

MINUTES

Of the forty-fifth Annual General Meeting held on 12 June 2010 at 14:00 at the Swiss Embassy, 16 – 18 Montagu Place, London

1. WELCOME

The **President Freddie Wyser** opened the 45th AGM at 2 p.m., and outlined the two-part format of the official proceedings, with a break for luncheon between the AGM and the Addresses. He then welcomed all delegates, observers and guests.

Please refer to Addendum A for attendees.

2. APLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Jacques-Simon Eggly, President OSA
Ruedi Wyder, Director OSA
Jean Francois Lichtenstern, Political Abteilung VI
Eduard Krall, Consul General
Valerie Chuard, Swissinfo
Sandra Glauser, Manchester Swiss Club
Hans Glauser, Swiss Relief Manchester
Victoria Senn, Secretary West of Scotland Swiss Club
Eva Wardill, President Yorkshire Swiss Club
Julie Baker, President Swiss Club Manchester
Erika Farwell-Meyer, Swiss Review, Committee member
Annie Tew, La Causerie
Salvatore Scalici, Secretary Swiss Club Gibraltar
Patrick & Katherine Bresnan, NHS
I.Kahn, NHS
Carmen Rose, President Swiss Club Inverness
Trudi Ferbrache, President Guernsey Swiss Club
Ursula Ross, Benevolent Fund Scotland

3. APPOINTMENT OF TELLERS

No tellers needed. No tellers appointed.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of previous AGM, Cardiff 2009, previously circulated as Enclosure 1.
Proposed by Freddie Wyser, seconded by Rosemarie Breitenstein.
No matters arising thereof.

5. ANNUAL REPORT

The **President's** Annual Report had been previously circulated as Enclosure 2.
There were no further questions or comments.

6. DELEGATES' REPORTS

Spring Meeting Berne, Enclosure 3a. No questions or comments.
Autumn Meeting St Gallen, Enclosure 3b. No questions or comments.

7. FINANCE

a) To receive and adopt the Income and Expenditure Accounts of FOSSUK for the year ending 31st of December 2009. Balance Sheet as at 31/12/2009.

Daniel Pedroletti explained that problems occurred with bringing the account up to date with new member signatures. It took months for the Treasurer's signature to be registered by the bank. This has been frustrating as could not sign cheques. The new signatories on the bank account have now been resolved. As a result, the Accounts are now prepared and have been distributed, including the Auditors' Report.

Members hold a copy of (Enclosure 4):

Income & Expenditure 2009:

Loss of £266.36.

Figures had to be adjusted, as expenses could not be paid.

Adjusted figures: Actual 2009: Real deficit £806.05.

The loss can be explained with a new concept of electing OSA delegates, as now four delegates were sent to Switzerland.

UBS used to sponsor delegates, this year no sponsorship was obtained. Now we have a financial problem as a new sponsor must be found.

Freddie Wyser opened the floor to questions.

Alan Martin: Explain travel expenditure of committee members – is this a one-off or is it for the entire year?

Daniel Pedroletti: We have some committee members who are not based in London who need to travel to meetings, also delegates who need to travel to Switzerland. FOSSUK are looking for sponsors and donations.

Freddie Wyser: Yes FOSSUK needs to find more ways to generate funds. Not easy in current climate. We are hoping to generate additional income through website advertising. Currently the only income is members' subscriptions.

Audience: Mentioned website and travel. Perhaps we should hold internet forums as opposed to physically travelling?

Daniel Pedroletti: All well and good, but personal contact is important – all must be available at the same time for e.g. forum. Not everyone is as computer literate as others.

Audience: The finances are forcing decisions, hence must reduce cost of meetings.

Alfred Zbinden: Delegates have to travel to Switzerland, this cannot be replaced with internet meetings.

Daniel Pedroletti: Some delegates do not charge for their expenses – we are very lucky.

Freddie Wyser: Expenses are large, money is always a sensitive issue. The committee is actively looking into ways of reducing expenses and to generate additional revenue.

Arthur Broadhurst: Where does income 'subscriptions' come from?

Freddie Wyser: Each club has x number of members, the clubs are supposed to pay £1 per member of that club. Minimum is £30 per society p.a. If a society does not have 20 members, they only pay £20. Clubs / Societies are very reluctant to pay this.

Arthur Broadhurst: Can clubs not be notified about increased subscriptions?

Freddie Wyser: This must be voted in, and can only take effect in 2012.

Daniel Pedroletti: Letter to clubs to request that figures are rounded up e.g. instead of £36, pay £40 which will assist, even if only in a small way. Many clubs are not as big as the City Swiss Club or New Helvetic Society – simply cannot afford more.

