

THE DELTA KAPPA GAMMA SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL
EUROPEAN FORUM

**Minutes of the European Forum Committee Meeting
held in Niederh ochstadt, near Frankfurt, Germany
Friday 9 and Saturday 10 November 2007**

FRIDAY 9 NOVEMBER:

Present: Ria Bleeker (Netherlands) in the chair
Trijny Schmitz du Moulin – European Director
Carin Ahlberg – Sweden
Gisela Baronin von Engelhardt – Germany
Marja-Liisa Lehtikoinen – Finland
Helga Thorlacius – Iceland
Kate York – Great Britain

Apologies: Bj rg Nakling – Norway

Ria Bleeker opened the meeting by welcoming the members of the European Forum Committee.

1. **Agenda:** The agenda drawn up by Ria Bleeker was accepted.

Reporters: The following were appointed as reporters:

Friday – Carin Ahlberg
Saturday – Helga Thorlacius
Kate York would review and edit the minutes.

2. **Minutes of the Forum meeting in Amsterdam – Friday 3 November 2006**

Matters arising:-

- a. Budget: Not all European States yet pay the travel costs for their European Forum Committee members. Action: Refer for discussion at the European Forum meeting in Chicago.
- b. Exchange Rates: The current rate of exchange for the dollar against European currencies places European countries at a disadvantage regarding conference registration fees for events held in Europe. It results in a low registration fee when the rate is set in dollars and converted into European currencies, making it difficult for a viable budget to be set. A way of compensating for the shortfall needs to be found.
- c. The €1 levy: See agenda item 8.c.I.
Action: Ria to write to remind State Presidents.
- d. Pin for European Achievement Award: Ria to request each state to pay €50 for the pin awarded in 2007, as previously agreed.
- e. Treasurer for the European Forum: The possibility of having a European Forum Treasurer would be discussed under item 8 on Saturday's agenda.

After corrections to spelling errors, the minutes were agreed.

Minutes of the Forum meeting in Amsterdam – Saturday 4 November 2006

Matters arising:-

- a. European Achievement Award: Members agreed to recommend the same design for the award pin for future years.
Action: Before January 2008, Ria to find out if matching additional pins can be produced and at what cost. Use of the same design to be discussed at the European Forum meeting in Chicago.
Spelling errors corrected: 'The Chair of the European *Forum*' and '*biennially*'.
- b. Voices of Vision DVD: It was reported that the sound and vision are not synchronized, so the quality is not good.
Action: Trijny to investigate the current situation.
- c. Pre-conference seminar in London: Attendance had been relatively low, but those who went were very positive. Kate summarized problems and frustrations, mainly relating to communication difficulties. Further discussion to take place on Saturday under items 4 & 8.

- d. Forum Goals: Change wording to read, '*Encourage members to attend other states' conventions*'. The importance of having different dates for the conventions in each state was emphasized. The advantage of having a translation of the Agenda into English was agreed.
Suggestions for the future:
Point 2 – Change to: '*organise a European event at international conventions*'.
Point 3 – Change to: '*continue with suggestions for expansion*'.

The minutes were agreed.

Items 3 – 7 were adjourned to Saturday 10 November.

The meeting closed at 22.15.

SATURDAY 10 NOVEMBER – the meeting resumed at 09.00

Present: Ria Bleeker (Netherlands) in the chair
Trijny Schmitz du Moulin – European Director
Carin Ahlberg – Sweden
Gisela Baronin von Engelhardt – Germany
Marja-Liisa Lehtikoinen – Finland
Bjørn Nakling – Norway
Helga Thorlacius – Iceland
Kate York – Great Britain

Apologies: None

3. Minutes of the European Forum meeting in London – August 2007

Matters arising:

- a. Two different sets of draft minutes were produced.
Action: Ria to merge into one document, which Kate would proof read and revise.
- b. From the minutes of the AGM held in San Diego on 19 July 2006:
 - i. Pin for European Achievement Award – see above.
 - ii. Proposals to organize a European website. Members felt that this issue should be discussed in individual states. The question arose of who would do the work.
 - iii. EuForia. Joan Carroll to be thanked for her valuable efforts.
 - iv. AoB: The letter from Sweden to be discussed at the European Forum meeting in Chicago.
This to be discussed further under item 8.
Ria to request more time for the European Forum meeting in Chicago.

4. Evaluation of the Pre-conference Seminar in London – 31 July 2007

- a. An action plan should be set up for organizing pre-conference seminars for the future. A committee member should be appointed to be responsible for the administration of a seminar. An application for an Educational Foundation grant should be considered.
- b. Planning should begin early. A 'critical path analysis' is needed to make sure that the necessary deadlines are met. The Steering committee in Norway will need to liaise with the Forum committee.
Action: Ria to contact the Norway Steering committee.
- c. Members discussed the possibility of holding the same seminar in Oslo as in London. For London, the information about content, costs and how to register was not obtained and published in time, resulting in only 11 participants. If there is a large number of participants in Oslo an assistant could be recruited to work with Eygló, who will be asked if she is willing to repeat the seminar. This point to be discussed further under item 8.

