

Minutes
YMCA Europe Executive Committee meeting
Helsinki, Finland
04.-06. November 2011

Participants:

Peter Posner	President
Ed Eggink	Treasurer
Beate Turck	Assessor
Stephan Cerny	Assessor
Susan Louhema	Assessor
Mieke Barenbrug	Assessor
Karin Hammar	Assessor
Juan Simoes Iglesias	Secretary General (SG)
Michal Szymanczak	Deputy Secretary General
Eva Tschornova	Officer Manager

Devotion

Peter Posner opened the meeting. Beate and Karin took the devotions.

Agenda

1. **Opening remarks and apologies**
Peter Posner gave apologies from Kaare Dag Mangersnes (Vice-President) and Marina Michailidou (Recording secretary) who will not attend the meeting.
As Marina will not be able to attend, Beate agreed to write the minutes.
2. **Adoption of the agenda**
The Agenda was adopted.
3. **Minutes of the Ex Com meetings in Svaty Jur, Slovakia and Den Dolder, the Netherlands**
Decision: Minutes were approved
4. **Matters arising**
New matters were included in agenda (5.7 - Internal Rules, 12.1 - GA 2011 Evaluation, 12.2 - Request from GA 2011 to shorten future GA).
5. **Reports and Decisions**

5.1 European Secretariat

Juan gave report.

He had the chance to observe the work of YE staff, to know better their profiles, he received many invitations, which mostly he could accept, and he could share the reality of YMCAs in Europe. Also he is involved the global YMCA staff team.

After Juan's report the question has been raised regarding the visit of SG at the last meeting of FG Russia. In 2009 in the Ex Com the decision has been taken to continue the work of FG for 3 more years and then to decide again about its existence.

A general discussion about the time of existence of a FG, its composition and the relationship of FG and Ex Com followed, especially knowing that every FG in the YE structure so far also is heavily

related to YE staff capacity (in terms of time and money).

Decision: A general review of FG/PG, as well as programme groups within YE need to be done. This should be a topic on agenda for Ex Com meeting in March 2012.

Juan further shared a first draft of an implementation plan of the new YE strategy. The expectations around Europe are high, but he could also find a strong commitment from all levels for the implementation.

Juan presented three concrete proposals:

1. Appointment of Michal Szymanczak as "senior executive staff" (no longer deputy SG)
2. To include "national general secretaries forum" in YE structure (on own costs) (first forum in September 2012 in Brussels)
3. Consider creating an "advisory board"

Decision: Ex Com is unanimously in favour of the proposed considerations with regard to structural changes as well as with the staff structure.

5.2 Movement Development

Michal reported about various activities according to existing list.

- FG Russia:
the FG decided at it's last meeting that it needed to continue for another 2-3 years in order to support their new camp building programme.
- FG Albania
formally exists, in fact is not working, FG leader (Lisa G.) may resign, no meeting in 2011,
- FG Belarus and Ukraine
want to continue with FG system, situation of YMCA in Belarus continues to be difficult
- FG Kosovo
strong connection to YMCA values, programmes.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina the development is going quite well.

Michal and Adam visited Turkey to start the preparation of the next "catch the vision seminar" that should take place in Istanbul. On the board of that association are Muslims and Christians. The situation in Bulgaria continues to be difficult. The national structure is very weak, there are only three existing local YMCAs, there is no strong link to YE. Also difficult is the work in the partner group. There is an attempt to help through YMCA in Romania.

Juan reported.

- Italy - he had contact with Stefano Tomarelli, there is no further involvement of staff on national level
- Portugal - from local level comes the initiative for a new constitution for a new national movement. It was agreed that this is an internal affair which must be resolved by the local parties and we would assess any proposals in the light of our Constitution.

5.3 Christian Community

Report was presented by Mieke and has been received.

5.4 Programmes - overall coordination

No Report received.

ESY

Report was presented by Karin and has been received.

ETS

Report was presented by Stepan and has been received.

ESG

Oral report was presented by Susan and has been received.

VfE

Report was presented by Beate and has been received.

