

Meeting Minutes

PTPI European Council - Annual Meeting Plovdiv, Bulgaria - 7 September 2019



International
Peace through
Understanding

Place: Tarkart Cultural Centre, Plovdiv, Bulgaria
Date: Saturday, 7 September 2019 – 09h30 to 13h20
Minutes: Chalks Corriette
Attending: 10 Council chapters, 4 visiting chapters, 64 participating members

Council Member Chapters		Visiting Chapters	
1	Brussels	Belgium	
2	Interlaken	Switzerland	Kansas City, MO USA
3	Bern	Switzerland	North Carolina USA
4	Berlin	Germany	New York USA
5	South Jutland	Denmark	Seoul Korea
6	Provadia	Bulgaria	
7	Varna	Bulgaria	
8	Plovdiv	Bulgaria	
9	Klina	Kosovo	
10	Skopje	Macedonia	

1. OPENING

President Kaloyan Stoyanov (Bulgaria) (the Presiding Chair) opened the meeting at 09h49. He welcomed all participants. At this stage, there was some discussion to cover the following areas:

- We need to review the process of sending reports and documents (including the prior year 's meeting minutes and the income/expense spreadsheets) to chapter presidents. They can get lost via the newsletter as people do not always read them. Some chapters would prefer an email direct to the chapter president.
- We would appreciate some additional assistance to get work done for the Region.
- Apologies; we did not place the agenda in the registration pack, this was an oversight on our part.

2. ENUMERATION OF PARTICIPANTS

The Secretary Chalks Corriette (Belgium) captured the participants and confirmed the delegates able to vote: 10 chapters out of Europe's 65 (unofficial number) were present to vote. We use the "Roberts Rules of Order" guidelines thus follow global rules for conducting our meetings. We write our minutes in International English.

3. ALLOCATION OF NATIONAL VOTES

We have two countries with more than one-chapter present: Switzerland and Bulgaria – this does not impact voting. We did not have a quorum of European chapters, as not all chapters were present at the conference. Thus, for the conference, we have 10 chapters able to vote. This forms the quorum for voting on matters in at this council meeting.

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4. DESIGNATION OF A PARLIAMENTARIAN/TRANSLATION SERVICES

Presiding Chair designated Anna Marie Bohsen, Denmark, as parliamentarian to advise and support the Chair during the meeting. Rolf Dahlberg, Sweden, seconded the motion. Ms. Bohsen accepted and assisted with the introductions and meeting process. She then asked Ernst Honegger, Switzerland, to translate what was said at the meeting to non-English speaking Germans attending the meeting.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Secretary provided a few copies of the 2018 minutes from European Conference in Katowice, Poland. This document was placed on our website @ptpi.eu, document library section. The minutes are always available in the library section of our website. We encourage our members to make an effort to review all important documents in the library.

6. REMARKS – MATTER ARISING – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Need to find another way to circulate key documents. Providing links in our emailed newsletter to obtain documents from the EEC, does not work for everyone. We need to have a process so that chapter Presidents know when new and important documents are available. EEC must review this and provide a solution.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There were no unfinished business items to deal with from the 2018 Council Meeting.

Antoneta Pophlebarova, Bulgaria; commented that PTPI members who travel, could make a video for the living library, and also at/for the next conference. This was inspired after the Skopje youth presentation.

8. ELECTIONS

The following people are now part of the 2020 and 2021, EEC (European Executive Committee).

Finance officer – Thea Lauridsen, Denmark (10 votes), none against, none abstained.

Secretary – Wendy Haydon, Germany (10 votes), none against, none abstained.

Youth Coordinator – no nominations, stays open for the moment. We would like to do an online vote in one month. Failing a solution, the EEC shall put in place a temporary cover to carry us through to our next Conference in Skopje.

Communications Officer – Tsvetiana Zaharieva, Bulgaria (7 votes) – Wendy Haydon, Germany (3 votes). During the opening introduction from each candidate, Wendy offered to take on the role of Secretary.

Auditor – Hannelore Buchler, Germany (10 votes), none against, none abstained. This is a legal requirement for our Region that Hannelore retain this role. She is named on the official statutes of Registration as this NGO's financial officer.