5. Evaluation of the European Forum Meeting in London – August 2007

- a. In Memoriam: Members suggested that this item should be on the agenda for all future European Forum meetings.
- b. More time is needed – at least 2½ or even 3 hours in total for both a business meeting and a speaker.
Action: Ria to contact the Steering committees for Chicago and for Oslo.
This point to be discussed further under item 8.

6. Budget for 2007-2008

- a. Ria made the following comments about the Budget:
 - The unfavourable dollar exchange rate against European currencies.
 - There is a surplus from 2006-2007.
 - A European DVD needs to be financed and it may be possible to utilize the surplus from last year.
 - Travel costs of European Forum Committee members – see agenda item 8.c.III.
- b. Addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of Forum committee members were checked. Ria to circulate updated details.
- c. Ria will be required to produce a biennium report on the committee.
- d. A form to apply to run a workshop in Chicago is available. The deadline for applications will be in February 2009.

7. Information from the Regional Director, Trijny Schmitz du Moulin

Trijny reported the following;

- a. She attended the installation of the second chapter in Denmark (Beta in Odense), held at Middelfart. The proceedings were in English, with 5 international guests present.
- b. It will be desirable for there to be a handover meeting in Oslo for outgoing and incoming members of the Forum committee due to the high proportion of those stepping down in 2008.
- c. The incoming Regional Director would be helped by a document stating which events went well and what could have been done better.
- d. Germany has put forward a proposal for an international exchange programme, which might combine with state conventions, taking place either before or after. Christa Dunker-Hopferwieser from Gamma chapter has produced a document. Email: christa.dunker-hopferwieser@gmx.de
- e. Points from Austin:
 - i. The European Task Force, which met in London during the Regional Conference, is involved in a re-evaluation of aspects of the Society. The possibility of combining some committees could rationalize the situation and show savings on travel costs. Merging and modifying could be the way ahead. The Constitution was also being looked at.
 - ii. A strategic action plan has been worked on. Some aspects of this have been accomplished, some are under way and others have yet to be started.
 - iii. Ideas for making the Society more 'visible' are being sought.
 - iv. ΔKF needs a 'brand' which identifies it, combining a logo and an image which can be used in promoting the Society and making it more 'visible' Professional advice is being sought. The name of the Society should imply *one* aspect rather than multiple facets. All the members of the Administrative Board have been assigned to investigate different aspects of change, and how this could help the Society to move forward.

The Friday agenda was completed at 10.20 and was followed by the agenda for Saturday.

8. Suggestions and proposals arising from the London meeting in August 2007

- a. Communications: Members agreed that making contact with other European members is sometimes difficult. A booklet with information similar to the one listing 'Conference Participants' in London could be slightly expanded for circulation to all European members. Kate York offered to extend her current work on the GB database to cover this idea. The booklet could be sent to State Presidents electronically for printing and circulation to their members. A procedure for collecting the necessary information was agreed.

Members agreed that state websites are an important aspect of communications and information. It was therefore agreed that it would be good practice for at least some part of state websites to be in English. The address for each state's website would be included in the European contact booklet.
- b. The DVD currently being worked on by Janny Kisteman would be valuable for publicizing the Society within Europe, especially to new members. It was suggested that material from State Conventions would be valuable. A budget and action plan would need to be agreed and implemented in order to complete this project. It was agreed that a realistic target would be to have the new DVD ready for circulation at Chicago in July 2008.

Action: Ria would seek clarification of the current situation from Janny. Kate would obtain a copy of the DVD produced by Jim Miller following the London conference.
- c. Financial matters. There is no Treasurer for Europe.
 - I. Travel costs of European Director: A payment of €1 per member payment to facilitate travel around the Region by the Regional Director was recommended at the Regional Conference in Malmö.

Minutes from the meeting held in Amsterdam in 2005 state that the seven State Presidents had decided in 2004 to pay this amount. At present only some states are making a payment. Members agreed that guidelines for payment would increase the likelihood of the money being collected from *all* states. The following suggestion was agreed:

- i. States to include €1 per member for this purpose in their annual budgets.
- ii. The €1 per member contribution to be collected with membership dues by Chapter Treasurers and forwarded to the State Treasurers.
- iii. Contributions to be sent in Euros via European Forum members to the November meeting for handing over to the Regional Director, with written receipts obtained for accounting purposes.

It was decided that the Regional Director would submit a financial report on her travel and other costs to the European Forum meetings in November each year.

