senior Pastor through Round 1 or Round 2 of the process.
- David and Chin had the opportunity to grow and develop since the Senior Pastor Search process was put on hold earlier in the year.
- The Search Committee has recently expressed a 4-3 vote against recommending David to the Senior Pastor role at this point in time, citing some concerns.
- The Search Committee is comfortable putting it back in the hands of the Elders to appoint David as the acting Senior Pastor.
- The Elders have received the recommendation from the Search Committee, have carefully considered it, and formed their own view. That is in accordance with the

process prescribed by the Constitution, which requires the Elders to take into account the recommendation of the Search Committee, but to determine what they consider the Church should do.

- David has worked graciously with the Elders without assurances for the past few years. It is now appropriate for the Elders to provide greater certainty for David in his role.
- The Elders have voted on whether he should be recommended by them to the Church Members for confirmation as the Senior Pastor.
- As a result of considering the matter, the Elders' Board recommends the appointment of David as the Senior Pastor by the Church, for a confirmation vote by the congregation. That is for various reasons, and I will mention some of them.
  - Throughout the year, the Elders have observed continuous growth in David's abilities, especially preaching.
  - The staff are seeking clarity on leadership within Subi Church. They have indicated that they are very willing to support David as their leader, on the basis that he is constitutionally elected by the congregation.
  - Congregation members have voiced their fatigue with the lack of certainty and some congregation members have expressly talked to Elders for the need to appoint a Senior Pastor.
  - It is also significant that the Church should start looking outwards towards its primary goal as a mission to others in our community and overseas, and should not be constantly pre-occupied by looking inwards at who should be the Senior Pastor.
  - To provide certainty in the Subi Church Leadership, a vote of members will take place sometime in late first quarter in 2024 and will specifically be for David to be appointed as the Senior Pastor, with a proposed 2-year contract.
  - The church members' vote will ultimately determine whether David becomes our Senior Pastor. That is in accordance with the constitutional process which gives the ultimate decision about whether to call a pastor to the Church Members.
  - The Elders will proactively search for a mentor to partner with David, ensuring the establishment of essential support structure around him, thereby maximising his potential for success in his role.
  - The Elders will continue to work with David to ensure appropriate mentoring is in place and to address the concerns of the Search Committee as needed.

Sean asked for questions

Jack noted that 3 staff have been left Subi Church during the year which had been big losses (Chin Wee, Debbie and Jordan);

He also thanked Chin for his many years of faithful service as well.

Jack asked whether there is work being done to assess the staff environment so that any new staff that are employed won't leave.

Sean noted that we had learnt a lot this year. We are doing things differently and seeking to work more closely with the staff.

We will seek to advise the staff of upcoming changes or decisions so they are not caught off-guard.

James Gosling asked – it seems that there was hurt this year and maybe that is because there are only 5 Elders. What are the Elders doing to increase their number closer to the 9 that the constitution allows?

Sean noted that we have one Elder intern starting and Sean is also talking to another brother. Sean advised if anyone thought we were not talking to the right people to become Elders, to discuss this with him.

George O’Neil suggested something like 3 equal preachers and someone called the CEO. Is this a model that should be considered?

- Sean noted the suggestion.

Sean talked about the proposal for the role of Deacons. It is hoped that Deacons will take on more of the administrative functions required for Subi Church to leave the Elders freer to concentrate on more spiritual/shepherding matters.

Michelle Genat shared that she was asking the Lord this morning if there was anything to put on her heart.

Michelle read from John 13:35 – “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Henry So asked– what specific support is required for David. We don’t want him to burn out.

- Sean advised that we have a preaching plan. Lee Hinkle from Fremantle Church has offered to assist as needed. COCWA – John Hutchinson has also reached out to ask how they can help. We will be planning with David to ensure that he does not burn out.

Rick Thompson asked – if the Elders have made a decision to put David forward to the Subi Church members why wait. Seems along time.

- Sean advised that we did not want to do this leading up to Christmas or while people were away in the new year.

David Davoll asked - if the vote was 4-3 against David Skirving, have the Elders now made their own decision.

- Sean advised that the Elders have received the feedback from the search committee and have now made their own decision regarding whether they should put David Skirving forward to the members to vote for, as the Senior Pastor.

- The Elders have put David Skirving forward and will build the structure to help him to succeed.

Daniel Ong asked for clarification -Why would we not show faith in putting forward David Skirving as Senior Pastor and make the appointment for 5 years rather than 2 years.

Pete Rogers clarified the question – ie why is David Skirving being offered a 2 year contract rather than a 5 year contract?

Sean advised that David Skirving does not have previous experience as a Senior Pastor.

Grant Smith asked– about a year ago the Elders said no to David. What do you think has changed? Do you think that David will be voted in when the members vote next year?

- Sean noted that the Search committee did not consider him to be suitable during Round 1 of the Senior Pastor search process. This was back in the first half of 2022.
- In response to what has changed, Sean replied that the Elders have seen that both David and Chin have changed.
- Sean noted a recent example during the interview for the Youth Director where he again noticed a change in David Skirving.

Jenny Marshall stated that– she personally thinks that Subi Church should be offering David a 5 year contract. Jenny thanked David for standing up to all the queries that he has had to endure.