Rosemary Breitenstein: Subscriptions used to be published. Is this an economy measure that these are no longer printed?

Freddie Wyser: An oversight.

Daniel Pedroletti: Not aware, with apologies – will institute.

Freddie Wyser: Income and Expenditure Accounts of FOSSUK for the year ending 31st of December 2009 Accepted?

Proposed by Geoff Rose and seconded by Freddie Wyser.

b) To receive the Auditors' report and appoint the auditors for ensuing year

Auditors Report 2009: Balance sheet shows true and fair view as of 31 Dec 2009. Wolff Kensit & Jeffrey Long signed.

Freddie Wyser: Proposed the same Auditors' for the next financial year.

Daniel Pedroletti: The same individuals are willing to be elected.

Freddie Wyser: There has been a discrepancy between Regula Marsh leaving and Daniel Pedroletti taking over – primarily due to issues caused by the bank by taking months to instate new signatories, delaying access to the statements.

Daniel Pedroletti: FOSSUK do not yet have budget for 2011, but does have one for 2010. Comment on budget for 2010 – figures for administration & traveling balanced. The loss is due to our new project, the Forum causing of the deficit, the rest is balanced.

Freddie Wyser: Any questions?

Alan Martin (quite upset): Main expenditure is the FORUM – this is a very big expenditure. Surely we can only approve the budget after the forum has been discussed?

Freddie Wyser: The Forum will be discussed in item 9 of the Agenda. The current auditors therefore remain appointed.

c) To accept the Budget for 2011

As explained by Daniel Pedroletti, there is no budget for 2011 available at this time. Agenda item cannot be completed.

8. SWISS REVIEW (Finances)

Erika Farewell-Meier cannot be here. Alfred Zbinden reading on her behalf.

31 Dec 2009, Thomas Fisher of Swiss Embassy found the accounts to be correct.

2009 ended with a deficit. Advertising still better than 2007, but did not match revenue of 2008.

31 December 2009 Swiss Review Account:
Income: £6,197.00
Expenditure: £7,675.94
Expenditure over Income £1,478.94

Total assets £7,763.78 which includes £888.75 advance payment for advertisements for 2010.

Swiss Review UK pages are some of the best in the world, colourful, interesting, full of news and info. Enough advertising space for businesses.

Big thanks to editor Derek Meakin and round of applause for Jeffrey Long – without whom we would have no advertising.

2010 advertising is well on target. Expenses kept to a minimum and helped sponsor an organ pipe of the Swiss Church.

One cannot run at a loss indefinitely. There is a new promotion to include electronic advertising. Jeffrey also selling adverts on the webpage.

Freddie Wyser noted that the figures of the Swiss Review are not normally distributed. Swiss Review figures are still pretty healthy.

Ane-Mari Peter: Explained the advertising opportunities available on the FOSSUK website.

9. FORUM

Freddie Wyser handed the subject to Daniel Pedroletti as he is head of the Forum sub-committee.

Daniel Pedroletti: Why a forum? FOSSUK is best known for organizing AGM's and is also involved in Swiss Review, organizing Delegates and paying for their expenses. FOSSUK need to illustrate what it's purpose is. Want emphasise the role of OSA. Essential for OSA what the concerns of compatriots are, it is important that compatriots know the position of the Swiss Government.

The Forum will allow members and others (not just FOSSUK members) to ask questions. 'Switzerland and You' is the title of the Forum and debate. Teamed up with the New Helvetic Society although FOSSUK paid for majority of expenses.

Panel with 3 delegates, chaired by a Swiss journalist based in London. Invitations sent and the event marketed in London Embassy, Swiss Review UK Pages, website and Swiss Church. Attendees could send questions.

Was it a success? Over 70 people attended which was way over our expectations. FOSSUK clearly answered a need, reached our target, a success.

What next? Planning another FORUM in autumn in midlands and Scotland in spring next year. Working on logistics and working with local level clubs. Request that societies make a donation to this new venture.

Arthur Broadhurst: First Forum was held in London. What is cost of FORUM? Shown in 2009 accounts?

Daniel Pedroletti: No, only for 2010 budget. Could meet in Embassy free of charge, New Helvetic Society paid for guard. FOSSUK paid for food from St Moritz (£200). Journalist did not charge for her time.

Total cost of the Forum was £619.66.

If we go to North England, more people will have to travel.

Audience: What was the catchment area?
All South East England clubs were invited.

Audience: Did FOSSUK pay for travel?
Daniel Pedroletti: No, individuals paid for themselves.
Alan Martin: Can minutes / notes be provided?

