

Minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting of ESEH, Florence, 18 February 2005

1. Vice President Christian Pfister opens the meeting and hands the chair of the meeting over to Dr Fiona Watson.

A minute of silence was observed in honour of Alexei Karimov, the late Regional Representative for Russia and Eastern Europe, who died in a car accident in early 2004.

It was announced that the new Regional Representative for Russia and Eastern Europe, could not be present due to visa problems.

2. Minutes of the Business meeting of 16 February 2005 were read to the Ordinary General Meeting by Jan Oosthoek.
3. The president reported on the 2003-2005 ESEH Project Plan and that all objectives of the plan were met. The new project plan was accepted by the board with one vote abstained. The project plan will be made available on the ESEH website.
4. Constitution amendment article 12.2 of the Statutes regarding the Nominating Committee was explained to the OGM. The vote on this amendment has to be delayed because the wording was changed during the business meeting. It does therefore not meet the statutory requirement that the version on which will be voted must be distributed amongst the members at least 40 clear days before the OGM. The vote on the amended article 12.2 will take place in 2007. In the meantime the executive board will live up to the intention of the amendment.
5. The Treasurer reported on the ESEH accounts for 2003 and 2004. It was also announced that the quorum of 20 per cent was met with 66 members on the attendance list out of 142 members who were not in arrears.
6. Frank Uekotter reported on behalf of the financial control committee. Letters were read from Phia Steyn and Martina Kaup, the two members of the Committee, in which both stated that after examination of the accounts they found them in good order. OGM edthanks the financial control committee Martina Kaup, Bielefeld, and Dr. Phia Steyn, Stirling. Both Ms Kaup and Ms Steyn have agreed to continue to monitor the books until 2007.
7. The secretary explained the content of the Biannual Report to the OGM and that the board had unanimously accepted the report. The Biannual Report will be made available on the website.
8. The members of the executive board and the regional representative for the Nordic Countries, Eva Jacobsson, were discharged by the OGM.
9. The chair of the Nomination Committee, Peter Brimblecombe, reported on the work of the Committee and the difficulties encountered in drawing up a slate of candidates. The main difficulty encountered was that of a non-responsive membership to the call for candidates for the executive board. It was

Election of Executive Board

The OGM voted for the entire board with raised arms and the result was as follows:

Yes: 46

No: 2

Abstained: 5

Vote for new Regional Representative for the Nordic Countries, Timo Myllyntaus

Yes: 51

No: 0

Abstained: 0

10. The new procedure for selecting the Nominating Committee was introduced. A slate of candidates selected by the Executive Board and accepted by the Board during the Business meeting was presented. All candidates have agreed to stand for election.

It was explained that a new on-line ballot system for members of the Nomination Committee will be introduced.

11. Verena Winiwarter introduced the Centre for Environmental History initiative. The idea was not ours but ESEH received an invitation by a Regional Government in Bavaria, the Landkreis Neuburg-Schrobenhausen. A provisional Committee was formed to investigate the possibilities of the proposed centre and deal with the offer on a general level. The centre could provide a platform for summer schools, thematically focussed conferences and could eventually house and archive and place for PhD research. Additional funding has to be secured.

The General Assembly of ESEH was asked to install a "Committee on the study of the feasibility of a venue to provide scholarly community services to ESEH." This

Committee shall replace the PROVISIONAL Committee to investigate and negotiate a Centre for European Environmental History (CEEH).

The committee shall report to the Board of ESEH in particular on:

- Overview of types & conditions of scholarly community services ESEH is interested in.
- Legal Considerations necessary to enable co-operation between ESEH and independent legal bodies providing such services (including a proper name for such a venue).
- Investigation of funding opportunities.
- Action Plan for further steps to be undertaken.

The members of the committee are

- Martin KNOLL, University of Regensburg

- Verena WINIWARTER, University of Klagenfurt/ University of Applied Life Sciences, Vienna

Dr Siegfried Geissler from the Landratsamt Neuburg-Schrobenhausen gave a short presentation about Neuburg and the Danube restoration project as background to the CEEH.

Vote:

Yes: 47

No: 0

Abstained: 2

With this result the Committee to investigate and negotiate a Centre for European Environmental History is installed.

12. The General Assembly of ESEH was asked to install an Education Committee. Poul Holm introduced the Education Committee and explained the merits and scope of this committee.

The merits and scope of the Committee are:

- Should undertake investigations into, propose actions to the Executive Board, and report to the OGM in 2007 on the state of environmental history teaching at European universities, both for the undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels.
- Is also charged to investigate possible sources of funding for furthering curriculum development and establishment of international research training activities in environmental history.
- Advise on the possible establishment of a European Master and Doctoral programme in environmental history.
- Engage with all interested parties to further the interests of developing Environmental History curricula in Europe.
- Tentatively map the existing job market for environmental history candidates
- Taking into account the interdisciplinary nature of environmental history.

Structure

The EdComm will be elected by the OGM and consist of three ordinary members. The committee may co-opt non-voting members. Interested ESEH members should contact the core group about joining or about otherwise contributing. The committee will elect its own chairperson who will be responsible for regular communication with the ExecComm.

The EdComm may apply to the ExecComm for specific funding of travel and other needs.

The members of the committee are:

- Bernd Hermann. University of Goettingen (Chair)

- Timo Myllyntaus, University, University of Helsinki
- A third person who will be selected by the other wtwo members of the Committee

Vote on the education Committee:

Yes: 47

No: 0

Abstained: 2

With this result the Education Committee is installed.

13. Paper and poster selection process for future conferences.

This matter arose from concern that of 330 submitted proposals only 180 could be accepted for presentation at the conference. The board is aware that this is a problem for many scholars because to obtain travel funding they must present a paper at the meeting. In order to increase the number of papers that can be accommodated the following options could be considered:

- enlarge panels
- longer conferences
- more posters
- More parallel sessions

The board realizes how complex the issue is and solicits advice from people with experience. Members with any comments/ideas are encouraged to contact the Secretary about this issue. The executive board will compile the advice and deal with this issue.

14. Statements by the chair of the 2007 conference in Amsterdam, Petra van Dam. The conference will take place in June 2007 and as title of the conference *Global and Environmental Connections* was presented. This theme was chosen because the Netherlands always had many connections through trade around the globe. Papers are invited that address this theme in any form.

The 2009 conference is proposed as a world environmental history convention under the auspices of ICE-HO. Possible locations in Europe were already offered in Austria and Denmark. The idea of such a convention will be presented to the ASEH board in March at the ASEH meeting in Houston. If the organisation of the world environmental history meeting does not succeed, a normal ESEH conference will be held in 2009.

The question was raised what benefit such a large international meeting has. Answer: This provides the opportunity to develop a more global scope for environmental history. It will broaden the network past the boundaries of the developed world.

15. Short statement by Guillermo Castro on the establishment of the Latin American Society for Environmental History (LACEH). The provisional office

take place during the first conference to be held in Spain in 2006. The LACEH expressed the wish to closely cooperate with both ESEH and ASEH.

16. Miscellaneous: Steve Anderson of the Forest History Society invited scholars to attend the joint meeting of the FHS and ASEH in 2006 in St. Paul, Minnesota.
17. The Chair closed the meeting.