

FEDERATION OF BRITISH BONSAI SOCIETIES

Minutes of Committee Meeting, 10.30 a.m. Sunday, 4th Dec 2016

“The Woodlands”, New Hall Drive, Walmley, Sutton Coldfield, B76 1QX

1) Present: Malcolm Hughes, Reg Bolton, Denise Baum-Pick, Peter Fielding, Barry Walker, David Cheshire, Judith Davison.

2) Apologies: Keith Wilson, Nigel Wright.

3) Minutes of the previous meeting: (9th Oct, 2016) Acceptance was proposed by DC and seconded by PF.

4) Matters arising: None.

5) Correspondence: MH has received an email from an organization in Ireland that is very keen to host a future EBA convention in Belfast. After much discussion, it was decided that this would be extremely difficult to do successfully due to the excessive distances and costs that would be incurred by the majority of European members. It was agreed that as they have no experience of hosting bonsai events, they could be encouraged to test the water by put on an Irish convention, which FoBBS could support, and also, they could possibly attend the Noelanders event in February to get a better idea of what is involved.

6) Reports:

a) Financial: DB-P reported that the current balance of funds stands at £9101.52. Petty cash remains at £7.67.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by MH and seconded by BW.

b) Companies House: RB expressed concerns regarding FoBBS' legal documents i.e. the constitution and by-laws and undertook to create a revised version of the by-laws which will be acceptable to Companies House and which will replace the current constitution. A draft will be prepared in time for discussion at the AGM in March. It was noted that the FNBC rules need no changes. RB stated that there is no limitation on the amounts of money that may be spent by the treasurer and/or chairman without reference to the committee.

c) Membership: Remains at 56.

d) FNBC & National Bonsai Collection: BW reported that new practice has been established which involves regular checks being carried out on all trees and the creation of a record of their progress.

The Bill Horan juniper group is now on its podium in the centre of the garden to ensure it receives maximum sunlight.

One pine has been taken to ‘Woodlands’ for some intensive remedial work. MH has been asked to give a talk to the staff at the Gardens about general bonsai care. The trees on display have been protected with horticultural fleece during the recent exceptionally cold weather.

e) European Bonsai Association: Marc Noelanders has been proposed as the new EBA president with MH as vice president. Issues have arisen regarding unofficial photography at exhibitions. Chris Thomas and Mark Cooper have both offered to exhibit trees at the convention in February but will have to organise their own transport. DC has investigated the cost of van hire but reported that most companies won't allow foreign travel insurance and those that do are too expensive. MH undertook to send an email to societies and individuals who might be interested in displaying trees to represent FoBBS, inviting them to submit photos of said trees by early January. MH queried whether the Friday evening reception would be limited to delegates or whether partners would be able to attend. RB was unsure.

f) W.B.F.F. RB said that he would be standing down as European Regional director. Lindsay Bebb (currently secretary) was suggested as a possible candidate as new president when the current four-year tenure ends. After questions were raised about the web presence, MH offered to create and manage a new permanent site with the aid of KH and NW.

7) Amateur New Talent Competition: A heat was held at the Heathrow show with two contestants, both of whom were good. The winner, Duncan Heild, will compete in the final at the EBA Congress in February. Bill Hallworth, the runner up, will be held in reserve and will also be available for the next final in Arco, Italy 2018. PF has 5 trees left which BW will refine ready for sale at the annual FNBC Boot Sale in March 2017. There are 2 prospective candidates from the south east for the next heat, which will probably be held at Capel Manor next year; they will be asked to submit their CV's in advance. RB proposed having a permanent central venue for heats but the general opinion was that they should be held at the event most convenient to the contestant's location. RB suggested that trees used in the competition could be repotted by the contestants and then displayed at FoBBS' events such as Chelsea, also that as the competition is limited to 3 candidates per year, they should be given the trees they have worked on.

8) A.G.M. 12th March 2017:

a) Reports, Accounts and Nominations: DB-P reported that all insurance renewals (£48 p.a.) should be in by Dec. 5th and in response to a query, stated that no copy of an insurance schedule has ever been received but that she would enquire of the Insurers whether such a schedule is available.

b) FoBBS constitution: See item 6b.

c) Items for Agenda item 8 – Informal Business Meeting: RB has undertaken to prepare a report of FoBBS' accounting from 2000-2010 to refute accusations of malpractice, also to counter criticisms being leveled at FoBBS on Facebook.

9) FoBBS related Bonsai Events, 2017:

a) R.H.S. Chelsea 2017: RB confirmed the stewards' rota is complete; new quality trees have been sourced and that the stand will be 10' by 3' and in a good position but that new fabric will be needed for it.

Chris Dearn, Tony Mackenzie and Graham Simpson will assist in building the stand, preparation, tree management etc.

b) "Bonsai for All 2017": MH reported that he has reserved the only weekend available for such an event which is 20/21 May. He will contact traders to ask whether they prefer a 1 day (Sunday) or 2 day event, he will also investigate possible demonstrators. Local Societies would be asked to put on displays.

10) Bonsai Speakers' Book: Some societies have complained that they haven't been getting recent updates to the book so it was agreed that hard copies be sent out by recorded delivery to all members once all renewals and committee members' changes have been received in the New year.

11) Current state of FoBBS and FNBC websites and 'Bonsai News UK': Both websites are being regularly updated. DC has asked to be added to the Trader's list and pointed out that Peter Whitcomb's name is still on the list although he no longer trades. KH has been asked to send the amended list to DC for validation.

Articles are being invited for inclusion in the next Bonsai News UK, which is due out in January.

12) Any other business:

a) MH reported that NW had raised the question about the provision of regional representatives, however, this poses difficult logistical problems due to the unequal spread of societies throughout the country. It was suggested that he might take on responsibility for the southwest region.

b) It was proposed that a Convention/Exhibition handbook and contract be compiled detailing responsibilities (accountancy and expectations etc.) which would be published on the FoBBS website as a guide to anyone wishing to hold an event which would require support from FoBBS. RB and MH agreed to work together on it's creation.

13) Date and venue of the next meeting: The meeting concluded at 15:45. The next meeting will be on the 12th February, 2017. Thanks were expressed to K & MH for hosting the meeting.