



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

**Lisbon Marriott Hotel
Lisbon, Portugal**

14 January 2010

Present: Robert Watson, Virginia Casale, Emmanuel Vrettos, Colin Toomey, Michael Romei, Jean-Roland Boutillé, Shujaat Khan, Roderick Levéjac, and Roger Bastoni

President's Welcome & Report

President Robert Watson welcomed the Executive Committee to Lisbon. His recent travels included a visit to France, where he attended an 80th anniversary event.

If there is time, the Executive Committee may show an historical film clip during the General Assembly. The clip was warmly received when it was shown at France's anniversary event.

General Secretary's Report

General Secretary Michael Romei received 31 responses to the questionnaires that were sent out in advance of the Congress. Together with First Vice President Virginia Casale, Secretary Romei printed a comprehensive booklet that includes agendas for all the meetings, zone reports, and a wealth of other information that will be distributed to all attendees. A copy of this Congress Booklet will be sent to our Paris office to be included in our historical archives.

Thank-you notes have been sent to all the many sponsors who helped make the Las Vegas Executive Committee meeting such a success.

The Winter edition of the International Review entitled “Joyeux Noel” Revue is now complete and in the process of being distributed. General Secretary Romei explained the challenges in publishing this particular Revue due to the unexpected illness of our main publisher. However our Publisher’s Assistant was asked to step in to complete the project. Secretary Romei commented that he particularly wanted to feature the historic village of Vissoie on the cover and had a particular idea of how this should look. He was very pleased at the outcome and the fact that the cover was exactly the way he had envisioned and explained to the Publisher.

General Secretary Romei is in receipt of Poland’s application, including remarks from Denmark’s site visit. The Poland paperwork was given to Second Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos for review.

A lecture of correspondence was received from President Catalin Malureanu (Romania) and President Yasmin Flores (Mexico). Secretary Romei related the sad news that Mexico has had to withdraw their offer to host an international meeting.

General Secretary Romei mentioned the existence of the LCD Facebook Page and gave an update of membership useage, etc.

Website Report

The Executive Committee brainstormed improvements on the website, including:

- Photos of Executive Committee members
- Expansion of partner links. (There was some discussion regarding how to ensure that partners granted links on the website are all partners with Les Clefs d’Or and not with Jet Media.) French President Roderick Levéjac asked for names and contact info of all sponsors the Executive Committee wants on the website, so he may contact them and set up the pages to their satisfaction.
- A brief history of the Andy Pongco Award that includes photos and brief bios of each of the winners.
- Congress guidelines
- If possible, an organizational chart (perhaps as a .pdf file) showing who reports to whom in the Clefs d’Or hierarchy.

General Secretary Michael Romei was given the password code so he can update the website directly.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Jean-Roland Boutillé has now prepared the full year-end report that will be reprinted and distributed to all members. The bank balance stands at approximately 100,000 Euro. The Executive Committee is pleased that there are now adequate reserves to run the association effectively.

Sadly, interest rates at present are terribly low, only 1.5 percent.

The over-billing situation with Fedex has now been resolved, and there is a credit of 3500 Euro that will be used to ship the Winter editions of the Review.

After brief debate, the Executive Committee agreed to keep the Review in print rather than convert it to an e-format.

The 2010 budget includes a 15000 Euro line item for Executive Committee expenses. This is more than adequate, considering that in 2009, only half of that amount was spent to reimburse officers for expenses incurred. There is an official form for Executive Committee members to submit receipts to Treasurer Boutillé. General Secretary Romei will email that form to all Executive Committee members.

2011-2012 Book of Members

Assistant General Secretary Shujaat Khan is pleased to report that every country submitted all the required information in a timely fashion. Now he is able to start compiling the Book at the conclusion of this meeting. To save on shipping, the Books will be delivered in bulk to Muffin Spielman's home, and she will ship them to each nation. The remainder of the Books will go to Paris for warehousing. The next Book will be alpha instead of by Zone. The statutes will be eliminated from the Book and will now appear on the website. The extra page showing each nation's flag and map will also be eliminated. Flags and the globe will appear inside the covers instead. Sections will have a chance to forward changes before the Book goes to press and a final reminder for any changes will be sent via email to all Presidents. The target date for the Book's publication is late April/early May.

