EUROPEAN
MUSEUM FORUM

The European Museum of the Year Award
The European Museum Forum Workshops
The European Museum Forum Publications

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SUMMARY OF RECENT EMF TRUSTEE MEETINGS

Two meetings of the European Museum Forum (EMF) Trustees were held on 28th March 2009 at Kensington Palace London – a General Meeting of the Trustees and an Annual Meeting at which formal appointments were made and legal approvals registered.

All Trustees were present at both meetings. Trustees at this time were:
Mrs Taja Vovk Cepic, Sir Neil Cossons (Chairman), Mr Stephen Harrison, Mr John C. Nolan, Dr Wim van der Weiden.

In attendance at both meetings were the EMF Director, Massimo Negri, and EMF Administrator Miss Ann Nichols.

SUMMARY OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF TRUSTEES

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

In accordance with modern standards of good governance of a legal charity, Trustees reviewed their respective involvement in any business or organization which could be perceived to constitute a conflict of interest. Recognising that in such a specialist area most Trustees would be involved with other museum, heritage or cultural organizations of some kind, it was agreed that each Trustee would formally register any potential conflict in advance of any appropriate item on the agenda or for any interest which might conflict with the aims and objectives of EMF, or for any area of pecuniary interest. It was agreed that there were no current such conflicts of interest amongst the Trustees.

GOVERNANCE OF THE EMF LEGAL CHARITY

Mr Harrison circulated a draft European model relating to good trustee governance. It was felt important that there is a clear definition of responsibilities and clarity of processes within the EMF organizational operation. The Trustees are the governing body of the European Museum Forum, and certain powers in relation to the judging of the European Museum of the Year Award are delegated to judges. The tabled governance document was agreed as the basis of the EMF Trust's Standing Orders, incorporating other amendments made at the meeting. This would be codified after the meeting and published.

After general discussion, it was agreed that EMF can be strengthened if there is more diversity with a firm legal basis for a range of delegated tasks. This should not mean more bureaucracy. The provisions for the retirement and renewal of Trustees and Judges were confirmed. The provision by the Judging Committee of draft criteria for the EMYA competition was noted and welcomed. It was recognised that this document should be developed in the future.

General discussion took place in relation to the various roles of Trustees and others within EMF.
In the light of Sir Neil Cossons notified intention to stand down from his current role as President and Chairman, the role of President for the future was discussed. It was decided that, at this time, a decision on a potential replacement in the President role was not critical and the matter should be left open for the future.

With regard to Trustees, Mr Harrison's proposal that the Chair of Trustees should not be a judge was agreed, as was his proposal that the Chair of the Judges' Committee should be, *ex officio*, the Vice Chair of the Trustees. During the discussion it was agreed that former judges should not automatically become Trustees. The potential was also recognized of advertising and co-opting people for specific tasks without making them permanent Trustees. The Director's previous comment that it was important to ensure UK Trustees were available who were familiar with the legal charitable status was re-endorsed and it was agreed that the original foundation of the organisation by Kenneth Hudson as a UK charity with UK Trustees should be respected. It was agreed that there should at all times be a majority of Trustees who were not judges, as this would ensure the correct distance of good governance required between the Trustees and the Judges.

FINANCE AND STRATEGIC PLAN

The Trustees received the draft accounts for the year ending 2008. The Administrator pointed out that the figures for 2007 represented 18 months' expenditure as this was the period when the accounting year changed to January-December. Sir Neil Cossons, as Chairman of the present meeting, was authorised to sign the final version of the accounts on behalf of the Trustees having received further comment from the Trustees after the meeting. It was noted that the level of free reserves had risen from 9 months' unrestricted expenditure in 2007 to 15 months in 2008.

Mr Harrison proposed that an EMF Strategic Finance Committee be formed to examine the medium and longer term financial plan for the organisation. This was agreed. It was also agreed that the possibility of gaining funding advantage by requesting that the EMYA Ceremony for 2012 be held in the UK during the Olympic year be progressed. Sir Neil Cossons and Hermann Schäfer were invited to be members of the Finance Committee, with the Chairman. This was agreed, with the possibility of other members being co-opted.

The Director was thanked for his work in obtaining money from European Union and other projects throughout the year, with the help of committee members and national correspondents.

UPDATE ON CURRENT PROGRESS

The Trustees had already received a copy of the 2008 Annual Report written by the Director, which set out the diverse activities which had taken place during the year. This was noted and agreed for publication.

