

Minutes of Walled Garden A.G.M. 15th March 2014 at Park Road Methodist Church.

Present:- Sally Hick, Mary Dawson, Chris M'Baye, Bob Hart, Caroline Eaves, Gerry and Tracy Harris, Lesley Bruce, Susan Thomson, Mary Sue Powell, Tony and Tigger Waghorne.

Apologies:- Ros Cran and Hilary O'donnell.

3. The minutes from the 2013 AGM were read. Caroline asked for clarification of the 'nature reserve' status. Bob explained that the garden is within the woods which are a nature reserve. Sue proposed that the minutes be accepted, Chris seconded.

4. Constitution item 7c states that submissions for the AGM should be in by 31st January. Bob proposed that the date be changed to 'the end of February' to encourage more participation. Mary seconded and it was unanimously agreed.

5. Management Committee Report was read by Bob and Susan.

6. Treasurer's report was read by Chris. The balance at present is £2,377.27, having raised £2,302.38 by various means, and spent £1,679.94.

At this point Bob introduced Mary Sue Powell who is a descendant of the Brisco family visiting from America. Mary Sue thanked the committee for the restoration work to her ancestral place and made a cash donation.

Mary proposed the adoption of the accounts and Lesley seconded. Unanimous agreement.

7. Mary proposed that Pat Weaver, the independent examiner of the accounts continue in this post. Sue seconded and all agreed.

8. The officers of the management committee stood down and Mary Dawson was asked to take over for the voting of the new committee.

9. Nominations were as follows:-

Chair – Bob Hart; nominated by Gerry, seconded by Lesley. Unanimously agreed

Secretary – Susan Thomson; nominated by Lesley, seconded by Chris. Unanimously agreed.

Minutes secretary – Sally Hick; nominated by Mary, seconded by Caroline.

Unanimously agreed. Sally said that she would like a reserve minutes secretary for meetings which she may not be able to attend in the future, especially if they are in the evening. However, it was agreed that meetings may be during day as at present, or on Saturday mornings.

Treasurer – Christine M'Baye; nominated by Caroline, seconded by Mary.
Unanimously agreed. Chris said that she was only willing to continue as treasurer for one more year.

Events – Mary Dawson; nominated by Sue, Chris seconded. Unanimously agreed.
Mary said that she also was only prepared to continue in this post for one more year.

Bob then invited up to three more nominations to the committee. Bob nominated Gerry Harris, Tracy seconded . Unanimously agreed.

Sue proposed Tracy Harris, Mary seconded. Unanimously agreed.

10. Business plan. Chris told the meeting that the plan of action called for a subcommittee to raise funds for the repairs to the wall. The subcommittee (Caroline, Mary and Chris) hope to raise the large amount necessary by applying for grants in the coming year, as well as holding other fund raising events, not necessarily in the garden. Mary Sue said that she would make her family in America aware of the work and encourage them to donate. Mary Dawson commented that it will be necessary to focus somewhat on 'heritage' for funding and that Mary Sue's interest had come at just the right time.

Mary Dawson said that dates of all events are on the website.

Tony said that he has contacts who would like to put on a music/arts event in the woods. Mary Dawson suggested that he contact Coastal Currents who are working on a similar event.

11. See item 4

12. It was proposed by Sue that plot fees of £1 per square meter per year be held at that rate for 2015. Lesley seconded and it was unanimously carried.

13. Mary Dawson reported on events:

13th April an Easter event is planned.

8th June is open day. Thanks was expressed to Lesley for all her work on refreshments.

Ben Fairlight the herbalist and Lesley are hoping to host an event around plants during May, where plants may be sold.

14th September is Heritage Day will be a good opportunity to promote the garden as heritage. Any input from Mary Sue would be useful. Mary Sue responded by saying that she intended to promote our work in her family and encourage them to donate. Bob has already done a lot of research which is on the website, but there is more which he is working on verifying before publication. He is currently researching Summerfields School.

September the Coastal Currents hope to hold an arts and crafts event.

October is the month for Hastings Week when a Pumpkin day event is being repeated in the garden. Pumpkin seeds will soon be germinating in anticipation.

Members are informed of all these events by email. Bob commented that 80% of Sussex is on email and 40% use more sophisticated means of communication. When sending large files with documents and pictures, as do some other groups, he wondered if members would like the use of URL or links to a website for an enhanced experience. Mary Dawson suggested that he use both.

13. There were no other motions submitted.

Tony asked if a combination lock might be used on the tool shed so that members could use them at any time. Sue pointed out the problems of tools being easily accessed: damage to expensive equipment and the chance of the shed being left unlocked. The possibility of a plastic container for some useful gardening tools, available at all times, will be put on the agenda at the next committee meeting.

The AGM ended at 11.30 a.m.

Date of next committee meeting – 1st May at Sedlescombe Gardens at 12.30

Date of next fund raising committee meeting – 24th March at Alma Terrace at 7 p.m.