

FEDERATION OF BRITISH BONSAI SOCIETIES

Minutes of Annual General Meeting: 11.00a.m. Sunday 15th March 2015 at the Louden Suite, Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

1) **Members Present:**

Committee members: David Cheshire, Denise Baum-Pick, Judith Davison, Malcolm Hughes, Peter Fielding, Barry Walker, Andy Dolman, Kim Turton.

Society members: Ambion Bonsai Soc., Bonsai Kai, Cardiff Bonsai Soc., Midland Bonsai Soc., Redditch Bonsai Soc., South Staffs Bonsai Soc., The Bonsai Group, Wigston Bonsai Soc.

2) **Apologies:** Kath Hughes (FoBBS Administrator), Nigel Wright (Webmaster), Keith Wilson, Reg Bolton, together with the following societies:

Bridgend Bonsai Soc., Heart of England Bonsai Soc., New Dawn Bonsai Soc.,

Of those societies who sent their apologies, all had individuals in attendance to carry their proxy votes. Therefore, the total number of votes possible was 18.

3) **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the 16th March 2014:** The minutes of the previous years' AGM were read and acknowledged as a true and accurate record. Vic Yeomans proposed acceptance of the minutes seconded by Wigston Bonsai Society. Carried unanimously.

4) **Matters arising:** Ed Brown (Bonsai Kai) remarked that for some of the entries in the website's Society list it was not obvious where they were located. This had now been rectified.

5) **Reports:**

a) **Chairman's report:** Malcolm Hughes presented his report on the year's activities (see attached). He added that as FoBBS' membership was increasing by about 8-9% annually, there would be no need to increase fees for some time. He then reminded members that FoBBS would be willing to give financial support to any club wishing to stage an event; however, such support would only be available on submission and acceptance of a proper business plan.

b) **Financial report:** Denise Baum-Pick presented her report (see attached) and stated that the Federation made a very healthy profit of £1653.18.

Richard Gilkes (MBS) asked whether there had been any insurance claims and if not, would there be any possibility of asking for a no claims bonus. Malcolm Hughes replied that there had been no claims made in the last 25 years, but Barry Walker suggested that for what is a relatively small number of societies, it might not be viable. Denise Baum-Pick agreed to investigate.

Gil Murray (MBS) asked about the need for an annual audit but Denise replied that for an organization of FoBBS' size, audits were not necessary.

Acceptance of the Accounts: proposed – Andy Dolman; seconded - Barry Walker.

c) **Friends of the National Bonsai Collection:**

i) Barry Walker presented his report as acting Chairman to the meeting (see attached). He also registered his intention of reviewing the method of recording work done and also putting more information on the website to keep volunteers informed regarding work completed/needed. He also invited members to volunteer for workdays at the collection.

Malcolm Hughes stated that whilst FNBC is responsible for the trees, the Botanic Gardens are responsible for structural maintenance of the area. It was suggested that the octagon needs a coat of paint to cover the staining on the walls but it was pointed out that such work might not be covered by insurance.

ii) Malcolm Hughes presented the financial report (see attached), which shows a profit of £415.23.

Acceptance of the Accounts: proposed – Dave Barnsley; seconded – David Cheshire. Carried unanimously.

- 6) **Election of officers and Committee:**
- a) FoBBS – Reg Bolton has resigned from the committee but all other current members (including recently co-opted members) were willing to stand again; the meeting therefore agreed that a block vote be taken. Carried unanimously.
 - b) FNBC – Barry Walker was proposed as the new Chairman and was voted in unanimously. As all other members of the committee were willing to stand again, a block vote was taken and carried unanimously.
- 7) **Date and venue for the next AGM:** It was agreed that the next meeting should be held on the same day as the FNBC Boot sale, and to avoid clashing with Mothering Sunday, was provisionally set for Sunday March 6th 2016.
- 8) **Informal Business Meeting:**
- a) FoBBS future activities: Malcolm Hughes reported that the website is receiving a regular number of hits but Societies are reminded to check the events list when picking dates so that clashes can be avoided. Also, as much information as possible is needed (date, time venue, cost etc.) when submitting items for inclusion and, after the event, organizers can send in photos for display.
Preparations for the display at Chelsea are well underway.
Richard Gilkes asked why FoBBS were not holding another joint exhibition at the ‘Gardener’s World Live’ Show at the NEC in June this year. Malcolm Hughes replied that feedback from those participating last year dictated that they wanted a year off or, if putting on a display, at a less involved level. Individual societies would be able to enter a display if they wanted to and any member whose own society was not participating would be given the opportunity to help those who were.
Malcolm Hughes reported that he now has a presentation ready for delivery to society meetings that explains what the criteria are when judging bonsai shows, which should help novices and more experienced bonsai enthusiasts to understand what the judges look for when judging individual trees as well as bonsai displays.
 - b) New Talent Competition: Peter Fielding reported that the new rules are now on the website. Mark Kennerly won the last heat at Capel Manor and represented the UK at the EBA event in Wroclaw, Poland. Jose Redondo came second and will represent FoBBS in Lithuania later this year (September).
There will be one heat this year in the Wirral (August) as a qualifier for next years’ EBA final. Next years’ EBA event will be in Budapest in 2016.
Barry Walker suggested that future dates should be published on the website. Also that costs paid to candidates should be a percentage of their actual expenditure (travel etc.), rather than a fixed amount. It was pointed out that with some EBA events now taking place further afield in Eastern Europe, candidates costs would have to reflect this.
 - c) National Collection: See 5.c above.
 - d) European Bonsai Association: Judith Davison read out a report submitted by Reg Bolton (copy attached) and Malcolm Hughes added that the role of EBA delegate was now vacant, as he has stepped down. A question was raised from the floor as to whether FoBBS would wish to continue with membership of EBA, which costs around £140 annually? The meeting was informed that any issues concerning EBA membership, including the matter of rejoining next year should be discussed in committee. It was emphasized that if FoBBS did not rejoin, then Reg Bolton would be ineligible to remain as President. The Chairman expressed the hope that concerns which had arisen within EBA during the last 12 to 18 months would soon be resolved and that the organization would continue effectively and move forward.
 - e) World Bonsai Friendship Federation: The next event will be in Japan in 2017. Trips to the event are likely to be organized from within the U.K., with costs in the region of around £2,000 to £2,500. Further information from Japan would be forthcoming nearer the time of the event. An interim WBFF Board meeting was being held in South Africa this coming September.

Meeting Concluded, 12:45p.m.