Treasurer Boutillé and Assistant General Secretary Shujaat Khan continue to compare numbers reported for the Book and for membership subscription fees for 2010.

It is unclear whether the book will be full color or single color. Mr. Khan will investigate and revert.

Quotes from Fedex USA and from the French Fedex account will be compared, and the books will then be shipped by whichever section offers better rates.

Statutes and BOD Proposals

Past President Roger Bastoni was asked in Las Vegas to review the statutes. He has done so, and the Executive Committee will now spend the next year reviewing and rewriting the statutes so they are in line with current practices. A formal proposal for all changes will be sent to Presidents before the Toronto Congress, and the changes can be voted upon at that meeting. If a President has a suggestion for a change, it should be filtered through Zone Presidents and then on to the Executive Committee for consideration. This will ensure a most democratic process.

In considering the statutes, the conversation veered toward perhaps making more substantive changes to the statutes. France, for example, had suggested that the executive mandate be increased from 2 to 3 years; that there be a requirement for one representative from each section to be present at every congress, to require new sections to undergo a probationary period, and to provide larger sections with more votes.

Much discussion ensued over this last point. There are benefits/drawbacks of changing the voting system from a “one vote=one country” system to a system weighted by membership numbers. The Executive Committee agreed that a one-vote system works well for elections, but perhaps a second type of system may be more beneficial for Board decisions (such as statutory changes, for example). At issue is how best to provide equality and solidarity in a democratic fashion.

As Les Clefs d’Or looks to the future and accepts new nations, it is important to promote the concierge culture. Mr. Levéjac is concerned that for many developing countries, the concierge position is not considered a career, but rather, a stepping stone. Without a weighted voting system in place, the long-term value of UICH can easily become diluted.

The Executive Committee discussed giving more time to country proposals in order that they be given adequate consideration. When the proposals come at the end of a meeting, they are often tabled due to time constraints and fatigue.

Second Vice President Emmanuel Vrettos suggested hosting a workshop format at a Board of Directors meeting, where presidents can sit and talk about these issues at greater length. What kind of an association does Les Clefs d’Or want to be?

Andy Pongco Award

There are 12 candidates for this year’s award. There is now a standardized form that countries must use in order to submit formal candidacies. It includes a list of the qualifications that candidates must possess.

This year, a point system has been put in place to help the judges determine a winner. Points are given for the exam and the essay as well as for the interview and presentation of each candidate.

The Executive Committee hopes that every country will submit candidates as the award becomes a more entrenched tradition. It is nice that there are 12 candidates this year. It would be better if there were 30.

The judges for this year's award are Tamas Ungar, Colin Toomey, Carolina Avaria and Shujaat Khan (in place of Marjorie Silverman who could not attend).

The Executive Committee discussed how judges should be appointed in the future, and everyone agreed that an Asian representative should be in place for all future awards.

The sponsor for this year's award is Concierge Assistant/Gold Key Solutions.

Lucien Barriere has offered to sponsor the 2011 Andy Pongco Award. The Executive Committee likes the notion of hotel groups sponsoring the award. By keeping the award in the hotel family, it offers publicity aspects that Les Clefs d'Or and the hotel chains can use to their advantage. It also creates good relationships between Les Clefs d'Or and the hotel groups themselves.

Pongco award winners will be invited to sit in and observe the Board of Directors meeting.

Sponsors and Partners

Past President Roger Bastoni suggested that President Robert Watson write letters to Lufthansa and to Elite, inviting them to renew their sponsorship for 2010.

First Vice President Virginia Casale was successful with two new sponsorship leads: Outlet Shopping Villages (based in Belgium) has taken a half-page ad in the Review. Newspaper Direct is debating between a half or full-page ad. Newspaper Direct is also on board as a sponsor for the 2011 Toronto Congress.

The Executive Committee will stress to the Board of Directors that sponsorship development needs to be a priority and is everyone's responsibility.

At the Board of Directors meeting, First Vice President Casale will distribute a generic document that outlines how Presidents can ask for sponsorship dollars to help offset their zone meetings.

New Section Proposals

A review of Dubai's application has now been completed. A copy of their official statutes in English and in Arabic have now been received. Greece and the Philippines are Dubai's sponsor nations and will motion for them to be accepted as the 41st member nation at the Board of Director's meeting.

The Executive Committee was unsure which zone to put the UAE into – the Asian or the Mediterranean.