- II. European Achievement Award: It was further agreed that payments for the European Achievement Award pin could be made in the same way, with the following recommendation:
 - €25 per year or €50 every second year to be sent via the European Forum Committee members to the November meeting, to be passed to Ria Bleeker (or whoever is delegated to be responsible for this matter).
- III. Travel costs of committee members of the European Forum to the annual November meeting. The following recommendation was agreed:
 - Members of the European Forum committee are entitled to have the difference in their travel costs between the payment from Forum funds and the overall total reimbursed from the funds of their respective states. This item should therefore be built into state budgets.

It was agreed that the recommendations should be on the agenda of the European Forum meeting in Chicago (July 2008) for ratification.

- d. Pre-conference Seminar. Members decided that some agreed guidelines for the seminar which precedes every European Regional Conference could help to improve the organization and efficiency of the event. The following suggestions were agreed:
 - i. The Forum committee should be responsible for deciding the theme and format of the pre-conference seminar.
 - ii. The appropriate Steering Committee should be informed of the Forum decision and given guidance about anticipated costs.
 - iii. The theme should be decided and agreed at the Forum Committee meetings in November of odd-numbered years in advance of the next European Conference. At the same time, a decision will be made about who will be invited to present the seminar. Final decisions about the presenter and costs must be made by January in the year in which the conference is to take place.
 - iv. Details of the seminar, together with the necessary registration form, must be ready for publication by the end of January of the year in which the conference is to take place.
For 2009, the Pre-Conference Seminar will focus on aspects of electronic learning, blogging and websites.
- e. Letter from Sweden: The following three questions were presented to the European Forum meeting in London on behalf of Sweden:-
 - i. What is the purpose of the European Forum?
 - ii. What can it decide?
 - iii. What has the European Forum decided or recommended?

The purpose of the Forum: It was agreed that the purpose of the Forum is always printed in the relevant conference booklet. For the London conference, the purposes were included in the red booklet which was circulated to all members attending the Forum meeting.

Decisions which can be made by the Forum: During a Forum meeting at Conventions or Conferences the members present can decide on any proposals made by the European Forum Committee. Proposals made by the European Forum Committee are submitted to European member states, they belong on the agenda of every Chapter and State meeting, where decisions about them are taken.

Decisions made or recommended by the Forum:

Apart from the recommendations included in the minutes of this meeting, yet to be ratified, the Forum as a whole has decided the following:

- I. That the Registration Fee (or its equivalent) for State Conferences should be waived for the members of other States who wish to attend. This represents the fees of the business part of the conference (*see

clarification below). It has also been decided that hospitality should be offered in members' homes, if appropriate, to further reduce the costs for members attending conferences in other States.

* The basic costs of State conferences are met by the host state by setting a budget which includes a registration fee to cover the cost of the venue, the speaker(s) and any other fixed costs. This is the element of costs which it has been agreed to waive. All other conference expenses are paid by visiting members, for example, trips, visits, meals, entrance fees, hotels etc.

II. The European Achievement award.

III. The levy of €1 per member to enable the Regional Director to travel to Society events within the Region.

9. Accomplishment of goals for the European Forum 2006-2008

i. *Plan both Regional and International Forum sessions through regular meetings of the Forum Committee.*

After discussion, the following recommendation was agreed:

- Meetings of the European Forum at Conferences and Conventions should be sub-divided into two sessions – 1. Business and discussion, 2. Speaker with time for comments and questions.

Rationale – There is always a shortage of time because previous meetings have attempted to cover both business and a speaker in one session. The committee wishes to enable discussion rather than curtail it.

ii. *Continue to strengthen the seven member states by using electronic newsletters and homepages with English summarization.*

This goal is included in the minutes and proposals above.

iii. *Maintain co-operation between European Regional Director and member states.*

Members agreed that this goal has been actively achieved.

iv. *Encourage members to attend State Conventions and the European Regional Conference.*

Members agreed that the achievement of this goal is encouraged by:

- Waiving the 'business' element of registration fees for members from other countries.
- Publicising dates early.
- Issuing explicit invitations.
- Giving members an assignment to involve them and encourage them to be present.
- Chapters subsidising attendance at Regional Conferences.
- Exploring the possibility of offsetting attendance costs against income tax.
- Exploring the possibility of European funding, for example from Leonardo or Socrates.
- Planning activities where non-members will attend and making applications to the Cornet Fund (now within the Educational Foundation).

v. *Recognise ongoing research by members in establishing contacts between members and members' schools.*

Amongst other initiatives, this has included (or may include in the future):

- School visits
- School exchanges
- School email and pen pal exchanges
- PowerPoint presentations of visits
- The benefits to members of having international contacts.

Members should be reminded to 'tell their stories' on the relevant enquiry form.

vi. *Portray ΔΚΓ events and projects through contacts with the media.*

Members are using every opportunity to obtain publicity for projects and events, whilst remembering that the project or event is the main focus and the publicity is a secondary consideration.

vii. *To organize a pre-conference seminar or workshops.*

This goal has been achieved.