Daniel Pedroletti: We had an observer, Dr. Rudi Wyder from OSA, who wrote a positive report.

Alfred Zbinden: Did someone in audience attend the Forum?
Margrit Lyster: SwissInfo also reported favourably on the event.

Audience: How was the event advertised?
Daniel Pedroletti: Invitation to all South East clubs, flyers in Swiss Church, Embassy and Swiss Review, notice on the FOSSUK website.

Audience: Aiming at regional groups, targeting a different region...
Audience member: I was here – was good. Lots of questions regarding passports – lots of practical information and exchange. Had a stumbling block with technology. Many people asked questions to which the answers are on the internet. Forum was in March, minutes should be issued sooner. Everything is right, but we should use the internet more. It was obvious many people don't do internet / don't understand it. I'm from a small club and I know it's about money, what about having a raffle that would just pay for expenses?

Freddie Wyser: At Cardiff AGM it was decided to have a low cost AGM i.e. No dinners, no extras, no specials. This year is a low budget. Thanks for the input. It was our first forum, and we learn from mistakes, but we get ideas from attendees. The next one will be better, and we will continue to hold forums. Regarding minutes, this takes time, but a valid point and we'll get minutes out much quicker in future.

On another note, there are Presidents / secretaries and our only access to members are through Presidents. Documents are not being forwarded to members. Forum shows that FOSSUK is doing more and being more progressive.

Audience: Run a local Swiss club, it is difficult, had to fight to join. FOSSUK info is circulated, but people don't want to know.

Freddie Wyser: We are aware that for many small clubs, it is a social gathering and are not interested in participating in the wider Swiss political landscape.

Audience: Info goes out via Presidents, but common problems in info distribution. Can we bypass the President and use our own database?

Freddie Wyser: Was tried a few years ago, data protection issue raised.

Audience: Website is not enough. Must send regular email newsletters.
Alan Martin: Invitation in hard copy, good as a lot of paper and don't have to print. Easiest way would be to encourage clubs to receive elements electronically. Clubs have email addresses of members and can then forward.

Freddie Wyser: Case for both, people without internet. Other side, some people have.

Ane-Mari Peter: Requested if members would submit their own email. Members want a sign-up form first.

Daniel Pedroletti: Look at other sites e.g. Swiss National Day have an email subscription form.

Alan Martin: This is the right direction – get email with direct link to website. Much more efficient.

Margrit Lyster: Efficiency is good, but we have both situations in the societies, we need to ensure that active club members who want paper can receive it.

Yves Guisan: Look at a simplified method of making the Presidents' job easier.

Freddie Wyser: FOSSUK should Push presidents more, get feedback, must be encouraged to distribute information. Committee will review.

Freddie Wyser: Now that forum has been discussed, please return to the budget.
Proposal – accept Budget 2010?

Allen Fareley. 1st proposal
Rosemary Breitenstein seconded.

FW: Apologise profusely. Should have asked Ambassador Lautenberg for a few words before the AGM started.

Ambassador Lautenberg: Let's do it at the end.

Alan Martin: You wanted to vote about acceptance:
14 accepted
4 declined

18 delegates, vote has been passed. The 2010 budget is accepted.

10. VENUE OF FUTURE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

Freddy Wyser: Spoken to the Yorkshire Swiss Club – they have accepted the invitation to organise the 2011, 46th AGM in York. Date not yet been decided, but will be in June 2011.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Questions, issues to raise: NO

Regarding: Swiss Review, Swiss Info, Biometric passports – please leave until after guest speakers.

Ambassador Lautenberg's part of proceedings:

This is the 6th and last time a privilege to participate in FOSSUK AGM. Impressed by commitment of organisation and work done. I know how difficult it is to gather people, but one element to raise, and not for the first time. What has it got to do with Switzerland? Now so many things changing in the world, I can imagine that throughout the Swiss community, there is probably a need to understand what is happening in Switzerland even more. People want to know more. I seems to me, that beyond the more social dimensions in the gathering of clubs / societies, make information more appealing so that people are able to respond and find answers to their queries. The work should lead to something more concrete. FOSSUK is a more formal organisation, it is the link, the method for ways of interacting, trying to find what people think and convey that back. This is the primary function of FOSSUK. I hope that in years to come, FOSSUK will find a way to have communications to and from members. Such a bunch of intelligent and committed people should not have to have finance as its main concern. Great meeting you all. Thank you for the work and acceptance.

Freddie Wyser: Wishing you all the best and god speed. Thank you.

The formal business of the **AGM was concluded at 3:20 p.m.**