



MINUTES OF GFW COMMITTEE MEETING - Tuesday, 29th April 2014

Meeting held at 6pm in Room 1/1 of Stow/Kelvin College, Glasgow.

Present: Jim Johnston Roy Kavanagh
Tom Lamb Karen McGavock (administrator)
Sue Moir John Newman (co-chair)
Fenella Rennie Cliff Uney (secretary)

Apologies: Finlay Allison (senior tutor) Virginia Anderson (co-chair)
Craig MacDonald Iain MacLeod
Ann Pidgeon (treasurer) Mike Turner
Jack Westwood

1) Minutes of Previous Meeting - notes of the previous meeting were circulated and approved.

2) Matters Arising from Previous Meeting:

a) **PVG** - the requirements of this are currently being checked out in detail.

b) **Treasurer** - a new treasurer is still to be recruited from the membership and appointed at the AGM. This should be announced at tea breaks and on the website.

3) Senior Tutor's Report (based on emails):

a) **EYG Trip:** A report was circulated showing just how successful the trip was for the 11 GFW juniors who attended the 4-day event. Although the children ran a very successful bake sale (to cover the costs of the 2 adult supervisors) the budget still overran by £17. As well as being a paid tutor at the event, the tutor also put a lot of personal time into organising and supervising the children but has not charged for this so far because the aim was for the trip to break even. However, some members thought that the tutor should be paid a small contribution in recognition of the hard work put in.

b) **Fundraising:** Concerns have been expressed by a tutor about the lack of support from committee members/ volunteers when it came to raising funds for the above event. Although she asked on various occasions for assistance no one came forward to help out. She has suggested that, in future, baking sales/ raffles should be done on a termly basis to build up a fund in advance of specific events taking place. It was agreed that this would be a more proactive approach and that volunteers should be recruited to help out.

c) **Joint Senior Tutor/ Committee Member Meeting:** It was also suggested that reactivating this meeting (as per previous year) would be a good opportunity to share ideas and plan future events. Had this happened a few months ago then perhaps some of the above issues could have been avoided. It would be a good opportunity to have this meeting in August to plan for the new academic year starting in September 2014.

d) **Bearsden Celtic Festival:** GFW can only participate in this event on the basis that it breaks even - including any tutor and admin costs.

4) Administrator's Report:

a) **Class Numbers** - only 229 students have paid so far compared to 376 last term. However, 12 more students paid on Monday night and it is expected that Wednesday night will be similar. This is a significant drop and may affect the viability of some classes.

b) Links - Concern were raised that one of the links on our website is sending out political overtones about the independence referendum - GFW cannot be seen to have any political affiliations.

c) Refunds/ Partial Block Payments - it was agreed that we have to take a stronger line on requests for a refund after a block of classes has started, as tutor fees and admin/ accommodation costs have still to be paid regardless. Only under exceptional circumstances could a refund be considered eg. severe illness. If students have difficulty paying for a block of classes up front then the possibility of a direct debit could be considered. Our policy should be in line with similar organisations such as the Scots Music Group.

d) Insurances - a sum of £564.61p has been paid for Public Liability Insurance. Two smaller invoices from Admiral Insurance (instruments?) have still to be paid.

e) 2014/15 Term Dates - these need to be prepared for issue by the end of the current academic year.

f) Administrator/ Co-ordinator - Karen confirmed that she is under a lot of pressure at the moment and can only work about half of her 15/16 contracted hours. As a result, many of the admin tasks (see list circulated at meeting of 25th Feb.) are not being attended to and of particular concern is the Gift Aid application that is worth around £1800 to GFW. After discussion, it was agreed that Craig should be employed on a temporary basis until such time as the job description is prepared and advertised - Craig has already offered to help out. It was confirmed that the permanent post has to be advertised so that the selection process is seen to be fair and above board - this is a requirement of the Care Inspectorate. Meanwhile, Karen is to liaise with Craig to agree on the admin priorities.

5) Treasurer's Report:

a) Banking - the bank balance currently stands at £25,437. Recent class fees (term 4) have brought in £11,871, which is well down on term 3. Some students have still to pay (despite the harder line being taken on late payment) and Karen will visit each of these students individually in their classrooms.

b) Financial Position - current financial figures suggest that GFW will break even this financial year but a lot will depend on the costs over the final term (see 4a above) and making sure that external events don't run at a loss. Accountant's fees are also a bit on the high side and we need to review this situation.

c) Accounts for 2013/14 - a draft copy of these should be available for the AGM if at all possible.

6) Annual General Meeting:

a) Date & Place: this is to be from 6.30 - 8.00pm on Monday 23rd June 2014 at the Islay Inn. The manager will be contacted to arrange for an area away from the main bar if at all possible. A member advised that the AGM should be advertised on the website at least 21 days beforehand and also announced at the tea breaks.

b) Annual Report: this needs to be prepared in advance and copies made available for members in attendance at the AGM, together with minutes of last year's AGM.

c) Resignations from GFW Board/ Committee: standing orders require the directors to step down at each AGM and then put themselves forward for re-election, or not, as the case may be. The newly elected directors then have to choose the Chair, Treasurer and other office bearers amongst themselves.

