

MINUTES OF THE 2021 BCA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD AT ROSE HOUSE – 22ND JULY 2021 – 7.30PM

Present:- Nicki Urquhart (Chairman), Philip Thomas (Vice Chairman), John McNeilly (Hon. Treasurer, Helen Edward, Alison Cowpe, Myszka Guskowka, Tom Barnett, Stevie McGarrity Alderdice, Alistair Sharpe-Neal, Charlotte Sharpe-Neal, Val Mindel, Steven Mindel, Simon Danciger, John Urquhart, Julia Bebington, Mike Hildesley, Raphael Zachary Younger, Milton Catelin, Matthew Purser, Leyla Hutchings

Apologies:- Sandy Robertson, Maral Mesrobian, Anne Johnstone, Edward Henson, Rita Palmer, Adrian Palmer, Emma Robinson, William Mortimer, Paula Mortimer

1. APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE 2020 AGM

The Minutes were approved.

2. CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The Chairman explained that the previous year had been a lean one, owing to the Coronavirus Pandemic. The BCA is grateful to its members and there were sufficient funds to support the Barnes Music Festival, The Children's Literature Festival, and the Barnes Film Festival. Nicki thanked the Trustees and said they had been wonderful during this awkward time. Philip had helped greatly with a consultation issues of the membership, Raphael had been marvellous in dealing with lots of local environmental issues, Helen had instigated changes for a more intuitive membership the database and was reviving the link with Le Pecq, John had converted the accounting systems, Tom had installed the new database, and Matthew a lead member of the steering group analysing the needs of The Barnes Fund, and looking at the fabric of Rose House and the wonderful technology for schools project. Adam Lockwood stepped down because of family commitments. Alison Cowpe and Jo Dallal had both retired in April. Nicki thanked the willing and creative staff who had worked flexibly throughout, currently collaborating with the OSO on a summer festival, culminating with the Food Fair in September. Thanks were also given to Myszka – our Non-Executive Director.

3. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

John explained that there is a reduced negative income overall because events had not taken place. Glynis Potter, the bookkeeper had been made redundant. The current situation is rather hand-to-mouth but this is not unusual for a charity of our size. The tax refund from the government through Gift-Aid was most helpful and the success of the new style Prospect has been a bonus and is appreciated by everyone. The goal of the BCA is to break even. If we can improve on things, then that will give us a wider scope for future projects including the Garden Bridge etc. The BCA is in a fairly stable cash position – sufficient to cover salaries for six months. John concluded that financially ‘we are keeping our head above water’. Staff costs are the highest item. The BCA Language School income is lower than usual because of the pandemic.

4. NICKI – THREE NEW TRUSTEES

Nicki introduced Milton Catelin and welcomed him as a new Trustee. Unfortunately, the other two – Maral Mesrobian and Sakshi Dewan could not attend the AGM. The current officers will continue in their roles.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman asked the audience whether they had any questions.

Alison Cowpe – the previous Hon Secretary – welcomed the new Trustees and thanked the existing ones for their contributions to transforming the BCA into a 21st Century charity. Alison praised Nicki’s Chairmanship during this very difficult time and said she had never wavered nor complained.

Local Flooding

Nicki had received a call from William Mortimer who wrote a discussion paper in May 2015 regarding surviving future flooding in Barnes, following the recent torrential downpour.

Mike Hildesley, the Chairman of Friends of Barnes Common explained that the group is working with the London Wetland Centre and LBRUT regarding local flooding. They have received a grant from DEFRA to pursue their aims. The bid was successful because the project is focussed on community engagement. £6million is to be given over a six-year period. Mike explained that the project would be looking at a host of things including floodwater catchment in Richmond Park – specifically Beverley Brook. Flooding could affect 20,000 homes in total. The Thames Water sewer project had a large part to play in the

success of getting this financial support because Barnes floodwater will not be connected to the sewer. The project will take a long time – the new buzzword is ‘co-creation’.

The Men’s Shed

Steven Mindel expressed his thanks to Michael Buckley (a local architect) who submitted the application for a Men’s Shed at the Wetland Centre. Planning Permission has now been granted and the project has to be completed within three years. A meeting took place with the new manager at WWT who is very keen on the new project. Fundraising is needed to cover the costs: £50K in total – (£30K for the building costs and £20K for management). Mike Hildesley urged Steven to get a multiplier when raising funds at the earliest possible stage. The Lottery Fund and the Wellcome Foundation have been approached and several other areas are being considered. A steering group will be set up. Milton offered to help. The Men’s Shed brochure will be updated. Steven explained that the space would be a refuge for men to do craftwork for local organisations such as BEST and FOBC. James Kyrle Pope is keen to pursue bicycle maintenance. Steven hopes to organise a trip to the Men’s Shed at Fleet.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm