

Minutes of the Steering Committee of the British Liquid Crystal Society

30th March 2015

Sheffield Hallam University, Cantor Building, Room 9137.

Members Present: Ingo Dierking (Chair; ID), Andrew Masters (Vice-Chair; AM), Stephen Cowling (Secretary; SC), Carl Brown (Treasurer; CB), John Goodby (JG), Verena Gortz (VG), Vasily Oganessian (VO), Tim Wilkinson (TW) and Rachel Tuffin (RT).

Absent: Flynn Castles (Communications; FC), Nigel Mottram (NM), Doug Cleaver (DC), Mike Hird (MH) and Simon Wood (SW) all send their apologies.

Actions

- ID to discuss the 2017 German LCS with the society at the AGM
- ID and SC to discuss the awards voting issue with the society and to ask the society to vote on how they would like to proceed.
- CB to investigate cheaper options than the current Gray and Hilsum medals.
- CB/SC/ID to ask the society at the AGM about converting the society bank account to online banking.
- ID to solicit opinions from the society for venues for 2016 BLCS meeting.

Minutes

CB highlighted the difficulties with the current two signatories as a requirement for cheques and payments by the BLCS since there had been difficulties in getting additional signatures added to the account. AM has acted as treasurer for other societies and suggested that the BLCS should look at online banking. This would mean only 1 signature is required. The committee agreed that this proposal was sound and should be presented to the society for discussion at the AGM.

SC requested that the committee discussed the current voting and eligibility for society awards. The current committee is large and represents a big proportion of the society, which leads to large numbers of conflicts of interest and abstaining in voting processes. SC and JG queried if it would be possible to form a smaller grouping (eg, the officers) to discuss the nominations but inform the committee of who had been nominated. VO suggested that the voting was opened to the whole society although the committee had concerns with this approach. AM suggested an external panel from overseas but the committee felt that they are society prizes so voting should be in-house. The following suggestions were put forward for discussion at the AGM: 1) Would the society be happy to see a small committee (Chair, VC and Secretary – plus Treasurer as reserve) making decisions on the awards. 2) Would the society find it acceptable to open up nominations for all members except the awards panel.

CB notified the committee that he had purchased 3 GW Gray and 3 Cyril Hilsum medals. These medals are very expensive and there was discussion over whether we maintained the medals in their current format or if the awards could be converted to something less expensive while still retaining the prestige that they merit. There was also discussion as to whether the calls for these awards are sent out every year or every two years. The committee asked CB to see what alternatives are available before they would make a decision or present anything more to the society members.

AM gave an update on the ECLC conference that he and Helen Gleeson are organizing in Manchester during 8-15th September 2015. The society agreed to underwrite £3000 for this meeting. AM highlighted that budgets were based on 175 delegates although previous meetings had in excess of 200 delegates. Therefore there was minimal risk of society funds.

ID explained that he had attended the German LCS meeting and highlighted the similarities in format to the BLCS meeting. The German LCS had voted unanimously in favour of a joint meeting with the BLCS – suggestion that this meeting is held in UK initially in 2016 and then a return meeting in 2017

(Wurzburg). Suggestions were requested for 2016 venues. Lancaster was suggested as a possible venue in addition to Hull or Leeds. It was decided that ID would solicit opinion from the society at the AGM for possible venues.

SC notified the committee of the nominations that had been received for election onto the committee:

Stephen Cowling (Secretary) – nominated by Peter Raynes and John Goodby

Carl Brown (Treasurer) – nominated by Stephen Cowling and Andrew Masters

Flynn Castles (Communications) – nominated by Tim Wilkinson and Stephen Cowling

Verena Gortz (Member) – nominated by Ingo Dierking and Helen Gleeson

Vasily Oganessian (Member) – nominated by Verena Gortz and John Goodby

Giampaolo D'Allesandro (Member) – nominated by Flynn Castles and Tim Slukin

Stephen Cowling

Secretary

Ingo Dierking

Chair