YES

Report was presented by Stepan and has been received.

5.5 European Representation

Oral report given by Karin and has been received.

A short report of the first “youth politics seminar” on behalf of YE in Berlin in October 2011 was given by Stepan (see Facebook group, with “Berlin declaration”).

Advisory board of Council of Europe

Martina H. informed that Katka Hommel (Slovakia) will replace Kie Cummings in the next meeting of advisory board of council of Europe. This issue has to be considered again in Ex Com (general guidelines how to nominate candidates, what mandate has been given to candidate). YE representative in the advisory board should be involved in new YE platform “youth policy”. Ex Com expects regular reports by its representatives. Representatives should exchange information about meetings prior to discuss with staff/Ex Com to receive a mandate for meetings of advisory board

Other issues:

Eva reported:

Martina H. was involved and took part in a seminar with the “big 6” NGOs (YMCA, YWCA, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Red Cross, International Youth Award). YMCA Europe should continue to undertake constantly activities in the group, as they are quite powerful with in the EU. Eva attended the conference of CEC in Prague (also a new strategy has been created), she would be willing to report from it more detailed.

Beate reported that she attended the 38th Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe meeting in Höchst, Germany for 2 days.

Proposal:

Instead of “European Representation” the new term “European Youth policy” shall be used with in the YE structures.

Decision: unanimously agreed.

5.6 Finances

Ed reported.

Where we are? In March 2011 there was a need to fundraise an amount between 65000-70000 Euro. In the third quarter of this year only a 8000 Euro deficit seem to be left. There are expectations that the budget of 2011 can be balanced. But still it will be the important need to refill our reserves again. The structural deficit in the Field budget might be reduced according to positive signs from different sides.

National contributions. Some countries still are not able to pay fees or debts. Ed and Juan are trying to address all of them to develop solutions. Some countries by themselves changed their fees to higher amounts (Armenia, Poland) which we happily see. National contributions grow every year for 2,5 % (indeed inflation rates are even higher).

The Proposal received from YMCA-YWCA Sweden at the GA 2011 in Den Dolder was discussed:

At the next GA there should be separate decisions taken on budget and national contribution. Peter Posner agreed to discuss this in the next executive committee meetings.

Juan shared some ideas on this issue:

- Approach: what YE is doing with national movements (system of negotiations in a fellowship way)
- Approach: we try to see the realistic situations in countries,
- give it a way to find a formula
- develop a method to design a plan for national contribution, that is logical, reflects national realities
- work on this, in forum of national GS

Peter mentioned that from national GS's point of interest, the understanding of system is important; therefore separate decision could make sense.

Proposal: Should there be a separate voting on membership fees?

Decision: in favour 4, against 3.

This result is quite close, it shows that generally there might be needed more openness about national contributions. The treasurer should include a more detailed part about this in his report for the General Assembly.

Proposal: Shall we ask the GA if they want to vote separately about membership fee?

Decision: all in favour.

Other relevant issues

YE will always have to raise extra income for special programme projects. Therefore various grant applications will have to be written.

Ed proposed to possibly build up a group of "specialists" to assist in writing grant applications for YE. The result of discussion was, at this point not to want to develop this idea further (as it touches the matter of resource mobilisation), but rather having one staff person only dealing with grant applications etc.

YE festival 2013 budget / YE festival company yes or no?

Ed raised concerns how it can be assured to divide strictly the YE festival 2013 budget from the general YE budget when there will be no extra festival company, and the festival budget will just be a section under the YE budget. Juan underlined that the festival budget is a very realistic and modest one

Juan explained some changes in the Czech law and presented three options how to run the next festival in 2013. The recommendation is to do it on behalf of YE. In this case again guarantees from national movements are needed. Risks need to be very clearly defined.

Proposal:

- close the old, still existing OPS
- run the festival 2013 as NGO (YE)
- festival StG has to inform the Ex Com more frequently especially about financial situation

Decision: unanimously decided

New part in constitution proposed -

§ 24 By-Laws

allow Ex Com to give itself the right to define rules, procedures etc.