Ann Pigeon (treasurer) has already confirmed that she will not be standing for re-election after 3 years on the committee. John Newman (co-chair) also confirmed that he'll not be standing for re-election after 8 years on the committee (5 on the board). Virginia Anderson (co-chair) and Tom Lamb have still to confirm their position. Other committee members who do not intend to stand are Jim Johnston (2 years), Sue Moir (6 years) and Jack Westwood (1 year).

Due to the high number of individuals standing down it was agreed that student members should be encouraged to come forward and join the committee. When the AGM details are announced at tea breaks would be the best opportunity to do this.

7) West End Festival:

a) Summer Ceilidh - the Glasgow University Student's Union has been booked for Friday 20th June 2014 and will include a tutor's band as well as performances by the GFW Juniors, Scratchy Noises and Strumelele. It was pointed out that a costed proposal for this (inc. tutor/ admin costs) has still to be presented to the committee for approval before the event can go ahead. An open-air event at Kelvingrove is also being considered.

8) Future Accommodation:

a) Kelvin College - the Principal, Alan Sherry, has confirmed that the College would like to keep GFW as a tenant and has advised his Vice Principal with responsibility for Estates, Christine Stronach, to contact us. GFW's first priority is to remain in the current building (Stow) if at all possible. If not then Stow West may be a possibility but this is much smaller and parking could be an issue. Springburn College would be a last resort as public transport could be a problem for many of our students. A member added that he knows the Principal of Strathclyde University and will pass on his contact details. Another possibility may be the Gaelic School near Charing Cross or some of the other West End Schools like Hillhead or Cleveden.

9) Any Other Business:

a) Email Policy - a recent flurry of emails appears to be directing criticism at the committee and board with phrases such as 'willing to stand back', 'back pedaling with leadership' and 'lack of direction'. Many of the committee members have full-time jobs and have to care for family (young and old) yet are still prepared to give up much of their free time in support of GFW. Committee Members & Volunteers etc. are respectively reminded, therefore, that all communications should be courteous and free of remarks that may cause offence. In addition, committee members, employees etc. should refrain from engaging in protracted email discussions on matters relating to policy, finance etc. as these have to be discussed at the monthly committee meetings where there is a quorum of members.

b) Late Agenda Items - in an email today a member asked for a number of items to be raised at tonight's meeting. Whilst this is very short notice (items should be put forward for inclusion on the agenda at least a week before the meeting) these points are responded to as follows:

i) Website - A member asked why minutes of monthly committee meetings are not posted on the GFW website under the appropriate section - only minutes of the last AGM are there. This was probably down to a lack of time available and other priorities.

NB - *the Annual Report provides members with a summary of what has happened over the preceding year and this is usually sufficient for most members. If minutes of monthly meetings are posted on the website then they may have to be edited as they often contain names of members who have not paid or those who have made some form of complaint. These individuals would certainly object if their names were to be made public on the website and we have to respect their privacy.*

ii) **Playing Opportunities** - 1 or 2 volunteer members should be allocated the task of seeking out opportunities for students to play music and promote GFW within the Greater Glasgow area. These individuals would liaise with Glasgow Live, Senior Tutors and the Committee to raise awareness of GFW and attract new students.

NB - to a certain extent this point was covered in the 'Marketing Plan' prepared by some students from WSU last year. This task requires considerable resources to undertake but GFW has not had a Development Officer for a number of years now due to lack of finance.

iii) **Senior Tutor/ Committee Meetings** - these should be re-activated to promote better participation and planning of external events.

NB - this has been agreed as per item 3c above.

iv) **Outreach Work** - there should be a budget for this type of activity.

NB - since the loss of grant 18 months ago GFW has been operating at a loss and, as a result, the contingency fund built up over the previous 5 years has been used up. The only income available now is from class fees and this money has to be spent on our core business ie. the weekly workshops which pay for themselves. There is no magic pot of money for external activities and any events out-with the classes have to pay for themselves or they cannot take place. Main areas of loss in the previous financial year were the 'Harvest Fling' (which had to be cancelled), the 'Big Band Day' and the 'Family Ceilidh'.

v) **Feedback** - this should be provided to the students by the committee on a regular basis.

NB - there simply isn't the staff or committee members available to do this other than at the AGM when there is usually a question and answer session after the main discussion. If this were to happen on a weekly/ monthly basis (ie. at the tea breaks) then it would require someone to be specifically allocated to the task like the Administrator/ Co-ordinator when they are appointed (see item 4f above).

vi) **Stage Presentation** - a separate class on performance skills is suggested.

NB - as with all new classes, if a minimum of 7 students are committed to it and there is a tutor prepared to supervise it then there is no reason why it couldn't go ahead.

10) Date of Next Meeting - Tuesday 27th May 2014 at 6pm in Kelvin College, Stow building (room to be confirmed).

11) Distribution - To all in attendance, those with apologies and Senior Tutors.

JN - 5th May 2014