



NewsFlash



March 2020



Dear District 23 Zontians,

In preparing this Newsflash for you I looked at the previous edition, from January of this year. Coming off a very successful 2019, we were dealing with the bushfire crisis in a number of states. I certainly could not have predicted that what we would be dealing with two months later would have turned our worlds upside down, totally changing the way we live and interact with each other.

This Newsflash is not about repeating what we are hearing about constantly in our greater world, and it's changing so quickly there is no point, but rather how we, as District 23 Zontians, can work with this new normal. I aim to be transparent with you about any issues that relate to our District and members, and help us all try to maintain a positive attitude and keep connected.

Club Meetings

To keep our District strong, and members engaged, I believe clubs should continue with their regular club and board meeting schedule, operating meetings via electronic means. IE—same date, similar timing.

The District Board has used Zoom for the last year or so, for meetings in between our face to face meetings. This has worked well as an alternative. The District has taken out an annual Zoom subscription, available for club use. Please see the following page for more information.

On 17th March, Zonta International President Susanne sent an email to club presidents regarding the continuation of Zonta business. This is important, and I've repeated some relevant parts of her email on Page 2. If you are in any doubt about where your club stands in relation to your Annual General Meeting, your club constitution is the first place you would seek guidance. If you are confused or require clarification contact your Area Director. If necessary they can escalate the query to me or our District 23 Parliamentarian Ann Horrocks.

Area Meetings

As you know the District 23 Board made the decision to cancel all face to face area meetings for 2020. We are currently looking at the best way to give you information that was due to be delivered at these events. How would you like to see this information?

- Newsflash—drip fed, not all at once
 - PowerPoint presentations available on the website (possibly with voiceover—we're just researching how to do this)?
 - Direct email to members?
- Please email me your thoughts to janeadornetto@gmail.com

Dues Payments

As you are aware, this is the time of year we are required to pay our membership dues. Our time schedule is unchanged for this process. Unfortunately with the large downward trend of the AUD to the USD, the District 23 bank account will take a large hit in exchange rate losses as we will be making a much larger member subsidy than anticipated. To this end I've made a request of Zonta International, that D23 holds all ZI dues in Australia until the situation improves. As previously mentioned this does not change our timeframe of when dues are required to the D23 Treasurer.

I've also asked ZI that the District be permitted to hold all donations to the Zonta International Foundation in Australia. We need to get as much value as possible for our hard won fundraising at this challenging time. At this stage I haven't received a response, however the question was only asked in the last few days.

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The new normal for us all, below. The District 23 Board at work last week. And, yes, we're still smiling! Difficult decisions to be made notwithstanding.



From President Susanne:

This is a busy time in a Zonta biennium. Plans had been made for annual club meetings, area meetings and important events. Here is some business you may need to address through virtual meetings and electronic communications:

Elections of Club Officers and Board Members – See more below.

Financial Reporting - Be sure you keep an eye on club finances and continue to distribute financial information to club members.

Financial Decisions – Continue to address important financial matters as necessary. We recommend live-virtual meetings where discussions can still take place regarding motions. In the US, if a ballot is sent electronically, there must be a 100% agreement in order for a motion to carry. Please keep this in mind when deciding how to proceed.

Donations to the Zonta International Foundation – In this period, many clubs make decisions related to how much to send to our Foundation compared to how much to give locally. We understand that these are uncertain times, but we hope that your club will be able to make donations to our Foundation as best it can so we may keep our commitments to our agency partners and awardees.

Election of Convention Delegates – You will soon receive information on how to register your club delegates for Convention.

Even if a decision comes to not hold a Convention, something we're optimistic we won't have to do, we will still need delegates identified for each club so that when an alternative model is ready for voting, we can proceed.

If an election meeting cannot be held, in-person or virtually, can an election be held by mail or e-mail?

