

FINAL minutes

SUMMARY

Servas International

EXCO Face to Face (F2F) Meeting Burley in Wharfedale, UK

Friday 20 September – Sunday 22 September 2013

Summary: v6

Based on full document version: v3a

Participants: Ann Greenhough (AG); Jonny Saganger (JS); Jaime Romero (JR); Danielle Serres (DS); Arnoud Philippo (AP); Mirek Wasilewski (MW)

Minute Recorder: David Asher (DA) on Friday 20 September 2013; Timothy Phillips (TP) on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 September 2013

Actions are identified in Italics and Underline.

Decisions are identified in Italics.

A summary of action items and decisions is at the end of the minutes

Friday 20 September 2013

Meeting began at 9.30 BST

- 1) Discussion about claiming of expenses for meeting.
- 2) JS identified goals for the meeting
- 3) Agenda (review and agreement)
- 4) Presentation by JS on Servas made for CISV (Children's International Summer Villages):

Realised Servas does not have a 'colour'. Suggests that olive green is generally perceived as the colour of peace. Bob Lutweiler didn't create an organisation just for pacifists. Differentiation of Servas from other hospitality organisations – important to stress we are not-for-profit.

Decision: To defer review of individual EXCO achievements over past year and goals to allow for reading of documents.

Action: Each member to present brief summary – 10 minutes each 7pm tonight.

5) From Group to Dynamic Team:

Presentation by JS about FIRO (Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation) model of moving group of individuals to becoming a team

6) Presentation by JS on how to nurture the 'flower' of Servas:

Agreed that an earlier F2F EXCO meeting would have enabled faster team work

Action: Recommendation that next EXCO have F2F meeting within 6 months of GA

JS asked what would be the most important thing to strengthen the team?

JS described conflict issues in EXCO team: This was followed by a full discussion.

Action: Exco will adopt the rule 'Never express criticism about other members of a team who are not present'.

Action: Exco will look for translation and interpreter solutions where use of English is found to be a barrier.

Meeting stopped for lunch at 13.05 BST

Meeting started 14.05 BST

7) Review of SI Exco Action Chart (v3) previously circulated by JR:

JS gave context for Action Chart

Action: To complete action that every EXCO member, committee and elected officer appoint an assistant between 18 and 30 by December 2013

Action: That all Servas committees produce their annual report by 31 January each year beginning 2014. Committees should submit their reports to JS via email address president@servas.org.

Action: That EXCO members produce their annual report by 31 March each year beginning 2014

Demographic and other data from Servas national groups has already been gathered. Need to identify someone to analyse the data. Deadline mid-2014.

Action: JR will recover and analyse the data as presented in the General Secretary first annual report

Discussion about the Servas Futures Project deferred to later discussion.

Decision: Proxy voting was priority four.

Action: JR to inform SI Exco that proxy voting is allowed for GA elections and the former decisions supporting such procedure. JR supported by Statutes Committee.

Action: To make priority 5 GA decision to prepare Respectful Communications Principles and Anti-Abuse procedures. (DS)

Decision: Further work now on Exco Action Plan be suspended, and that the Plan should be modified throughout rest of the meeting when appropriate.

8) Annual Reports for 2012

JR shared chart previously circulated of results of member country Annual Reports 2012. Summary word document also previously circulated.

JR confirmed that few countries kept to original deadline for production of annual report, but good response after further contact by JR.

JR commented that this work has been very useful for understanding Servas outside EXCO and produced the 2 motions that are being considered in distant vote process for November 2013 about members and scope of Servas International handbook.

9) ServasOnline (SOL)

Brian Heagney joined the meeting as part of the SOL Resource Team, SOLRT

Presentation by JS covering history including 2009 GA decision, SOL Working Group and previous systems. SOL prototype produced by Matthew Pashkovskiy presented at different occasions 2011 and 2012. Current organisation to make SOL a reality.

Work descriptions discussed in detail covering:

SOL project sponsor; SOL steering committee; SOL project manager

The role of SOL resource group, SOLRG discussed

The role of two subgroups inside SOLRG discussed:

- user group
- expert/technical group

Query raised as to whether project objectives are clear as this is not evident from GA minutes. MW confirms information is available on SI EXCO website and on a project platform managed by Matthew Pashkovskiy in Google Drive.

