



WASLI is committed to the development of the sign language interpreting profession worldwide

MINUTES OF WASLI 2007 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Held on 13 July 2007 in Segovia, Spain

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 The session was chaired by Liz Scott Gibson, President of WASLI.

1.2 The President introduced herself and minute taker, Gill Wood, and welcomed delegates to the 2nd WASLI Conference. The President asked the conference for agreement that any comments or questions could be opened up to the floor once FULL members had contributed. Conference agreed.

1.3 Prior to agenda business, the President asked for verification that at least 25% of the voting membership was present – a quorum - to enable the General Meeting to progress.

(For the record, the total membership at the beginning of the General Membership was 15. 25% is 4 so the quorum was 4. There were 13 members present and 1 member who voted by postal vote. A simple majority vote requires 8 votes and a 2/3-majority vote requires 9 votes.

1.4 Clarification of the voting procedures was provided.

2. MESSAGES OF GREETINGS

2.1 The President highlighted messages of greetings received prior to the General Meeting. (See attached)

3. APOLOGIES

3.1 Formal apologies were received from South Korea.

4. APPROVAL OF TELLERS

4.1 The President introduced Tellers and requested approval from the voting membership. Unfortunately, Isabel Rey from Peru was unable to attend.

Betty Wisiki (Malawi)

Elvira Vega Lechermann (Germany)

Lynx (New Zealand)
Liz McLuskey (Scotland)

Conference approved the tellers

5. APPROVE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MINUTES MEETING 2005

5.1 The minutes were approved subject to an amendment to note that HEND AL SHOWAIER had asked that Arabic be formally recognised in WASLI documents.

5.2 There were no matters arising.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 The President requested that items for discussion under AOB should be passed to the WASLI Secretary during the break.

7. WASLI ACTIVITIES 2005 - 2007

7.1 The President presented the WASLI Activities Report 2005 – 2007. The President opened the floor for questions. None received.

8. WASLI FINANCIAL REPORT TO 30 DECEMBER 2006

8.1 The session was chaired by Zane Hema, WASLI Secretary.

8.2 The Secretary spoke to the Financial Report made available and explained the situation to date regarding the appointment of the WASLI Treasurer at South Africa in 2005. Unfortunately the appointee had not been able to carry out their duties and as a result the Board had shared the responsibility of overseeing WASLI finances. The Secretary opened to floor to questions.

8.3 Rosie Addis, Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters, requested clarification to the following:

(i) While it was acknowledged that due to the current value of the USD it might make sense to establish WASLI charitable status in the US - why was there a need to hold accounts also in the UK?

RESPONSE – the Secretary reported that WASLI hold bank accounts and Paypal accounts in both the UK and US to make payments as easy as possible for members.

(ii) Will WASLI accounts be audited?

RESPONSE – the President reported that until the legal seat has been formalised, accounts are unable to be formally audited. When the seat is established, account auditing would comply with the financial regulations of that country

9. APPROVAL OF ACTIVITIES REPORT AND FINANCIAL REPORT

- 9.1 Activities report – 13 approvals
- 9.2 Financial report – 12 approvals, 1 abstention

10. DRAFT BUDGET

10.1 The Secretary presented a 1-yr draft budget 2007/8. (See attached) The President acknowledged that possible changes might take place, eg. an expected increase in expenditure of approximately £4,000 for website development, but stated that it was felt the budget was realistic and achievable. It was hoped that project proposals can be created and put forward to grant bodies. The floor was opened to questions.

10.2 Caron Hawkins, UK – requested clarification of the heading Regional Development and how this budget would be spent?

RESPONSE – the President explained that a priority of WASLI is to share its expertise and therefore it was hoped that income rich countries can support poorer ones.

10.3 Johanna Smerlov, Denmark – asked for an explanation of membership fees as some European countries find the fee expensive.

RESPONSE – the Secretary explained that the Board has recently discussed this point. The regional representative for Europe, Marco Nardi, added that the banding and structure of the fees will be revised. The President reminded delegates the current fees are based on each country's Gross Domestic Product, and that there is a structure for exemption (eg. Countries can request a waiver) should there be problems. Delegates were also reminded that sponsoring opportunities were available.

10.4 Elvira Vega Lechermann, Germany – asked if Germany should join WASLI as a national member as it is currently a member of the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters?

RESPONSE – It was hoped Germany would have the funds to support WASLI by joining as a national member and also continue as a member of 'efsl'.

11. PROPOSALS (See attached)

11.1 The President clarified that only national members could vote and put forward proposals and amendments. The Board also had the right to propose and amend motions.

11.2 PROPOSAL 2007:1
Governing Document – Chapter 3 Membership – Article 4

11.3 DECISION: Accepted (14 approved)

11.4 PROPOSAL 2007:2

There was considerable discussion around Proposal 2007:2 and some concern raised that maintaining continuity might be lost if the full Executive Board was replaced every four years. It was confirmed that Officers could hold office for two consecutive terms (8 years) in the same post and thereafter could be nominated for another post. The Board would continue to co-opt members with expertise as required.