Consult your club's governing documents and/or your club's bylaws chairman to determine if voting by mail or e-mail is allowed. Under Robert's Rules of Order, e-mail elections are strictly prohibited, unless allowed by the bylaws or governing documents of the organization. However, if your club's governing documents are silent on the issue, your club can look to the Bylaws of Zonta International. Article XIV, SECTION 4 of the Zonta International Bylaws allows balloting by mail, at the club's option. The Glossary of Zonta International defines "mail" as "not only regular mail, but also written or oral messages sent electronically (e.g. through e-mail or voicemail)." We also recommend you consult local laws.

If our club cancels its election meeting, can the current club board of directors continue to act until an election is held?

Consult your club's governing documents and/or your club's bylaws chairman. Some governing documents will allow the board to continue to function until successors are elected and take office. Other

governing documents will be silent on the issue. If your club's governing documents are silent, your club officers and directors must cease to act at the end of their respective terms.

If your club board has staggered terms and a quorum (majority) remains to make a decision, you should consult your governing documents to determine whether or not the remaining directors have the authority to appoint interim officers or directors who would act until an election could be held.

Please do not be caught in a position where it is unclear who your elected leaders are or that you legally do not have any.

What if we can't hold an installation ceremony for the newly elected Board?

An installation ceremony is very nice, but it is not essential. Consult your club's governing documents and/or your club's bylaws chairman as to when the newly elected leaders may take office. We recommend that you proceed with this transition based on your club's normal prescribed timelines.

Note: Your Area Director or I would be available to conduct inductions via Zoom if any club would like to have a formal induction.

A few short weeks ago Area 4 Director Catherine Taylor and I made the journey to Wangaratta, Victoria to present the 2019 District 23 Young Women in Public Affairs award to Madalynn Baumanis.

Madalynn was a student of Galen Catholic College. She was a student leader, and among many activities worked to raise awareness for mental health issues due to suicides within the school community. Madalynn was also heavily involved in the Galen VEX robotics program. An educational robotics competition that assists in the learning and development of STEM skills for students. She captained the Galen VEX team that went to the 2018 World Championships and is also a mentor to younger students in this program.

Madalynn was a keynote speaker at the Charles Sturt University Girls in STEM breakfast. She believes there is a hindrance in attitudes surrounding women in STEM and feels these young women need role models for inspiration and to know there is a way to succeed, no matter your gender or rural location. Madalynn hopes to study medicine and specialise in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. After university she aspires to travel as a volunteer to remote communities and possibly overseas to assist in educating women of all ages in self care, hygiene practice, contraception methods and also to look after patients during pregnancy and birth. She would also like to continue to empower young women in STEM through her work with robotics.



Madalynn, Christine Haddrick President ZC Wangaratta, Catherine and I

Madalynn is a wonderful example to the many young women who were present at the Zonta Club of Wangaratta's careers breakfast.

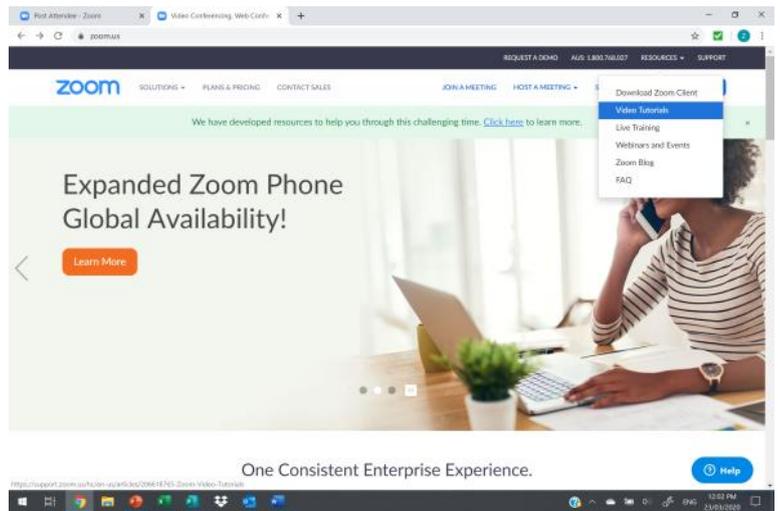
Zoom information

As there can only be one host at a time, there are some guidelines:

