



Sharing our vision – strengthening our society

Minutes of the European Forum committee meeting held in Rastede, Germany

November 1-3, 2013

Present:

Estonia – Anu Ariste

Finland - Heli Piikkila (Treasurer)

Germany – Dagmar Ullman

Great Britain – Sheila Roberts

Iceland – Ingibjörg Jónasdóttir (Chair)

The Netherlands – Riet Smits-Hoenederken

Norway – Ingrid Christiansen

Sweden – Catherine Bringselius Nilsson

Marika Heimbach – European Regional Director – ex officio

Apologies:

Denmark – apologies from Kamini Nielsen who could not attend the meeting

Saturday 2 November: The meeting started at 9.10

1 Opening of the meeting

Ingibjörg opened the meeting by welcoming all those present. Anu would take the minutes for Dagmar to edit and Sheila to proofread. Sheila would act as the timekeeper. Ingibjörg introduced the agenda of the meeting.

Words of inspiration were presented by Dagmar - “A Thought Provoking Story”, everything changes except the law of change, we are happy to experience what we have here together.

Ingibjörg reminded us of the purposes of DKG.

2 Minutes of the EF meeting in Amsterdam

The minutes from Amsterdam were accepted.

Matters for AOB in the minutes – at the EF meeting in Amsterdam it was motioned to hold a competition to find an alternative DKG song.

Sheila presented a new song by Rosalind Price, Gamma Chapter GB.

There is a need for an alternative song that meets our time. We need a new and easier melody. Beverly Helms’s feedback to Sheila: compose the song in Europe and send it to the administrative board for approval. Marika suggested to add the song from Europe to the DKG song booklet.

It was agreed that Sheila would ask for the completion of the second verse. The final version would be introduced on the DKG European website. State presidents should be asked to communicate with chapter presidents to invite members to listen to the song and compose their own songs. Present the samples on the website, deadline two months after introduction on the web.

3 European Forum Operational Guidelines

Only minor changes have been made to the operational guidelines:

- Item VII. b) The European Forum Committee meets annually for planning and discussion preferably in first weekend of November.
- IV. b) The current EF budget of 3000 U.S.D. is allocated from the Available Fund by the Administrative Board.

The Committee proposed to change:

- **Item V. e)** as follows: The forum committee decides the theme and format of the Forum seminar. It informs the conference steering committee and gives guidance on costs.
- **Item V. f)** as follows: Activities of the European countries, and ...
- **Item VII. c)** as follows: The European Forum committee plans and organizes the Forum seminar programme for the regional conference.

4 Financial Affairs

- RD expenses

Marika presented her projected budget for travel expenses for this year.

The sum of €1 per member from each country (apart from Sweden and Denmark) was contributed towards the Regional Director's travel expenses.

According to the Operational Guidelines approved in New York in 2012 "*all nine countries agreed to contribute €1 per member annually from their own budgets to facilitate travel around the Region by the RD.*"

- EF budget, the meeting budget

Ingibjörg presented the proposed budget for the European Forum 2013-2014.

It was agreed on that 80% of the travel expenses of state representatives to the Forum board meeting would be reimbursed. Heli noted that the committee should decide the budget for next year to be approved in Indianapolis.

- European Achievement Award

It was agreed that the next EF committee would collect the contributions of €25 from each country in 2014.

5 SAP for European Forum 2012-2014

The following areas of focus were discussed:

1. Communication:

- Encourage members to send materials for the website. These should be more visible on the front page.
- Topics for the website were suggested: November – the EF meeting; December - festivities in Europe; January – the Society, committees, state conferences; February – membership
- Encourage the Web Committee to organize online meetings – the EF Chair will work on this
- Invite and encourage members to send in projects on Educational topics (not only DKG projects). We have had such interesting workshops during the conferences, members should have access to the information.
- Discussion groups on the website – if topics of interest arise on the website, members can start discussion groups in the form of blogs, Skype conferences, etc.

It was noted that all EF committee members are responsible for getting the material in for the website as well as making sure that the information reaches the members of their countries.

EF Committee should be in charge of the website and communication, the Web Committee should be in charge of the technical side. Ingibjörg will make a proposal from the committee at the next EF business meeting that the role of the Web Committee is taking care of technical issues.

2. Membership:

Marika stressed that it is important to look after our young members. Marika presented a paper containing ideas and suggestions of young members, which she will forward to the administrative board.

The Forum Committee proposes that we should find opportunities for networking between interest groups (e.g. younger educators, foreign language teachers, librarians).

Sheila introduced GB's idea of having an "associate member," category for students training for teaching. This would be non-dues paying but the associate member would receive all State communications and invitations to meetings and conferences. It was suggested that the EF committee members inform their states about the idea of associated membership.

It was emphasized that it is essential to keep members. Most members want to be active and involved. We want to encourage every country to find ways to attract new members.

3. Finance:

Heli noted that a draft budget for the next EF has to be prepared by April.

As noted before the budget only allows for 70-80% of travel cost for committee members to attend an EF Committee meeting.

6 Planning the Forum Meeting 2014

It was discussed whether the Forum needs to have a business meeting every year. Heli pointed out that the financial report, budget and the EF committee report must be presented, therefore it was agreed to have a business meeting as usual. Matters for AOB/ proposals should be notified in advance (website).

The extra time we have will be used for discussions.

The speaker and topic for the European Breakfast is the responsibility of the RD- Marika will look into it.

7 Discussions and proposals for the future

Ingrid introduced the suggestion from the Norwegians to have a Nordic (Scandinavian) conference next year on March 14-16 in Oslo to encourage members who don't speak English to participate in a conference.

The Committee encourages all kinds of activities.

We need to discuss the timing of The European Regional Conference as too many members in Europe cannot attend because of the start of the school year. A proposal has to be presented for the International Board.

It was discussed whether we need a forum when we are now a region.

Marika: State presidents should meet more, the forum could facilitate that.

Two countries (GB, NO) want to have their State President as a member of the Forum Committee, four countries (Estonia, The Netherlands, Germany and Finland) will have someone not holding that position. The other three countries (IS, DK, SW) have not stated anything about it.

The members agreed that if we didn't have a forum we would miss: discussions, communication, connections, strength of the region, support to state presidents.

We all agreed that we want to work towards good communication and work together to strengthen our Region.

Ingibjörg closed the meeting by thanking all committee members. She said that we have added a motto: "Actions - Activate our goals". She added that the forum committee had contributed a lot.

The meeting was closed at 16.50