Action: JS will send the links to EXCO members after the f2f meeting where the updated information will be inserted. JS will inform Exco members after due consultation with the SOL project manager Matthew Pashkovskiy, Frederic Morizot and Bernard Andrieu. All three are core members of the ServasOnline Steering Committee, SOLSC.

Confirmed by June 13 2013 that approximately 6000 CWF spent and 43000 CWF collected for the purpose of SOL project. Deadline for completion is 2015, hopefully 2014 with good prototype working in March 2014.

Drafted Request for Proposal (RFP) will be ready for EXCO by end of September. Confirmed that national groups will be invited to contribute best practice examples of web design.

Action: EXCO confirms the top priority is for SOLSC to commission a new website. Second priority is for new search function to be developed. Third priority is functionality for social group interaction.

There was a strong view from EXCO members that the first priority was completed by the end of March 2013.

10) Review of agenda

Meeting ended at 18.15 BST

Saturday 21 September 2013

- 1) Lifeline presentations from 9am to 10am – not minuted

Meeting begins at 10.20 BST

- 2) EXCO individual achievements and goals: each member made a report to the group.

Action: JS to e-mail to TP for inclusion in minutes (possibly as an appendix) SI Exco members individual achievements and goals_Treasurer: MW intends to continue as Treasurer until 2015 but would be pleased if someone else could be found to assist with view to taking over treasurer role. Importance of prompt sending out of SI financial reports stressed but this dependent on necessary information being provided promptly to treasurer.

Host list co-ordinator: Discussion about the role of the HLC and value of the host list reliability test, with reminder of GA decision that test should focus on countries scoring less than 70% in last test.

Action: AP to prepare a plan for how to do the host list reliability test and a timetable for the test, by 31 October 2013.

3) SI Peace Information Material and global network

Presentation by DS

United Nations – including role of Magnus Adams (Servas Germany).

Development of role of Peace Secretaries

Action: DS to present a job description for peace secretaries in Servas countries. Deadline: March 2014.

Action: DS to make sure there are Job descriptions for SI UN observers. Deadline: March 2014.

Discussion about availability and growing use of Servas France peace posters.

Action: DS, JS & JR to check out the Power of Peace Network initiative and the Servas Peace training exercise in Latin America.

Discussion about status of Palestine and position of Servas members who identify themselves as being Palestinian, and others from countries not fully recognised.

Decision: AP to set up new list 'Servas start-up contacts'.

Action: JS will send to AP contact information of prospective contacts in Tunisia, Oman, East Timor, Iran and Palestine.

Action: AG will send to AP contact information for Ethiopia.

Action: AP will by 30 November produce a draft for the project.

4) 1245 MW departs

5) Servas Planning Group (Servas Future Project)

Full discussion lead by AG on proposals arising from 2012 GA for the development of the SPG, including the idea of an informal meeting in Britain summer 2014 to progress ideas and the value of a survey of members.

Decision: After due consideration of motion 5 of the GA 2012 [shown below], we consider that we have covered 1(a) and (b) through additional questions to the annual report and that parts (c) and (d) will be covered through a consultation exercise to the key list via the Servas International Development Bulletin (edited by Ann Greenhough) inviting contributions by all individual members by 30 November 2013. For the future we will look at providing material for national groups to prompt discussions on key topics including what makes Servas special.(Proposed by AG)

a) gather information regarding current common practices from Servas national groups and other non-national groups;
b) gather demographic and other data from Servas national groups and other non-national groups;
c) determine a common understanding of current beliefs regarding Servas' vision, mission, principles, policies and practices; and
d) gather other information that may be useful in establishing a comprehensive understanding of where we are, at present, as an organization.

Action: A consultation exercise will be undertaken to the key list via the Servas International Development Bulletin to address parts (c) and (d) of Motion 5 of the GA 2012, inviting contributions by 30 November 2013.. AG to undertake.

1.30: break for lunch

2.35: meeting resumes

Decisions “parked” since lunch.

Servas Future Project:

Decision: Put Servas Future Project questionnaires “in the fridge” [i.e. “on ice”].