- A request to hold a meeting needs to be emailed to Secretary Deb at zontadistrict23@yahoo.com.au each time you wish to use Zoom. You will need to advise the date and time frame you require.
- Once confirmed, Deb will provide you with the log-in details and password.
- Your area director will be able to assist in how Zoom works if you are not aware. Please avail yourselves of the free version (which limits meetings to 40 minutes) to practice. It would be a good idea to have a trial with a couple of club members before your first meeting. The first time the board used Zoom it took about 15 minutes to get us all online.
- Members who are unable to use the technology required can phone in to the meeting. The phone number is provided when you set up your meeting. They will then be able to participate by listening in and contributing.

- There needs to be some discipline established in Zoom meetings. The chair is in charge! These are not regular meetings where a number of conversations can happen at the same time. One person speaks at a time. As Governor, I've found the best way for me is to provide the information required, speak my thoughts about the topic, then go round the board individually for their thoughts. Board members raise their hand if they wish to ask a question. You can work through an agenda quite well with this process.

- Motions are moved, seconded and approved in the same fashion.
- I'm happy to join in your meetings for a short time if you wish. Don't think I'll be going out anywhere, so I have time! If you would like me to, just include my email address in the invitation. I'll come in about 15 minutes after your start time, to give you all time to settle down. Please also provide me with a copy of your agenda.
- The Zoom.us website has valuable information including video tutorials on how to set up and use.



Convention 2020

As at writing this Newsflash I have no further information that hasn't already been disseminated from Zonta International.

Whether there will be a physical convention or not, there will still be obligations to clubs for participation and voting. As and when this information becomes available I will advise the District. My understanding is the club mailing for convention will be released electronically before the end of this month.

My fellow Governors and I have a Governors' call with Zonta International mid next week. We have compiled a list of questions which will be submitted prior, so hopefully we can have some clarity on the situation.

For those 40-50 District 23 Zontians who have registered for convention, I urge you to not take any action at this stage regarding refunds from ZI. Inaction is difficult, but let's get some clarity on the situation first.

Young Women in Public Affairs

A reminder we have extended the deadline for applications to the District 23 Co-Ordinator Sue Lear. This has been pushed out to 30 April 2020, with the District 23 recipient required at Zonta International at an extended deadline also.

Fit for the Future

In January I mentioned ZI were asking members to have discussions about making our clubs "Fit for the Future". In our world situation this takes on a new context, which I think is necessary for club discussion. When our world returns to some semblance of normal, and we have to believe it will, Zonta will be needed more than ever. There will be long lasting effects to women less fortunate than us in our local and international communities. They will need our help.

KEY UPCOMING DATES

- 19 April:** D23 Board Meeting—via Zoom
- 30 April:** Young Women in Public Affairs Award district deadline.
- 30 April:** Emma L. Conlon Service Award applications due to ZI

District 23 Zontians, our world is no longer as we knew it. We are assured we will come out of this current situation, but I think the unknown is what frightens us most. By supporting each other as we adjust to a new way of living, we give ourselves the strength to keep going.

I will keep in touch with clubs via email or Newsflash, and I'm available at any time to all of you.

In preparing this Newsflash I took a walk outside to stretch my legs. From my front yard I could take in Corio Bay looking a little choppy, flowers blooming in the garden and the sky a bit cloudy. Life looked normal. We know it isn't, but we are there for each other, and that hasn't changed.

Jane

Jane Adornetto,
District 23 Governor
2018-2020

(I'm also quite happy that I completed this Newsflash without mentioning the C word once, which was my intent. It is so present in our lives, I wanted a space where could avoid the word.)