

Minutes of Board Meeting, 14 December 2023

The full Board was present for this Zoom Meeting. Joanna and Henk were invited to participate.

Finance

The first item on the agenda was Sophie's report on financial matters that highlighted the reason for the shortfall in the Club Account - unforeseen expenses that have not been encountered before.

A significant expense is the commercial maintenance of our new Website. The original Website was handled in-house courtesy of our Member, Sabine at no cost to the Club. The set-up costs for the new Website were carried over from the previous year and Joanna confirmed that we should budget €400 per annum for operation of our Website.

Sophie clarified an erroneous assumption in a previous discussion regarding the fees paid to District and Rotary International. This is not in fact a percentage of our gross Membership fees, but rather a fixed amount per Member set by Rotary International, irrespective of the size of a Club.

The takeaway is thus that if our Annual Membership Fee were to be raised, the extra money will benefit the Club Account directly with no bearing on the amount paid to District and RI. On that basis, the Board was in favour of asking Members to vote on a 10% increase of our annual fee to €330. Ian recalled that this was still less than the original €350 Annual Fee charged by the Club at its inception. This was lowered after a few years because of the large surplus in the Club Account at the time.

A discussion over the format for presenting the accounts followed. The issue arose from the notion that the Club had suffered a financial loss when in fact the carry-over of cash in the bank covers the extraordinary expenses mentioned above. It was posited that because a Rotary Club is a non-profit entity, the accounts should not be shown in terms of profit and loss but rather, as recommended by Henk, an inflow and outflow of funds. Using these terms would be both clearer to the Members and a better representation of reality.

Sophie reiterated the ongoing problem she has reconciling our bank accounts with the payments made via the Website. It was decided that the most appropriate solution is to delineate payments via the Website exclusively for the Club Lunch Meetings, with monies for Events and other income to be either paid by prior bank transfer, or credit card on the spot.

Non-paying members

Despite several attempts made by Sophie and other Members of the Board to contact and collect, there are still **five** members who owe either all or part of their fees for 2022-23, and **six** who owe all their fees for 2023-24.

Each case was discussed, and it was decided that the Board will make one last attempt to contact the defaulters. They will still be asked to pay last year's fees, as payment for their membership has already been made to the District and Rotary International. As for this year's fees, they will be given the deadline of 30 December to pay, after which their Membership will be revoked. This cut-off date is based on the fact that invoices for our payments to the District and Rotary International are prepared on the basis of the number of Members on 1 January of each year. Ian and Willem will contact three of the Members, while John will send a letter to the ones to be removed immediately, as their situations mean they will not be returning.

SAA role

Following Annette's resignation from the SAA role, Peter has taken over as acting SAA in addition to his day job and role of Head of Events. A few weeks ago Ralph volunteered to perform the SAA role on a part-time basis. The Board was informed that Roman, who was pinned last week, has agreed to share this part time role with Ralph. He will be away until March, but could start immediately upon his return.

Project funding

A former-President, Lorraine kindly provided a list of suggestions to the Board, one of which was that projects be budgeted at the beginning of the year, and that fundraising should be based on what is needed.

Both Martin and Jane explained why that was not feasible and that it is much better to budget as we go along based on the needs of charities we choose to support. Martin also proposed enlarging the Projects Team to enable a split focus on relations with local charities as well as grants for international projects. As our Past-President Mark Shurey went the extra mile to gain expertise on funding through District and Global Grants, Ian suggested that he could be asked to do this for us remotely.

Events

Martin thought that the lead time on our events was too short. On the other hand longer lead times would lead to working on more than one event at once, which is not ideal. Lorraine suggested that perhaps the Events Team could be separated into different groups with group leaders working on different activities, and the Team Leader Peter handling overall co-ordination. Team leaders do not need to do everything and we need to give more responsibility to team members. Ian suggested that "strike teams" comprising Members with relevant skill sets pertaining to an individual event could be assembled as needed.

Martin noted that promoting events in the press does not really work in terms of attendance, and the only people who come to our events are those who are personally invited. The primary worth of a press release after an event is to make the community aware of what we are doing, and maintaining our Club profile in public.

Upcoming events calendar

It was felt that a Fellowship event every month was too much. On the basis of the upcoming calendar, it was felt that February and May would be best months to organise the next two Fellowship events.

The Almond Blossom Run has become a popular and well-supported annual event, and dates will be decided closer to the time.

The President's Golf Cup, which was postponed, needs a new calendar date. John is in discussion with various golf clubs.

The Croquet Tournament could become a regular event with scores cumulative and an annual awards ceremony.

The Music Festival, postponed from last year will take place in the first half of 2024. Barbara will check out availability of El Trapiche for early June, and Ian will discuss dates and logistics with Pawel Rosak whose new album is close to completion at Fhersound Studios in Marbella.

Martin asked if the Board felt it would be good to do another Gala event like the Swing Ball next year. Some people have already indicated interest in another Swing Ball. Martin will discuss this with Shane.

As we all know, there is a problem with clashing events between Clubs in the area. Even when we decide our dates early and communicate them to the other Clubs, they do not respect that and still organise clashing events. That said it is not a big deal where the Spanish Clubs are concerned as we do not have much to do with them and we should focus on not clashing dates with the other English-speaking International Clubs with whom we do co-operate.

Projects report

Jane reported on where and what we are spending on our charities over Christmas.

- 1) Age Concern: €750 contribution towards a defibrillator. Agreed by members at previous lunch.
- 2) Ciudad de los Niños: €336 of the allocated €800 on winter clothing (43 sweatshirts) thanks to Martin, Yingying and Joyce. See our Website for info.
- 3) Las Lagunillas: €600 of supplies such as baby milk, diapers etc. Curro will purchase and send photos.
- 4) AFESOL: the main beneficiary from the Swing Ball in aid of mental health. Martin and Jane to meet in the New Year to work out details. The full amount collected from the Swing Ball was €9,500, which could be split up between various mental health charities.

We have spent €1,686 of this, with €1,340 of that raised by the raffle.

As the Club needs to be updated on the progress of our current projects, Jane will prepare a PowerPoint presentation that Martin will give during the meeting on 18 Jan.

Other business

Martin recommended that it would be useful to identify future Club officers earlier than November and suggested that perhaps the AGM take place earlier. Joanna pointed out that according to RI Statutes, the AGM must be held in November. However, Board discussions can take place earlier in the year at a Business Meeting, with the AGM in November used to formally present the information for the record.

Barbara reminded the Board that we still have not set our objectives, which need to be put on the Rotary.org site. She requested a meeting with John to do this, and suggested it could be useful to have input from Ian and Willem who performed this task last year.

The next Board meeting will take place on 25 January 2024. The time will be decided based on the agenda to be discussed. Willem asked for the Minutes of this Board Meeting to be distributed to the Members. Barbara agreed to send them to the Members by e-mail and Joanna will post them on the Website.

The Zoom Board Meeting ended at 1350 hrs.