

Minutes from the AGM, Madrid, May 2009.

Present: Dan Bloom, Sarah Fallon, Judy Graham, Burt Lazarin, Gordon Wheeler, Peter Philippson, Robert De Vos, Urtzi Cristobal, Margherita Spagnuolo Lobb.

Dan Bloom convened the meeting.

Dan asked if there were any new items for the agenda. There were none brought to the meeting.

Positions to be elected, selected or appointed:

Ansel Woldt was re-elected as Association Archivist.

Bud Feder was re-elected as OM Representative.

Charlie Bowman was appointed as Publications Director.

The RCP representative is to be announced by the RCPs in due course.

The meeting expressed its appreciation of the above for their commitment to the organisation.

Proposed changes to AAGT By-laws:

The proposed changes to the responsibilities of the CEU Officer were ratified.

The 30 days annual meeting notice was ratified.

The change in the role of Director of Communications was ratified.

A topic that came out of the meeting was that we should try to adjust the by-laws so that all elections are done at the Biennial conferences. Therefore, all terms of office should be 2 or 4 years.

The proposal that the positions of OM and RCP representative be three years was approved, yet with recognition for the issue, re Biennial conference elections, raised above.

Other Business:

The clarification of the secretary's responsibilities was accepted, with some further additions to the wording:

1. Dan added the maintaining of the agenda of the AGM.
2. Judy added that the secretary is an active member of the board. This was agreed by those present.
3. Dan added that the secretary does not perform an administrative function but a corporate function, and engages on the committee at an executive level.

These additions were agreed by those present. There was some further discussion of the role of secretary. Sarah shared the difficulty in taking an active role in the monthly conference calls whilst simultaneously typing detailed minutes. Although it is possible to ask the meeting to pause at times, or to stop typing to raise a specific issue, these are (necessarily) the exceptions, due to the responsibilities of the role. The necessarily simultaneous summarising, and recording, of discussion doesn't allow for the secretary to spontaneously form his/her own figures as the discussion unfolds. There was a suggestion that we look into the possibility of recording the monthly board calls, with a view to the secretary finding the time to summarise and record them minutes at a later date.

Proposed Research Task Force:

Judy asked how a Task Force would be different to an Interest Group.

Peter P clarified that our role was to give support to this happening and that there is no financial support needed.

Margherita spoke our need to have a list of references all over the world - a database for researchers. She said that EAGT asked all organisations to make a database of references/research done in every country. She thinks it is on their website in the archive section. She asked whether Ansel also held a list of such references. Peter P confirmed that he did, although there may be sources that Ansel is unaware of.

Margherita proposed that the Research Task Force could have the task of making such a database. Also that we could link the database to websites of other organisations who have their own databases, such as that of EAGT. This proposal was supported by the meeting. The task force is tasked with making a proposal to present at the 2010 AGM in Philadelphia.

Proposed Development Fund:

A report was presented to the meeting by Urtzi Cristobal, and is attached to these minutes. A discussion took place.

Peter P said that, although he felt the idea to be a good one, he had concerns that the proposal could turn into "jobs for the boys" and could be used by individuals to build personal empires. He felt that we could engage in discussions about how to safeguard against nepotism in the community.

Judy expressed concern about such a development fund being separate from the scholarship fund. She said that there are members of our own current membership who do not have the funds to attend conferences and training workshops. She cautioned against what happened in New York, where our well-meaning generosity to Russian delegates put the organisation in debt. As an AAGT member, she said she would find it hard to make the choice around which development to make personal contributions to - the scholarship fund or a development fund - and, as (like others) she only has a certain portion of her income to donate, then the scholarship fund could end up getting less. She wondered about combining the two funds. She also felt that we need to support those members who have been in the organisation for years, particularly in the current financial climate.

Robert supported Judy's idea about combining the funds.

Gordon stated that he has always offered his professional services free, or at a notional rate, to institutes in countries with poorer economies. He has been doing this ever since he began to earn money - including flying to places at his own expense. He said that he sees this as part of the pro bono obligation that we have as psychologists.

Peter said that he had done quite a bit of pro bono work, but that such work would always be limited by finance.

Burt stated the importance of the comments made at this AGM going back to the committee.

Burt also raised a question arising from Gordon's contribution - Why should we support this when individual professionals have been doing it for years? What has changed?

Dan expressed concern about the fund draining funding possibilities for the next conference.

Judy shared that there is a lot of shame involved in asking for help from the community from our current membership. She shared a personal experience of having to do this and of how she felt it was handled tactfully, and beautifully, and that this meant a lot to her. She felt she would be taken care of even if her request was rejected, due to the long-standing relationships she had with those dealing with the matter. She said feels more interested in us weaving our energy within the community, and wonders if we have now spread ourselves so thinly that we cannot hold this international basket anymore.

Burt and Judy felt this could be a drain on the financial resources of individual members, and also a drain on the time and energy of members as a community resource.

Some discussion of the meeting's role in terms of this agenda item, as the (attached file) is in the form of a progress report.

In response, the meeting supported continuing discussion from the committee, using the communication facilities we have for the community and asks that the committee submit a proposal for the 2010 AGM.

Proposed Reciprocity for Organisation Leaders:

This was approved by the meeting. We need to make sure that it is reciprocated 1:1, and this will need to be monitored.

Judy asked whether we could encourage guest leaders to spend the whole conference with us, so as to best facilitate developing relations. Obviously this would need to be a mutual commitment.

Dan described this as the beginning of a gesture of opening to each other.

A.O.B:

The meeting thanked Robert for his diligent handling of membership activities at the conference.

Peter P commented that we need to be thinking of a venue for the AGM for 2011.

Dan announced Cathy Gray as the new Vice President.

Dan thanked Peter P for all his work and dedication during the terms of his office and gave a short speech in which he shared his appreciation of how Peter P had contributed to the organisation. Peter was presented with a gift as an expression of our thanks.