MEETING OF JUDGES' COMMITTEE

The Trustees received the Minutes of the meeting of the Judges' Committee held in Strasbourg on 25-26 November 2008. It was agreed that the prime role of the judging committee was to judge the entries in the European Museum of the Year Award, and that policy issues were the province of the Trustees, in consultation with the judging committee and others. The term of office for judges is three years, with the ability of the Trustees to confirm two terms of renewal of three years - a possible total of nine years. It was agreed that the existing policy of having no more than two judges from one country should be formally approved by the Trustees. Mr Javier Pes and Sibilla of Luxembourg were approved as new members of the Judging Committee.

NATIONAL CORRESPONDENTS

A discussion followed on the method for the selection and appointment of National Correspondents, bearing in mind the need for a reasonable geographical distribution and the possibility of future recruitment to the judging panel. The National Correspondents were felt to be an important part of the EMF organisation. It was noted that last year's consultation survey with the National Correspondents, undertaken by Mr Harrison, had been a valuable exercise in bringing views and role of the National Correspondents to the fore and providing a clearer view of their potential role within EMF.

APPOINTMENT OF EMF AMBASSADORS

The post of Ambassador is an honorary one and follows recommendations by the Judging Committee or Trustees. Three proposals were put forward:

1. Mrs Ulla Keding Olofsson (Sweden) – a founding member of the Committee, who had served for 29 years before her retirement. She continues to take an active part in the museum world in Sweden and to promote EMF and EMYA.

2. Mrs Aleid Rensen-Oosting (Netherlands) who is retiring from the Committee in May 2009, having served since 1983 (with a gap of two years).

3. Mrs Danièle van den Abeelen (Belgium), currently a very active National Correspondent, whose husband Georges van den Abeelen was a founding member of EMYA.

These three proposals were agreed unanimously.

WORKSHOP REPORTS

Details of the workshops held during 2008 are given in the 2008 Annual Report, and also appeared in the January 2009 issue of the EMF *Bulletin*.

Mr Negri said that in the coming year it would not be possible to organise another Focus Group in Italy.
It was hoped that a third workshop on museums in islands and coastal areas may take place towards the end of the year in Sardinia.

POSITIONS OF DIRECTOR AND ADMINISTRATOR

The Trustees warmly thanked the Administrator and Director for their excellent work during the past year and considered the current levels of remuneration for these positions.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT TRUSTEE MEETING

It was agreed that in order to ensure the continuing close working relationship between the Trustees and the EMYA Judging Committee, Trustee meetings will take place twice a year, at the Annual Meeting in May and in Strasbourg, to coincide with the Judging Committee meeting, in late November.

SUMMARY OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE EMF TRUSTEES.

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

The draft accounts for 2008 were received at the meeting, not being available beforehand. Sir Neil Cossons, as Chairman of the present meeting, was authorised to sign the final version of the accounts on behalf of the Trustees, having received further comment from Trustees after the meeting.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR

Old Mill Accountantancy LLP, Chartered Accountants , The Old Mill, Park Road, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 5BS were duly appointed, having provided a good professional service previously.

ELECTION OF EMF CHAIRMAN

Sir Neil Cossons having duly notified Trustees of his intention to stand down as Chairman, a proposal was duly tabled in advance of the Annual Meeting to elect Mr Stephen Harrison as Chairman of the Trustees. Proposal by Sir Neil Cossons and seconded by Mr John Nolan.

A vote was taken and Mr Harrison was duly elected as the EMF Chairman.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Mr Harrison proposed that in order to facilitate close working co-operation, the position of Vice-Chairman of the Trustees should be the Chairman of the Judging Committee, *ex officio*. This was agreed. Dr Wim van der Weiden, as the current Chairman of the Judging Committee was therefore duly elected as the EMF Vice Chairman.

ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

The Annual meeting was agreed as the appropriate meeting to consider Trustee membership in accordance with the Trust's legal Deed.

Two candidates as additions to the Board of Trustees were formally proposed and seconded, full CVs having been circulated.

(a) Dr Hartmut Prasch, Director of the Museum für Volkskultur at Spittal/Drau in Austria, member of the ICOM international executive committee, and currently a National Correspondent;

(b) Dr Hermann Schäfer, former Director of the Haus der Geschichte in Bonn (winner of the 1995 Council of Europe Prize), and Former Vice-Minister for Culture & Media in the Federal Government of Germany. Currently an EMYA judge.

After full discussion, discussion both candidates were appointed unanimously.

Stephen Harrison
Chairman
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