Action: AG will circulate proposals for a Servas Future Project meeting in Britain in June 2014 to EXCO for consideration.

6) Financials

Report given by Treasurer: Some clarifications awaited before 2012 accounts can be closed;
SI asset figures given: 100000 Swiss Francs in liquid assets.

Servas International has of today approximately 100000 Swiss Francs in liquid assets.

SI money in Bank, as of Dec. 31, 2012:

CHF savings account: CHF 180 867.51

CHF current account: CHF 77 270.83

USD current account: USD 34 527.22

EUR current account: EUR 2 841.08

SI money in Bank, as of May 4, 2013:

CHF savings account: CHF 180 867.51

CHF current account: CHF 113 765.64

USD current account: USD 34 514.44

EUR current account: EUR 5 107.02

Positive financial picture, with stamp fee income stable 2010 – 2012, and increasing cash reserves due to less expenditure. International meetings result in increase in LOIs which forecasts did not take into account previously. Income from stamps can't be calculated until at least January. Closing accounts for current year will not be complicated.

Budget 2013 – 2016: MW hopes to organise budget meeting in India in first half of 2014 – ideally for budget committee and SIAC members to attend, to set budget for next GA 2016 - 2019.

No money spent yet on SOL and registering Servas as NGO.

Action: MW to write proposal for a SI IAC meeting in 2014.

4.20pm break

4.35pm re-start

7) Registration

Discussion about the registration status of Servas, considering the advantages / disadvantages and costs of formal registration compared with current informal registration.

Action: David & Tim to get the full name of person, the address, et cetera with whom and where Servas International is registered in Switzerland. To be checked with Mirek)

Servas International formal address and residence address in Switzerland is:

SERVAS INTERNATIONAL
c/o Sonja Landolt
BECKHAMMER 32

8057 ZURICH
SWITZERLAND

Choice is to remain as we are, formal registration in Switzerland costing 20/30000 Swiss Francs per year for the office, seeking registration in another country

Discussion about whether there was a need for legal opinion on whether Servas meeting Swiss law requirements, and the implications of formal registration. Also whether the lawyer giving advice should be Swiss or not.

Agreed that it was better to be proactive in getting legal opinion before we had to.

Action: DS to ask Magnus Adams to find an affordable competent lawyer to advise on the legal status of SI.

Action: If he accepts the task, Magnus should present his plan on how to find a lawyer by the next EXCO meeting, which is on the third Saturday in October.

Action: JS will consult his Swiss NGO contact about possible lawyers to instruct and will pass on any information that he might receive to DS for her to pass on to Magnus, assuming that he agrees to look for a suitable lawyer

8) CoNGO

Discussion about the role of CoNGO (link body to UN) and whether stopping paying the fee would jeopardise role with UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Action: DS will confirm - and get the confirmation documented - that breaking with CoNGO (stop paying the bills to CoNGO) will not put at risk SI's position as an NGO with consultative status within ECOSOC.

9) Magnus Adams' expenses

Decision: Written motion circulated and endorsed by all 6 EXCO members present:

"Magnus Adams is the SI Peace Secretary assistant. He has been in Geneva since August 1st 2013 at his own expenses, where he will stay till end of October.

Thanks to his dedicated work, SI has been able to produce and deliver a written and also an oral statement to the Human Right Council"

Decision: Proposal to reimburse Magnus with 200 Euros.

10) Other items

Review of agenda

Meeting ends at 6.05pm

Sunday 22 September 2013

09.35: Meeting begins

1) Review of and discussion about the agenda

2) Servas Future Project: “Where next for Servas?”

Discussion of reasons for convening a ‘Future Project’, referring to GA 2009 decisions 14 and 17.

Full discussion of wording for a Servas vision and mission statements, with various ideas shared including from 2010 revised SI statutes and SI statement at UNHRC Geneva this year.

Meeting agrees that different members to look at potential wording on different web sites and report back.

Break at 10.55

Re-start at 1130

Feedback of ideas for vision mission statements and further discussion with reference to different Servas national websites. Agreed to work up some draft proposals for later in the day.

3) GA Preparations & Venue

Confirmation that AG has agreed to do GA work on JS’s behalf with his help.

Hungary unable to host GA leaving Columbia and New Zealand.