The Indian delegation entered the meeting room and gave gifts to the Executive Committee. They will be making a presentation of their application at the Board of Directors meeting.

Poland will also present their application at the Board of Directors meeting. They are supported by Denmark and Hungary.

A site visit to Poland and India by one or more Executive Committee members will need to occur some time over the coming year. Then, in Toronto, the Board of Directors can vote to accept India and Poland as official sections.

Lisbon Congress

The Executive Committee reviewed the agenda for this Congress. President Watson asked First Vice President Virginia Casale to ensure that proper protocol is observed as regards the sponsors and VIPs, who must feel adequately welcomed and acknowledged.

Instead of displaying host country gifts at the gala night, Presidents will be asked to bring their gifts to the Sunday, January 17 dinner – which is at the Marriott, in the same hotel where delegates are housed.

The Executive Committee talked about how to conduct the Tiger Raffle most fairly. Issues included:

- Pre-selling seems more heavily weighted in the USA, which may be perceived as unfair
- Should winners be pre-drawn to save time or not?
- The determination of the five “best” prizes is determined by dollar value, not by quality of hotel offering the package
- There should be a clear deadline for ticket sales
- A list of prizes and who their donors are should be printed and distributed as soon as possible, though it is difficult to accomplish this due to so many last-minute donations

Raffle sales will cut off on Sunday, January 17 at 5:30. All but 5 of the prizes will be awarded at that evening’s dinner. The final five will be drawn at the gala.

The Tiger Raffle is a great way to offset congress costs for a host country, and, since its inception, the Tiger Raffle has raised \$125,000. It is an impressive success.

Other Business

The Executive Committee must resolve the issue of sections that were placed under observation last year. Romania, Morocco, and Russia have all been returned to good standing already. The Philippines and Spain remain under observation. Much debate ensued over how to handle inactive sections in an equitable and efficacious manner.

Several countries are still not in compliance with paperwork requirements and/or trademark protection.

Past President Roger Bastoni wishes to remind the Board of Directors of the importance of archiving materials for historical purposes. Materials from each congress should be retained at Paris headquarters so that Les Clefs d'Or retains a sense of its history as it progresses forward.

Protection of the international logo is not permanent. Though it is not due to expire for perhaps another 6 or 7 years, it is something that the Executive Committee must remember to put into a tickler file so the protection is not allowed to lapse.

Mr. Denis O'Brien has been putting together a new Ethics Committee, which he will present at the Board of Directors meeting.

The Executive Committee reviewed the questions and proposals submitted by various member sections. The Committee was not in favor of creating an international card because of the logistical nightmares of tracking and maintaining such a large database.

Mr. Aldo Giacomello will ask Bucherer to look into redesigning the lapel keys for thinner fabrics.

It is the right of Presidents to have and display an international flag at their national meetings. Presidents wishing to order a flag may do so through the Paris office, and orders will be fulfilled au gratis.

Past President Roger Bastoni mentioned that a suggestion box at the General Assembly might be an excellent way for members to express themselves in a less intimidating fashion. Additionally, there often is not enough time for all member comments to be heard, and a suggestion box would solve that dilemma.

President and Zone Director Tamas Ungar presented the new UICH official flag, which was loudly applauded by the Executive Committee. The new flag shows the flags of the nine founding countries surrounding the international logo. The remaining flags are in date order based on what year a nation was accepted. There is room to add flags as new sections continue to join the Clefs d'Or family.

President Ungar explained that he had the old flag restored and cleaned as best as he could. The old flag will be carried to rue Cambon and displayed there permanently.

President Watson asked President Ungar to order hand-sized versions of the new flag, which he would like to present at the Board of Directors in Toronto.

Mr. Aldo Giacomello reported that Founding President John Sun Dong has chosen not to attend the Lisbon Congress in order to provide opportunities for the new faces of Les Clefs d'Or China. Mr. Giacomello encouraged the Board of Directors to warmly welcome the Chinese concierges who are at the meeting. China is a rapidly developing nation, and Mr. Sun Dong has recently put into place rigorous exam requirements that international members must fulfill. To help China continue to mature as a Clefs d'Or section, Mr. Giacomello explained how important it is for the Executive Committee to travel to China from time to time to share their wisdom. The Executive Committee must be China's guide.

The meeting concluded.