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RAFOS/Sec/18

All RAFOS Members 24 Nov 18

**MINUTES OF THE 53rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY HELD AT ROYAL AIR FORCE HIGH WYCOMBE ON 17 NOV 18**

Present: Gp Capt M J Routledge Chairman

 Gp Capt (Retd) K Cowieson FALO

 Wg Cdr (Retd) W G Francis Newsletter Editor and Social Media

 Representative

 Sqn Ldr J E Lindley Publicity Member

 Lt Cdr (Retd) J K Springett Ringing Co-ordinator

 Mr K W Earnshaw Journal Editor and Web Administrator

 Mrs S F Earnshaw Treasurer

 Mr C P Wearn Production Manager

 Mrs J-A Wearn Membership Secretary

 Mrs J M Knight Secretary

 and 19 members, listed at Annex A

Apologies had been received from 21 members listed at Annex B.

1. **Opening Remarks.** The Chairman welcomed all those present to RAF High Wycombe and thanked members for coming. He thanked the guest speaker, Ms Sacha Dench from WWT, for her fascinating and spellbinding talk, Flight of the Swans, which preceded the AGM and Wg Cdr (Retd) Bill Francis for organizing it.

2. **Chairman’s Report.** The Chairman’s report is at Annex C.

3. **Minutes of the AGM 2017**. The Minutes of the AGM 2017 were accepted as a true record.

Proposed: Mr J C Le Gassick.

Seconded: Sqn Ldr (Retd) M J Blair.

Carried unanimously.

4. **Matters Arising.** There were no matters arising.

5. **Balance of Funds and Future Funding.** The Chairman reported that the Committee had recently been wrestling with the matter of the balance of funds in our account and future funding. In days past we had lots of members, lots of funds and kept a healthy balance of funds. Some years ago it was decided to let the total decline slightly. The Charity Commission recommends retaining a cushion of 2 to 3 years’ expenditure to cater for a complete loss of income. We are not a charity but the Committee recommends following that guidance. Currently our expenditure is approximately £2500 a year and income slightly less than that. The Committee recommended a balance of approximately £6500 but it was the Society’s money and the members’ decision. Gp Capt (Retd) Robin Springett said he had been Chairman in the days of 12% interest which was not available now. He suggested that a balance of £2500 would be sufficient as it was inconceivable that income would stop completely. The Treasurer described some of the uncertainties of future income and expenditure, as listed in her report. Subscription rates were £20 per annum for single membership and £30 for families. Sqn Ldr (Retd) Alex Smith asked if we would be refused access to RAF Stations for future AGMs. We need a RAFOS member to be stationed at the venue as a co-ordinator and go-between and had been refused by RAF Brize Norton in the past due to “operational commitments.” After discussion the proposal put to the meeting was that the balance of funds should be approximately £6500 with the ability to review this in the future.

Proposed: Sqn Ldr J E Lindley.

Seconded: Wg Cdr (Retd) W G Francis.

Carried unanimously.

6. **FALO’s Report.** The FALO’s report is at Annex D.

7. **Treasurer’s Report.** The Treasurer’s report is at Annex E. Following discussion Sqn Ldr (Retd) Mike Hayes suggested that the Committee should have a discretionary float of up to £500 to cover unforeseen expedition expenditure. The expedition grants for 2019 listed in the FALO’s report plus a £500 discretionary float, and the Treasurer’s plan for the next financial year were approved.

Proposed: Sqn Ldr (Retd) R Yates.

Seconded: Gp Capt (Retd) R Springett.

Carried unanimously.

8. **Committee Members Updates.** There were no other verbal reports from the Committee. The report from the Newsletter Editor and Social Media Representative is at Annex F and the Publicity Member at Annex G.

9. **RAFOS Constitution.** The Chairman explained that the current RAFOS Constitution stated at paragraphs 11 and 12 that “The Officers of the Society shall be: President, Vice-Presidents, Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.” and that “The Committee shall be drawn from across the membership of the Society and is to consist of a maximum of 12 Members of whom the Officers of the Society should, when possible, be serving members of the Royal Air Force. If this is not possible, then at least one of the officers *is to be* a serving member.” (Secretary’s italics). At present he is the only Officer of the Society who is a serving member and for only a limited further time, and he is struggling to find someone willing to take on the role of President. He proposed an amendment to the Constitution to make the last sentence of paragraph 12 read “If this is not possible, then at least one of the officers *should be* a serving member.” Gp Capt (Retd) Robin Springett supported the move and said that the Constitution needed to reflect the current situation.

Proposed: Gp Capt (Retd) R Springett.

Seconded: Sqn Ldr J E Lindley.

Carried unanimously.