Summary of feasibility studies provided by both countries given. Discussion about long distance of proposed Columbian venue from Bogota airport. Other venues may be available.

Advice from ED (Poland): not using one flight booking agency; that reasonable costed tickets are booked; venue to be selected well in advance to enable individual funding decision and visas arranged.

Viability of Singapore / Malaysia discussed and discounted.

Decision: That EXCO supports the decision of the last EXCO not to hold the GA in Malaysia - on the basis that some countries would be excluded.”

Decision: As Kiat has offered to hold the GA somewhere in her region (other than Singapore), this should be a reserve position if other offers fail, on the understanding that, in principle, we should not exclude the possibility that someone from one country could organise the GA in another country.

Discussed need to have viable proposals by December 2013 and a decision about the venue by February 2014. Need to decide on funding in next FtF meeting.

Decision: To have more than one FtF meeting before the next GA

13.25: Break for lunch.

14.45: Re-start:

4) Slogan, Core Values, Mission

Meeting breaks into 2 groups to work up proposals

16.20: Meeting resumes:

EXCO joined by David Asher (DA), Brian Heagney (BH), Anne Heagney (AH) and Jean Seymour (JS) who contributed to discussion of options.

Slogan:

Decision: Proposed SI slogan is 'Open doors – building peace and understanding across cultures'.

Core Values:

Decision: Proposed Core Values are 'Trust, Tolerance, Open Mindedness, Respect'.

Mission:

Decision: Proposed Mission is 'Servas promotes trust, tolerance, open-mindedness and respect, so that people can live in peaceful coexistence. Our members value understanding of different cultures, gender equality and diversity in ethnicity, ideology, sexuality and nationality.'

In times of increased movement of people and globalisation, there is a growing need to promote understanding across borders and cultures.

Hospitality and cultural interaction are the essential tools for achieving conditions for people to live in peace // unity // concordance'.

Action: JR, DS and JS will distribute the Slogan, Core Values and Mission for review to 2 people each. AG will send them to Ewa for review.

17.50: Meeting re-convenes after short break

Reminder from JS of need not to confuse “what” (purpose and vision) with “how” (values and mission)

Review of agenda: Postponement of discussion of SI Identity cards to another date proposed. Still important to discuss Area Coordinator SCW Asia; FtF meetings 2 or 3; structure & tools for work process; expenses claims; UK meeting; SI management strategy towards member groups; action chart; information on SI banking relationship and banking agenda for the near future.

4) AC SCW Asia

Discussion about repeated failure of AC for SCWA to communicate with members of EXCO, including regarding recent meeting finances. Confirmed that regional meeting has taken place. Assumption, therefore, that majority of funding was used, although SI owed 200 Swiss francs.

Decision: That the funding issue for the AC for SCWA is closed; that no more money is provided and that no money is expected to be received back.

Decision: We suspend Area Co-ordinator for South Central West Asia until he contacts AG to discuss the issues and the resumption of his duties.

Action: AG to inform AC for SCWA of decision.

5) Face to face meetings

Proposal to have two meetings in 2014, Spring and Fall discussed in the context of any other non-EXCO meetings that are known about, including regional meetings and AGMs.

Suggested that the Spring meeting could be in France

Decision: To meet in the Spring, either on Friday 31 January to Sunday 2 February, or Friday 28 February to Sunday 2 March, or Friday 21 March to Sunday 23 March.

Review of the agenda. Agreed to reconvene after a break before dinner.

19.00: Break for one hour.

20.15: Meeting resumes

6) Structure and Tools for Work Processes

Presentation by JR about the primary and specific activities of SI, support activities, network activities; Servas value chain and Servas value network. Chart presented.

Decision: JR's document on Structure and Tools for Work Processes in Servas is approved. It is agreed that it does not require a vote.

Discussion about Dropbox and problems experienced by some EXCO members in use and advantages of Google Drive which may be a more flexible tool.

Action: Exco to look at the action plan using Google Drive at the next Skype meeting.

Action: within the next 8 days, each member of Exco will send an update on their actions in their name in the action chart. Receiver: Jonny (jonsag@gmail.com)

21.10: Meeting ends.