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. Report - European Organization by the EEC President. The Presiding Chair provided a short update. Progress has been made by simplifying and correcting data and its presentation in the income and expense spreadsheets. Angel produced a 2018 Annual Report, which can be found in our online library – a reminder will be sent to all members. We make an effort to consistently improve communications and visibility of European-wide activities. We do need the chapters to engage and to keep us informed. Both the EEC and team in WHQ mentioned this as a major wish.

B. Report - Financials from our Treasurer. Thea Lauridsen, Denmark, provided a summary of the 2018 accounts. There was a request to send the files, attached to an email, not just send a link to the library. The EEC has agreed to review this suggestion for future important documents.

- Financial report vote: 8 approved, 1 against, 1 abstained
- We need to provide a 2020 budget to the chapter presidents – EEC will do this before year-end 2019

- Noted that the finances need a wider discussion to ascertain what would, acceptability, look like. There have been many improvements made over the past 4 years. The EEC has this action to follow through.

C. Report - Auditors. We did not provide an auditor's report, there was nothing new to add over and above the discussion in section B. Here is a summary:

- Opening bank balance January 2018 = 1442,49
- Closing bank balance December 2018 = 1663, 22
- 2018 profit = 220,73
- Total income in 2018 = 17,464.81
- Total payments in 2018 = 17,244.08
- 11,982.93 of spending relates to conferences and supported projects/activities
- We received 5,481,88 in funding and other income

D. Report - Public Relations Officer. We have many places that people can choose to engage with us. Website, newsletter, social media (Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and various What's App Groups). We have a unique audience of close to 5000, with an estimated 2000 being members. We shall, together with WHQ, investigate what technology can offer us to improve communication and engagement with our members.

E. Report - Youth Coordination Officer. Angel Dimitrievski, North Macedonia, provided a summary of the year, thanked the financial donors who supported the youth scholarships, and gave a special mention, and awarded a certificate of appreciation to Mike and Mary Hermida. They have been instrumental in supporting youth activities around the PTPI network.

Youth participation has increased by 40 percent since 2016, especially through the scholarship program. 14 students were supported this year to attend this conference out of 20 who applied for funding. Angel mentioned and thanked the donors and explained the process of the open call, and selection process for recipients of scholarships. Angel also mentioned a donation from the Greater Trenton chapter, in memory of Len Tharney for inter-regional scholarships.

Angel also mentioned his visit to the Kosovo chapter to connect and support them. The work of adult advisors was mentioned, these people are very important. In addition, we want to better understand our student alumni to better stay connected in the future, so there is an ongoing goal to create a student alumni database.

Christmas project update. Five chapters raised nearly 20,000 euro for charities in their local communities. Local engagement brings to life our purpose for people who are not well connected to PTPI at a global level.

PTPI Provardia Chapter received the HOPE Award for their humanitarian efforts.

We must better represent the Youth elements of PTPI so that we can apply for funding from the Council of Europe, and other youth-focused donor organizations. Our youth effort is hidden under travel elements that dominates our website and newsletters. We also need to demonstrate that youth are involved at all decision-making levels of our NGO. We must work on key headings from the UN SDGs and we are looking to focus on Peace Education, a project that Angel already has some experience in.

Next, each of the youth chapters that received scholarship funding gave a presentation on their activities. We shall place all presentation material from the conference into our online library. The folder is **Plovdiv 2019**.

Student Presentations:

1. PTPI Skopje, North Macedonia; human rights and the living library
2. PTPI Varna, Bulgaria; quality education, SDG 4
3. PTPI Provardia, Bulgaria; keep key places clean and tidy, celebrate tolerance
4. PTPI Klina, Kosovo; Positive changes in our society, humanitarian postcard and cookies project. UN SDG goal 1 – reduce poverty
5. PTPI Sofia, Bulgaria; Ahuka - a center for children with hearing issues

We were all, once again, impressed with all that our youth are doing. We also saw what could be done with a small budget, and the potential to do much more with a little more budget.

F. Reports from Representatives of National Organizations and Chapters.

We covered the chapter/country uniqueness element during the dinner held on September 5, 2019. Our Chapters provided a short "skit" about where they are from and what we should know about their country. The Swiss were very witty, and the Bulgarians danced for us. There was a wonderful poem from Macedonia and a choir performance from Germany. Everyone participated and it was a fabulous evening.