10. **Election of Officers.**

a. The Committee positions of Chairman, Treasurer, FALO, Ringing Co-ordinator, Web Administrator and Production Manager were due for re-election. The incumbents were prepared to stand again but any counter offers from the floor were invited. In the absence of any other applicants the proposal was to re-elect:

Gp Capt M J Routledge as Chairman.

Proposed: Mr G W Candelin.

Seconded: Gp Capt (Retd) K Cowieson.

Carried unanimously.

Mrs S F Earnshaw as Treasurer.

Proposed: Wg Cdr (Retd) W G Francis.

Seconded: Mr D R Munday.

Carried unanimously.

Gp Capt (Retd) K Cowieson as FALO.

Proposed: Mr C P Wearn.

Seconded: Mr G W Candelin.

Carried unanimously.

Lt Cdr (Retd) J K Springett as Ringing Co-ordinator.

Proposed: Mr J N Wells.

Seconded: Mrs S F Earnshaw.

Carried unanimously.

Mr K Earnshaw as Web Administrator.

Proposed: Lt Cdr (Retd) J K Springett

Seconded: Sqn Ldr (Retd) M I Hayes.

Carried unanimously

Mr C P Wearn as Production Manager.

Proposed: Gp Capt (Retd) K Cowieson.

Seconded: Sqn Ldr (Retd) A M Smith.

Carried unanimously

b. The former Publicity Member had resigned due to an Out Of Area deployment. Sqn Ldr Jayne Lindley had been co-opted onto the Committee in his place but this required ratification. The Chairman invited applicants from the floor but none were forthcoming. The proposal was to elect Sqn Ldr J E Lindley as Publicity Member:

Proposed: Gp Capt (Retd) R Springett.

Seconded: Sqn Ldr (Retd) M J Blair.

Carried unanimously.

c. The post of Journal Editor was due for election. Mr Ken Earnshaw reported that he had received no articles suitable for the Journal for a couple of years. After discussion the meeting agreed that articles of a scientific nature would be published in the newsletter rather than a separate publication and the post of Journal Editor would remain vacant.

11. **Awards.**

a. Best written article – Sqn Ldr J E Lindley for her article on Expedition SIMMER DIM.

1. Art and crafts – not awarded this year.

c. Best UK photograph – Gp Capt M J Routledge for a picture of a Skylark.

d. Best overseas photograph - Sqn Ldr (Retd) R Yates for a picture of a Tawny Frogmouth.

e. Best photograph by a novice – Sqn Ldr J E Lindley for a picture of an Arctic Tern.

f. The Frank Walker Award – not awarded this year.

12. **Venue and Format of Future AGMs.** The Chairman had canvassed opinions from the membership and the general response was that the current venue and date was satisfactory. A different venue would probably only result in the same people who regularly attend having a different journey. As discussed at paragraph 5 we rely on having a RAFOS member at the venue prepared to make all the arrangements and co-ordinate with the different parties. The view of the meeting was that we should continue with the present venue and format unless a better alternative becomes available.

13. **AOB**

a. Sqn Ldr (Retd) Alex Smith recounted a whimsical story on crows’ ability to avoid road traffic, to the amusement of the audience.

b. The Social Media Representative had 2 RAFOS Facebook pages. The Watch the Birdie page was now effectively defunct and so he wished to save the photographs then close that page. The meeting agreed to this.

c. Gp Capt (Retd) Robin Springett said that articles about RAFOS’s past had been printed in the newsletters for the 40th and 50th anniversary of the Society but that there was no definitive history. He proposed that one should be written with, for instance, a record of what we have done, past expeditions and Frank Walker Award winners and that it should be compiled before the next major anniversary. A copy should be logged with the RAF Museum and other copies perhaps offered for sale. Sqn Ldr (Retd) Dick Yates suggested a note in the Minutes and the newsletter asking members for appropriate input to be sent to the Secretary. The Secretary has the list of Frank Walker Award winners and George Candelin said the old website had a list of past expeditions. Ken Earnshaw volunteered to assist with the task. The Chairman thanked Gp Capt (Retd) Robin Springett and agreed that the Committee would pursue the idea.

d. Sqn Ldr (Retd) Mike Hayes proposed a vote of thanks for the work of the Committee over the last year. The applause was taken as a vote for the motion.

11. **Arrangements for the Next AGM.** It was agreed that the next AGM would be held at RAF High Wycombe on 16 Nov 19.

*Jan Knight*

J M Knight

Mrs

Secretary

Annexes:

A. Attendance List.

B. Apologies Received.

C. Chairman’s Report.

D. FALO’s Report.

E. Treasurer’s Report.

F. Newsletter Editor and Social Media Representative’s Report.

G. Publicity Member’s Report.