11.5 DECISION: Accepted (12 approved, 2 abstained)

11.6 PROPOSAL 2007:3

WASLI establish a new region to be called the "Balkans Region"

Discussion also took place regarding Proposal 2007:3 about the benefits of this proposed new region and how many countries should constitute a region. It was felt since WASLI works to support and develop sign language interpreting worldwide then it should have no opposition to any request from a group of associated countries to set up a new region if it was felt this would be supportive of the interpreting profession.

11.7 DECISION: Accepted (8 approved, 4 abstained, 2 rejected)

11.8 PROPOSAL 2007:4

Proposal: if Proposal 3 is passed that Selman Hoti is elected as the Regional Representative for the Balkans Region

11.9 DECISION: proposal withdrawn

Following the break, representatives from the Spanish Sign Language Interpreter Federation (FILSE) updated delegates on the opening ceremony of WASLI to take place at 4pm.

12. ELECTIONS

12.1 Philemon Akach, WASLI Vice President chaired this session, and asked each of the nominees for Office to make a personal statement.

12.2 Office of President, Liz Scott Gibson (Scotland), nominated by the Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters.

Liz explained that much had been achieved since her election in 2005 and that she wished to stand for re-election to take WASLI to the next stage. 106 countries now have links with WASLI and she hopes to see many more by the next conference in 2011.

12.3 Office of Secretary, Zane Hema (England), nominated by Association of Sign Language Interpreters (for England Wales & Northern Ireland).

Zane reported that it had been a privilege to work with the President over the past two years since his appointment in South Africa. At that time many countries had limited access to information but this has steadily improved. Zane was asked to clarify the term 'Network of experts' and explained that the

Board would like to ask the national members to identify volunteers with specific expertise to help establish various task groups.

12.4 Office of Treasurer, Daniel Burch (USA) nominated by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf USA

Daniel provided background information on his experience with budgeting and grants and noted his involvement with the Working Group and the Board since Brisbane, in 1999. He also summarized his vision for a regular membership drive, establishment of a trust fund from which interest could fund WASLI operations, and regular special projects fund raisers. He welcomes the opportunity to continue working with the association.

12.5 All Officers were unanimously re-elected/elected.

12.6 Office of Vice President

Newly re-elected President, Liz Scott Gibson, gave thanks to Philemon Akach, who was retiring from the Office of Vice President. Unfortunately no nominations for the post had been received. Although a nomination would be accepted from the floor, provided it met the relevant nomination criteria, Liz asked that delegates allow the Executive Board to appoint to this post. With Officers currently from the UK and USA it was hoped to provide a more representative Board. This was unanimously agreed.

13. WASLI SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME 2007

13.1 Deb Russell provided a feedback report on the success of the programme. Sufficient funds had been raised to allow 22 delegates from around the globe to attend the Conference. Thanks were extended to Daniel Burch, Jack Callon, Robyn Demko, Zane Hema, Brendan Costello and colleagues from FILSE.

There were an additional 49 applicants had requested financial support to attend but unfortunately no funding was available.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

14.1 SPAIN – a request for the budget to also be made available in euros.

14.2 MALAYSIA – although the general meeting is held every 4 years, it was hoped it might be possible to organise a conference every 2 years.

14.3 WASLI BOARD – the joint statement between WASLI and WFD will be signed at a ceremony in the Hotel grounds at 8.30pm. A similar ceremony will follow at the WFD General Assembly. The Secretary requested that delegates sign their name and country on a copy of the statement located to the rear of the auditorium.

15. PRESENTING THE WASLI EXECUTIVE BOARD 2007 - 2011

President – Liz Scott Gibson

Secretary – Zane Hema

Treasurer – Daniel Burch

Regional Representatives:

Asia Region – Emiko Ichikawa, Japan

Australasia & Oceania Region – Georgina Major, New Zealand

Europe Region – Marco Nardi, England

North American Region – Debra Russell, Canada

Transcaucasia & Central Asia Region – Anna Komarova, Russia

Africa, South America and the Balkans are current regions without representation but announcements are expected shortly

16. WASLI 2007 AND BEYOND

Liz spoke of the WASLI objectives over the coming years and told delegates this was an exciting time for the organisation. It is hoped that task groups can be established to move forward specific issues.

The location of the next WASLI conference will depend on where the WFD agrees to hold their Congress in 2011 – options are South Africa or Turkey – but both countries have been approached and would welcome the opportunity to host the WASLI event.

17. The President closed the meeting and gave thanks to all Board members, supporters and those attending. Special thanks were extended to Philemon Akach, Carol Lee Aquiline, Bill Moody, Jemina Napier, Arun Rao, Ito Tadashi, and to Nigel Cleaver, Francois Deysel and Knud Sondegaard who unfortunately could not attend.

18. The meeting closed at 12.30