

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WAGNER SOCIETY

Wednesday 17 November 2015 19:00

15 Gibson Square, N1 0RD

ATTENDEES: Andrea Buchanan (Secretary)
Neil King (Treasurer)
Simon Empson
Margaret Murphy
Geoffrey Griffiths

APOLOGIES Richard Miles
Charlie Furness Smith

The meeting opened at 19:00 and was declared quorate, there being over one-third of the total committee membership present.

Item 1: Apologies for absence

These were noted as per the above list.

Item 2: Approval of minutes 21 October

The minutes of 21 October were approved without further comment.

Item 3: Chair's Report

As the Chair was not present, there was no report. Further to the forthcoming retirement from post of the Secretary and the current lack of Events Secretary and Web Content Manager, it was agreed by all those present that a letter from the Chairman should go into Wagner News asking for volunteers to join the Committee, along with a member email with the same message.

Item 4: New Members for Approval

As the website reporting functionality was not performing optimally, this was proving a challenge to ascertain. SE was asked to identify all members who had joined in 2015.

ACTION – SE to identify all members who had joined the WS in 2015 and report this to the committee.

Item 5: Budget Update 2015/16

The Treasurer informed the meeting that the final figures for 2015 would roughly those budgeted. Further gift aid contributions had been claimed in October and these were now more or less up to date.

Costs were lower than in the previous year, especially for administrative items such as postage and stationery. The one item over budgeted had been the website and a budget adjustment to reflect likely costs would be incorporated into the 2016 forecast.

The aim for 2016 would be a modest budget that would aim to make a modest surplus, with an appropriate contingency built in. The sums available in the current account and held in investments were noted. The accounts were basically in sound shape and the Society was progressing slowly towards its pre-2013 healthy state.

Membership income for 2016 would be budgeted to remain the same as for 2015 and there was no budget for any other sources of income at present. Events were budget to continue to bring in the modest surplus that had been the pattern for the past few years. The cost of membership and of Society lecture events would remain the same (£15). There would be a slight increase for the President's Masterclass (to £25) and for the Singing Competition (£30). Parties would be priced at £20. Advertising revenue in Wagner News had been very welcome in 2015 and would be actively sought for 2016.

The Society would be able to meet its basic budget commitments for 2016. It was hoped that some sponsorship could be sought.

The budget was broadly agreed by those present.

Item 6: Website

A discussion was held on the website. A new site was being constructed to address the issues with the current one, which was deemed too complex and did not address the requirements of the Society. However, the committee remained on amicable terms with the company that had created and hosted the current site and a handover of data would be arranged in due course.

Some useful suggestions for functionality and content for the new site were proposed, discussed and agreed.

Item 7: Events

There had been no applications for the post of Events Secretary. The Secretary would try to handle the events that had already been organised, with some assistance from other members of the Committee.

- Christmas party – The Treasurer was organising this event. There were still some spaces available. It was noted that only pre-paid entrance tickets would be accepted for this event.

- The joint societies' dinner – The Committee decided that it would not support subsidising the Berlioz Society in its payment of artists for this event, although the Committee agreed to contribute to the reimbursement of the artist performing Wagner.
- Talk by Professor Derek Hughes – AB and RM would organise this event.
- Tannhäuser Study Day – AB would assist with the organisation for this event.
- AGM – AB would organise this.
- Dame Gwyneth Masterclass – a volunteer organiser from the Committee was yet to be decided.
- Singing Competition 2016 – AB would continue to organise this.

Item 8: Bayreuth tickets and Ballot

The Secretary reported on the additional tickets that would be allocated to the Society via the RWVI this year. The ballot of these and the 6 tickets received from the Friends would be carried out early in 2016, as soon as the tickets were confirmed.

Item 9: Wagner News

The Committee noted the current state of health of the Editor and commended his efforts to produce the December edition of WN.

Item 10: AOB

- The communication from Ken Sunshine was raised and noted. He would be requested to bring this up at the AGM in May.

The meeting ended at 21:00