Summary of Actions and Decisions

Friday 20 September am:

Decision: To defer review of individual EXCO achievements over past year and goals to allow for reading of documents (Done on Saturday 21 September)

Action: Each member to present brief summary – 10 minutes each 7pm tonight (Done on Saturday 21 September)

Action: Recommendation that next EXCO have F2F meeting within 6 months of GA

Action: Exco will adopt the rule 'Never express criticism about other members of the team who are not present'.

Action: Exco will look for translation and interpreter solutions where use of English is found to be a barrier.

Friday 20 September pm:

Action: To complete action that every EXCO member, committee and elected officer appoint an assistant between 18 and 30 by December 2013. Committees should submit their reports to JS via email address: president@servas.org.

Action: That all Servas committees produce their annual report by 31 January each year beginning 2014

Action: That EXCO produce their annual report by 31 March each year beginning 2014

Action: JR will recover and analyse the data as presented in the General Secretary first annual report

Decision: Proxy voting was priority four

Action: JR to inform SI Exco that proxy voting is allowed for GA elections and the former decisions supporting such procedure. JR supported by Statutes Committee. Action: To make priority 5 GA decision to prepare Respectful Communications Principles and Anti-Abuse procedures.

Decision: Further work on EXCO Action Plan be suspended, and that the Plan should be modified throughout the rest of the meeting when appropriate.

Action: JS will send the links to EXCO members after the f2f meeting where the updated information will be inserted. JS will inform Exco members after due consultation with the SOL project manager Matthew Pashkovskiy, Frederic Morizot and Bernard Andrieu. All three are core members of the ServasOnline Steering Committee, SOLSC.

Action: EXCO confirms the top priority is for SOLSC to commission a new website. Second priority is for new search function to be developed. Third priority is functionality for social group interaction.

Saturday 21 September am:

Action: JS to e-mail to TP for inclusion in minutes (possibly as an appendix) SI Exco members individual achievements and goals.

Action: AP to prepare a plan for how to do the host list reliability test and a timetable for the test, by 31 October 2013.

Decision: Proposal to reimburse Magnus Adams with 200 Euros.

Action: DS to present a job description for peace secretaries in Servas countries. Deadline: March 2014.

Action: DS to make sure there are Job Descriptions for SI UN observers. Deadline: March 2014.

Action: DS, JS & JR to check out the Power of Peace Network initiative and the Servas Peace training exercise in Latin America

Decision: AP to set up new list 'Servas start-up contacts'.

Action: JS will send to AP contact information of prospective contacts in Tunisia, Oman, East Timor and Iran

Action: AG will send to AP contact information for Ethiopia.

Action: AP will by 30 November produce a draft for the project.

Action: A consultation exercise will be undertaken to the key list via the Servas International Development Bulletin to address parts (c) and (d) of Motion 5 of the GA 2012, inviting contributions by 30 November 2013.. AG to undertake.

Saturday 22 September pm:

Decision: Put Servas Future Project questionnaires 'in the fridge' (i.e. 'on ice').

Action: AG will circulate proposals for a Servas Future Project meeting in Britain in June 2014 to EXCO for consideration.

Action: MW to write proposal for a SIIAC meeting in 2014

Action: Tim & David to get relevant figures and time/dates for liquid assets, bank savings etc from Mirek.

Servas International has of today approximately 100000 Swiss Francs in liquid assets.

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Decision: That EXCO supports the decision of the last EXCO not to hold the GA in Malaysia - on the basis that some countries would be excluded.”

Decision: As Kiat has offered to hold the GA somewhere in her region (other than Singapore), this should be a reserve position if other offers fail, on the understanding that, in principle, we should not exclude the possibility that someone from one country could organise the GA in another country.

Decision: To have more than one FtF meeting before the next GA.

Sunday 22 September 2013 pm:

Decision: Proposed SI slogan is ‘Open doors – building peace and understanding across cultures’.

Decision: Proposed Core Values are ‘Trust, Tolerance, Open Mindedness, Respect’.

Decision: Proposed Mission is ‘Servas promotes trust, tolerance, open-mindedness and respect, so that people can live in peaceful coexistence. Our members value understanding of different cultures, gender equality and diversity in ethnicity, ideology, sexuality and nationality.

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