5.7 Internal Rules

Ed reported.

A meeting took place in February 2011 about necessary adjustments of internal rules of YE.

Participants have been: Ed, Juan, Michal, Martina, Peter.

Martina worked out the details:

- accounting rules
- cross control
- staff expenses protocol
- pension payments
- travel expenses reimbursement

Proposal: The new papers "Internal rules" will be used from December 1, 2011 on by YE staff.

Decision: unanimously decided

6. Resource Mobilization/Impact Assessment

Juan reported.

The main thesis: Generate income through good service. Generate income for special field projects.

Impact Assessment -

Juan raised the question: How visible and relevant YE is for its members? What would be the difference if YE would stop working?

7. YMCA Europe Resource Team - YERT

Juan reported.

Meeting took place in March 2011. The next visit will be to YMCA Slovakia (March 2012). There has been a review of general work of YERT group. Countries possibly interested: Lithuania, Czech Republic (and Switzerland?)

8. YMCA Europe Training Centre

Juan reported.

He attended his first meeting. YE's attempt is to make us (YMCA) as visible as possible in the board. The on-going question will be what is the benefit to the YMCA in general and YE to remain committed to the TC. A new benefit now is that it has been decided that any YMCA can apply for a price reduction. (Inform national movements about price reduction for YMCA groups.)

9. World Alliance of YMCA (WAY) Matters incl. GOP

WAY

Peter reported.

Global Operating Plan (GOP)

Juan reported.

10. YMCA Europe Festival 2013

Juan reported.

A major decision has been taken by the StG: the festival venue will be again at Výstaviště, Prague, the same venue as 2008. The Czech YMCA applied for a special EVS volunteer project at EU agency. 2 EVS interns shall serve as assistants in the festival office, one of them should be a Czech speaking person.

Also the YE VfE group offered a proposal with regard to include more volunteers and interns in the planning period of and during the festival.

Juan also reported that so far there is a very good relation and cooperation between the organisation teams of YE Festival 2013 and Umea Festival 2014.

The following proposals were presented:

- Appointment of Ian Luck, Norway as manager for YE Festival 2013

- Appointment of Pete Bürki, Switzerland as technical consultant under the supervision of festival manager

Decision: unanimously received.

11. Amendments to the Constitution

Peter reported.

YE's legal advisor Jan Nissén made a proposal according to decisions from GA 2011 in Den Dolder.

The proposals are:

1. Changes referring to Auditors;

2. Adjust "Trade Name"

3. Role of Secretary General

Proposal:

The proposed changes in the constitution shall be presented to the delegates of the GA 2012 for voting.

Decision: Unanimously decided.

12. **YMCA Europe General Assemblies 2011, 2012 and 2013**

12.1 Evaluation of GA 2011

Eva reported.

12.2 GA 2012 and 2013

YE GA 2012

The next GA will take place 17-20 May 2012. As the YE TC Litomysl most possibly will not be usable, the GA might take place in the city of Prague region.

The planning committee for the GA was nominated: Eva, Juan, Michael, Peter, Beate. They plan to meet in January 2012 in Prague.

Request from GA 2011 - shortening GA for one day

The issue was discussed.

The GA planning committee will consider this and will present a final proposal to the Ex Com.

YE GA 2013

The GA 2013 will take place 09-12 May 2013. Venue to be decided.

13. **Next Meetings**

08-11 March 2012, Berlin, Germany

The Ex Com meeting starts Thursday (8 March) 17 hrs., ends Sunday (11 March) 17 hrs.

The movement strengthening meeting (FG, PG, Programme Groups, Ex Com) starts Friday (9 March) afternoon, ending Saturday (10 March) 17 hrs.

14. **Any other Business**

Stepan raised the issue of upcoming elections for the Ex Com at the GA 2012.

15. **Closing:**

Peter thanked in particular Juan for his work and already visible contributions to YE so far. He closed the meeting at 6 November 2011, 13 hrs.

Peter Posner
(President)

Beate Turck
(Assessor / Recording Secretary)

