

Minutes of Committee Meeting Wednesday, 1st March 2023

Present: Dorothy Hughes (Vice Chair), Dave Walton (Treasurer), Janet Hoskyn (Secretary), Steve Hoskyn, Lynda Andrews, April Hammond, Adrian Edgington

1. Apologies

Pauline Horton, Wendy Gardner, Sharon Smith

2. Minutes

The minutes of 1st February were accepted, approved and signed by **DH**.

3. Matters Arising

The matter of Colin Head's resignation in respect of the notice boards at the library and at the monthly meetings was discussed. **LA** had volunteered to take on the responsibility of the notice boards in the library but now felt that it was too much of a task for her in view of the commitments she already has. She suggested that maybe David Rapetti may like to take on this task and would ask him for his thoughts and report back at our next meeting.

With respect to the notice boards for the monthly meetings it was felt in view of finding somewhere to store these being a problem it was decided to find an alternative way to display the necessary documents. **JH** suggested double sided display stands and had sourced these at a cost of approximately £27.00 for six and would confirm this at the next committee meeting.

4. February Monthly Meeting – Feedback

LA & DH stated that they felt the new timetable went well and it was agreed by the rest of the committee that we should adopt this format for the future. It was felt that some group leaders were reluctant to stand up in the meeting to speak and **DH** suggested that she could speak on their behalf. **LA** commented that the mystery object quiz at the end of the meeting was well received and it was decided that we should continue with this. **SH** offered to bring the mystery object for the March meeting and **LA** will provide the prize.

5. March Monthly Meeting

As agreed in item 4 this will take the format of the February meeting, however, as annual subscriptions are due on the 1st April we will be taking payment at the March meeting. Therefore, the doors will open at 1.15pm to facilitate this – see item 10.

AH advised that Jason Middleton would be speaking about the gemstones of the rich and famous.

6. March Monthly Notices

LA will email the Groups News to **JH**.

JH will advise members that membership subscriptions are due and that there will be an opportunity to pay at the March meeting and that doors open at 1.15pm

7. May Monthly Meeting – Coronation of King Charles III

Jim Stebbings will be giving a presentation on the lives of the famous songwriters and **AH** will ask for him to play some appropriate music for this occasion.

Suggestions were made at the January committee meeting for a main prize for the raffle and it was decided that this should be a voucher for an Afternoon Tea for Two. A free drink at the bar should be provided out of funds to toast the new King. This was agreed however, it was decided that we would

not provide food. **DW** will print tickets to be given out as members register on the day so that they can claim their free drink and enter the draw for the main prize. Marion and Paula have agreed to hold a raffle for this occasion.

8. Correspondence

JH advised that she had received a number of emails from Head Office and the East of England regarding various subjects and Zoom meetings and she had attended one regarding Contingency and Succession Planning. **LA** had attended a Zoom meeting regarding Groups and found that we had been negligent in that we did not ask Group Leaders to advise us of any trips they are planning. She will contact all Group Leaders to ensure it is implemented.

It was felt that Head Office and the East of England Regional Support Team are seemingly trying to justify their existence in view of the overwhelming vote against the proposal to raise the capitation fee at last year's AGM.

LA stated that she had attended the funeral of our first chairman, Christine Pringle and asked if we were going ahead to plant two fruit trees at the FACT Community Garden in her memory. It was agreed that we should do this and **DH** will ask **PH** if she can organise purchasing the trees. **DH** will arrange for a plaque to be made saying 'In memory of the First Chairman of March u3a Christine Pringle'.

9. Treasurer's Report

DW stated that the it was the end of our financial year and the accounts balance although two cheques need to be paid in to the bank. The committee thanked him for his diligent accounting. It was decided to add a separate category for postage.

The subject of groups support was raised and **DW** reported that the Science and Technology Group had bought DVD's to the value of £41.96 and asked should these be funded from the accounts. This was put to the vote and was carried unanimously.

He also stated that the Table Tennis Group were struggling to meet the payments for the hire of the hall at Cambridgeshire Skills and that Margaret Barrington had already raised each members contribution from £2.00 to £4.00 to try and cover costs. It was felt that this group needed support. It was noted that if the group did fold we would have difficulty in disposing of the tables.

The same situation applies to the Classic Film Group, again the monies taken from members doesn't meet the costs of the hire of the hall. A discussion was held as to whether an alternative venue could be found and the library was suggested, as they have the necessary equipment apart from a DVD player. **DW** suggested that one could be purchased at a reasonable price if required. **LA** agreed to speak to the library to find out if the third Wednesday afternoon would be available. **SH** agreed to demonstrate how to set up the equipment if the groups leader agreed to move.

DW suggested that we support these two groups by funding them by £50.00 each. This was put to the vote and both points will carried unanimously.

10. Membership Update

SH reported that the membership stood at 278 at present and that he would send out renewal notices before the March monthly meeting. He is formatting a letter on Beacon for those members without email and will need to purchase stamps for these. **DW** has the printing of the new membership cards on hand and will ensure that these are available for the monthly meeting.

DW, WG will take payments at the monthly meeting and **DH** will contact Sandra Smith to ask if she can help. The committee is to meet at 12.45pm to set up the hall. **JH** will help to hand out membership cards once payment has been taken. **SH** will do an extract of those members who may have paid by bank transfer and will ensure lists are available for registration.

11. Groups Update

LA had investigated the possibility of First Aid and Defibrillator training. Eight members had expressed an interest but may not want to pay. She had ascertained that the course would cost £25 per person for up to six and £20 per person for six to twenty. March u3a could not support funding the attendees but would pay for hall hire and refreshments. **LA** will advise those interested of the cost which they would have to pay but we would cover the other costs. **AH** made a valid point that refresher courses were required every three years. **AE** suggested that maybe we could have someone demonstrate a defibrillator and **LA** suggested that it may be possible for a paramedic to demonstrate this and CPR.

AE had suggested a Carers Group and **LA** said she had two members and **SH** had another member who had expressed an interest. Their details were given to **AE** who will contact them. He also needs to speak to **WG** as he needed her input and it was decided to put this on hold until her return. **LA** had received a good response to the suggestion of a Litter Picking Group and that Nick Harvey has agreed to organise it. Fenland District Council would prefer it if we would operate under their scheme (and would provide the necessary equipment but Nick would like to keep our operation separate. **DH** pointed out that protective gloves would be needed. Several members had expressed an interest in the History Group and a meeting will be held at the end of the March monthly meeting to discuss a possible date and venue. The Writing for Pleasure group need to find a new venue as there are too many to meet in the group leader's home. **LA** has suggested various venues including the Braza Club, the room at the Railway station. The Spanish group are looking for members however one person is a beginner and **LA** will email the membership to find out if anyone else would like to learn Spanish with a view to starting a new group.

12. Speaker Update

AH reported that speakers had been booked for all of 2022 and that she will circulate the list to committee member for their information. She will contact Jason Middleton to confirm the March meeting and to find out if he needs any equipment. She will also contact Jim Stebbings regarding the May meeting as in Item 7. He is provisionally booked for our Christmas meeting.

13. Welfare

LA will advise **WG** that Eileen Russell is in hospital and that the husband of Val Bell has died.

14. Any Other Business

LA said that Chris Cummings's funeral is to be held on Monday, 6th March at 2.30 pm at March Crematorium.

AE stated that International Women's Day is being celebrated at the Fenland Festival on Saturday, 11th March from 1pm – 4.30pm at St Peter's Church Hall, Wisbech.

15. Date of Next Committee Meeting – Wednesday, 5th April at 10 am