Calvin Ko advised - that in December new Fair Work laws come into effect and you cannot offer a fixed term contract for more than 2 years.

Josh Thompson – advised that the terms of the contract should be thought about separately.

Linus Chen – asked if we are taking the easy way out regarding proposing David as the Senior Pastor

- Sean advised that the Elders are not taking the easy way out.
- It is time for the church to move forward and provide certainty for the congregation, staff and David.
- If the members vote David in as Senior Pastor, Sean requested that we move forward and support him.

Tony Overhue said - that he was just about to enjoy his 75th summer and 60 of those as a political activist. After being at Subi for a short while, including enjoying the 125th anniversary, clearly the Lord has his hand on his Church. I think we can trust in our Lord to give us clear guidance.

Shani Nel stated– when Sean said get behind David, he was saying, once the vote is cast, if David is successful, we need to support him. The vote for a Senior Pastor, must be 75% or more to be successful so the members voting will reflect what the majority of church members want.

Peter Stannard stated – when you take on the Senior Pastor role, it is leadership. We need someone to lead the church. Who preaches, can be someone else. Does David want the position?

Donna Copland said we need to be patient. The Lord's timing is perfect. It is now up to us as members to get on our knees and ask the Lord for guidance.

Mary du Heume confirmed- that she agreed with what Donna just said.

Ernest Tan asked - whether we are looking for other pastors to come and work with David.

- Sean advised that we are looking for other pastors to come and work with David.

David Davoll asked – what are the future directions that Chin refers to.

- Chin provided an answer to the question similar to what he had provided in writing prior to AGM which was:
- With regards to the future direction of the church, the elders approached me and proposed that instead of the 3 of us (David, Peter, and I), it will be only David and I leading the church in the coming months/years. I felt that this proposal has all the same issues that I listed above and therefore I felt that I could not accept and continue serving under such an arrangement. It would not be fair to the ministry team for them to continue struggle to follow the lead of 2 leaders, without a clear leader heading into the future. Therefore I felt that I had to step away from my role.
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## Questions raised prior to the AGM

Looking back at the last 12 months at Subiaco Church, if you had the time again, what would you do differently and what would you do the same, and why?

Answer :

- The Elders could have worked more directly with the staff throughout this year to see how they were going and to respond to any issues as they presented.
- The Elders could have allowed David and Chin to take on more responsibility earlier in the year or maybe when Ben finished as Senior Pastor, thus removing the need for an Interim Executive Pastor.

- Speaking earlier to Chin and David about a co-senior pastor role.

Would the elders consider an additional meeting to the AGM where members are invited to discuss the events of the last year, the situation at hand and the direction for the next few years?

Answer : The Elders will put this on the agenda for their next meeting.

I just had a few questions to submit regarding the upcoming AGM.

1. Why have so many staff left in such a short span: particularly Ps Chin, Debbie Yong and Jordan.

Chin – see Chin’s report in the AGM report.

And for the other staff please talk to them directly.

2. Any particular reasons that there have been several changes to the Elder board such as Peter and Jonathan.

Answer

Jonathan's views and subsequent actions on certain issues while he was on leave has led to some tension with the Board. Jonathan has agreed to take some time off the board. The board plan to re-engage with Jonathan within the next 6 months.”

As per the AGM report, in September 2023, Peter Wieske completed his role as Interim Executive Pastor and subsequently resigned from the Elders Board in October 2023. If you want to know more you will need to talk to Peter.

2. This is with regard to the senior pastor search. Might both the board and search committee then reconsider looking at Chin Wee? He was a serious candidate when the board decided to build both Chin and David up.

Chin has resigned and removed himself from consideration.

- 1) Two years ago we ran a churchwide survey, where our congregation was asked about their perception of Subi Church and what they are looking for in our next Senior Pastor. I recognise this survey was done for the sake of the Search Committee and our external consultant Phoebe. However the results of the survey were never disclosed to the congregation. I don’t expect to see every verbatim response, of course, for confidentiality reasons. However, I am certain there would have been some data analysis and categorisation done post data-collection. Could we please have that report made available at the AGM if possible?

Wayne Luce provided the Discovery survey snapshot

- 2) I would also like to know: As an elders board, what were your thoughts when this report was first made available to you? Was there anything in this report that was per your expectation, and was there anything that came as a surprise?



Answer The Board thought it was consistent with how they thought the congregation would respond to the survey. Eg. Biblically based church with solid teaching and Gospel focussed. Consistent with the 4 DNA of Subi church- Word based, Gospel Centred, Multi-National, Kingdom minded.

### **Comments and Thanksgiving**

David Skirving spoke a few words. When Moses stepped down from the job, no one thought that there was anyone that could take over from him, but Joshua did a great job. When you look at the qualities for Pastor/Elder from Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3, the qualities are mostly about character. If anyone has any issues, David invited people to come and talk with him. He listens and learns from criticism and welcomes feedback.

John Iyamu shared - – first time he has come to an AGM in any church. Not easy to take criticism. The day the Holy Spirit came on him, Peter was able to preach. The Lord will need to have someone to place his anointing on. We have to remember that it is the Lord who leads this church.

### **Closure**

David Skirving closed the meeting in prayer at approximately 2.30pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairman) date: \_\_\_\_\_