10. How the Forum has been made more visible within each member's State

The following points were made:

- Giving a talk at Executive meetings
- Giving a talk to Chapters
- Giving reports of meetings to the home State
- Pre-conference seminars
- International contacts
- Articles in newsletters
- Impact of the European Achievement Award
- Having the Forum as an agenda item at meetings.

Ria expressed concern about the continuity of the Forum committee with the forthcoming changeover of so many members. The present 'rolling programme' has some members serving for 4 years but others for 2 years. The intention was for the period of service to be 4 years, with half the members changing every 2 years. It was suggested that the Forum should produce its own 'shooting script' stating what needs to be done, when, and by whom. This led to the suggestion of a 'Shadow Forum' or a handover meeting in November 2008, with the old and new committee members meeting together in the circumstances of a big changeover of membership.

11. European Forum Meeting 2008 in Chicago, 22-26 July

a. Theme & Speaker: It was decided that Ria would contact Corlea Plowman about the possibility of one workshop being allocated for the European Forum Speaker. This would help to resolve the ongoing problem of insufficient time. Themes suggested included:

- Assessment for learning
- How to involve/educate/assess secondary students based in the workplace
- Student self assessment
- The newest educational changes in each country
- The lifelong learner / self as learner

Members felt that we should ascertain who from Europe is going to Chicago and what topics would they like to discuss. A combination of input and discussion (questions and comments) was favoured. The format should be decided by the speaker – it could take the form of a debate. Members should investigate possible speakers in their own countries. A letter would be sent by Ria to all European State Presidents and all subjects discussed should be listed for action points by them. The minutes should reach Kate for editing by 24 November, with the aim of having them ready for circulation by 1 December.

b. Reporters: Members decided there should be one from GB and one from Finland.

c. Timekeepers: The decision was to have one from Iceland and one from Sweden.

d. Opening thoughts: It was thought appropriate to ask Elsebeth Gabel Austin, State President of Denmark to do this.

e. Election procedures and forms: Ria would send a form for each State President to name their State's incoming Forum representative by March 1st. The new Forum members would then be asked to nominate their choice of chairman.

f. Installation of new representatives; This would take place at the Forum meeting in Chicago. Ideally, the outgoing member should introduce the new member. Alternatively, this introduction could be prepared for someone else to read out. It was felt that outgoing members should also be introduced to members at the meeting.

g. Proposals from the meeting in London: This item had largely been covered under item 5.

Other proposals:

- Consider launching a European website with links to member states, to include a calendar of events, programmes, ideas and chat rooms. However, it was recognized that it would be challenging to find someone to do this.
- Consider appointing a European Treasurer.
- Trijny emphasized the importance of communications between the European Director and State presidents, from them to the Chapter Presidents, and from them to each member.

h. Conference booklet: It was decided that this should contain:-

- The relevant sections from the Constitution and International Standing Rules. Forum goals for 2008-2010. The Rationale, Purpose and Structure, Financing and Accountability statements as in the red booklet used in London.
- Minutes from the Forum meeting in London.
- An abstract of the presentation given by Sigrún Klara Hannesdóttir in London.
- Proposals from the Forum Committee.
- A list of outgoing and incoming Forum members.

12. Suggestions for the future

The majority of these are contained within these minutes regarding the making of action plans and guidelines / handover meetings / shooting scripts etc. It was agreed that Forum members will communicate with their own states when these minutes are available. Email communication would take place to compile the shooting script for the Forum.

Other suggestions:

- Organise a European event at the International Convention.
- Continue to make suggestions for expansion

- Pay attention to cost effectiveness when choosing the venue for Forum meetings.
- Consider Oslo for the November Forum Committee meeting in 2008.

13. Any Other Business

Trijny was asked whether there would be a special theme for the European Breakfast in Chicago. She did not want this to become a stressful matter with too much to prepare and set out. The International President would visit. There would be presentations to outgoing officers. Trijny would like each state to prepare a **short** song to sing. A suggestion of having postcards from each country to decorate the tables was enthusiastically received, so each State President will be asked to organize 10 postcards with views of their home country to take to Chicago with them. It was agreed that Trijny will ask for the room allocated to be of a suitable size for the number of European members involved. The guests to be invited would include all Past International Presidents since Europe became a region: Paula Dent, Evelyn Barron,

- Carol Mueller, Jean Gray, ▪ Jackie Cuppy, Barbara Day, Janet Shelver and Karen Duke who have been present at all the European Regional Conferences since that time.
- Each European State would pay the cost for breakfast for one Guest.

14. Closure of meeting

The meeting closed at 16.58

Recorders: Friday Agenda - Carin Ahlberg
Saturday Agenda – Helga Thorlacius
Reviewed and edited by – Kate York