G. Resolutions/Recommendations.

- We need to ensure that we improve year by year in all aspects of engagement, both with our members and our local communities
- We will provide WHQ with as much support as possible
- We need to explore technology to help improve our efficiency

H. Items Raised by National Organizations and Chapters.

Update from WHQ

Matthew Goddard, USA, indicated that Mary Eisenhower retired as CEO last year and that Merrill Eisenhower Atwater is our current CEO. This gathering provides an opportunity for other members from WHQ to visit the regional teams and meet members from the chapters. WHQ:

- Is working on improved communication, based on feedback from chapters
- Holds regular video conferences with our Regional Chair/President
- Needs us to share our events and activities with WHQ so that they can share these with the rest of the global network
- Is working on revising the member dues process and roster, bearing in mind the EU GDPR regulations (data protection and privacy rules)
- Indicated that chapter grants have been issued to folks dealing with quality of life issues
- Is fully staffed for the moment and the focus has been on getting the operating budget on a sustainable path. Wants to increase staff so it can increase services.

Presentation: 22nd Worldwide Conference in Korea

March 25 to 28, 2020 at the Millennium Seoul Hilton Hotel. Theme: Korean Peninsular: The Way to Peace. Registration fee is USD400. A high-level summary was provided about the current situation in Korea. Handouts and a postcard were made available with details.

Visiting delegates will be able to see the area close to the North Korean border. A tentative at-a-glance day-by-day agenda was presented. It is possible that homestays may be available. There may be either a pre- or post-conference tour planned. It was suggested that each region pay for one student from its region to attend. Questions were asked about a lower registration fee for students due to their budgets; a scholarship fee is in discussion but not yet agreed. We will find more details on the Global website in October.

I. Any Other Business.

Nothing new to add for this section.

SPEAKERS:

10. REMARKS – QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS BY PERMISSION OF THE PRESIDING CHAIR.

- The Presiding Chair provided an updated to the dues situation in Europe and asked everyone to pay their dues by November 1, 2019. We next pay dues in March 2020 (due March 15).
- Antoneta Pophlebarova, Bulgaria, pointed out that, although the Community chapters pay 5 euro per member in dues, the Student Chapters pay just a fixed fee of 50 euro. These chapters take the least amount possible from the students as membership. Some chapters, such as Skopje, do not charge the youth at all. Matt Goddard will validate that this is clear and how it is understood by WHQ and the Board of Directors (BOD).
- Daniel Ruegsegger, Switzerland, thanked the EEC for the changes and improvements since the Armenia Conference. He appreciated the energy and elements that youth have contributed to the regional organization. Emilia Crushcov, Bulgaria, was thanked for all that she did for a well-organized conference.
- Members like the idea of an electronic voting system. We have done this in the past. It allows chapters that are not present to be included in key decisions. There is a sensitivity, however, about how we deal with more complex subjects that may require dialogue.
- Wolfgang Getfert, Germany, asked if we invite local media to our youth events. Angel Dimitrievski, North Macedonia, replied that they have social media pages and invite media to talk to them before big events.
- Thea Lauridsen, Denmark, asked for more information about what is going on in WHQ. Matt Goddard, USA, indicated that WHQ is in a time of transition following staff changes. WHQ is working on improving communications, a chapter manual, and enhancing the chapter grant program. WHQ wants to further deploy the school and classroom program. WHQ would like to have better connections to local chapters as part of the global travel program visits.
- Michael Hermida, USA, indicated that a lot of effort is spent by WHQ on developing expensive adult travel. He would appreciate some visibility of what is being worked on and where the organization is going. The chapters need to be informed regarding the staff names, and their roles and contact information. Matt Goddard, USA, indicated that WHQ is focused on the long-term sustainability of the organization. It is also focused on balancing the books. Wants to build on the legacy of what has been successful in the past. He will provide the names, roles, and contact information for WHQ staff to the European chapters.

11. PLACE AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

There was one volunteer chapter for the 2020 Conference.

- Skopje, North Macedonia
- Early September, in line with our global agreement

Votes: 10 for this motion. none against, none abstained.

12. ADJOURNMENT / CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

EEC President Kaloyan Stoyanov, thanked the Plovdiv Organizing Committee, and all members present for their contribution and participation at the conference. The council meeting was then closed @12h50.

Notes taken at the meeting by:

Chalks Corriette and edited by Wendy Haydon

Cover Secretary, EEC for this meeting

Tarkart Cultural Centre, Plovdiv, Bulgaria **Version 0.5**

