

**Minutes of the Old Wymondhamians Committee Meeting
Held on Saturday 11th September 2010 in the Conference Room**

Present Mike Herring, Roger Garrard, Jack Smith, Michael Brand, Steve Read, David Spinks, Carole Arnold, Caroline Hall, Jackie Glenn, Melvyn Roffe, Julie Harding, David Jackson.

1. **Apologies:** Asha Simmons, Iain Trafford, Bob Rowell, Jack Donaldson (6th Form OW Rep), Phil Robinson.
2. **Minutes of the Meeting held Saturday 15 May 2010.**
The minutes were signed as a true record.
3. **Matters Arising and Actions**
Mike Herring reported that Bob Rowell is still pursuing the contact with Peter Rogers.
4. **Treasurer's Report**
The Treasurer had provided a financial report (on the minute book) for the period to 31st August 2010.

He reported that there had been income of £2,020 from the 100 Club and £373 from donations.

The net movement of funds for the period was £1,353.61 and the balance in the account is £6,741.83

There are no planned expenses for the immediate future.

Jack Smith asked if the sum agreed at the last meeting for the travel bursary had been included. The Partnership Development Officer reported that this bursary would be paid for the first time in the summer of 2011 with the advertising taking place during the coming weeks.

ACTION: Partnership Development Officer

5. **WCR Report**
Julie Harding reported that a start had been made in revamping the site and she was now able to include photographs. She welcomed suggestions for improvements.

Julie was asked if professional help had been sought to get costs for updating the site. She reported that a 'brief' would be required before a quote could be obtained.

Julie had spoken to the contact that had previously helped with the technical issues on the site, their advice had been that an annual support agreement was not necessary and she could ask for assistance as and when required.

Jack Smith asked if Julie had been reimbursed for costs incurred as agreed at the last meeting and she confirmed that she had.

David Spinks commented that the site needs to be more attractive to users in order to work as a marketing tool for the association.

The WCR committee (Carole Arnold, Asha Simmons and David Spinks) would provide Julie with a specification for changes required to the front page.

ACTION: WCR Committee

Julie confirmed that Phil Robinson was re-writing the article about the 100 Club in order to try to attract more members. Jackie Glenn confirmed that the new database could also be used to email former students and staff to try to encourage them to join.

6. Heritage Report

The Partnership Development Officer reported that the Heritage Lottery Fund application had unfortunately not been successful but the bid would be resubmitted when she had spoken to the case worker dealing with it.

In the meantime the project needs to move forward particularly with the production of the Heritage Trail and the College History. The costs for these two items would be in the region of £20,000. The College had agreed to underwrite these two projects in the short term and it was envisaged that the History would produce some revenue.

The Partnership Development Officer showed examples of the design for the pages of the history book which were well received.

The Principal asked if the committee would consider a donation in the region of £1,500 in order to help with the costs of the Heritage Trail.

A donation in the sum of £3,000 was proposed (D Jackson) and seconded (J Smith) and agreed unanimously. The Principal thanked the committee members for their generosity.

Jack Smith asked what the timescale would be for the re-submission of the Heritage Lottery Bid. The Partnership Development Officer reported that she hoped it would be no more than 3 months.

The Partnership Development Officer and David Jackson reported that plans for the Diamond Ball were well in hand and that the cost of tickets would be £50. They were asked if there were any plans if the event was oversubscribed. The Partnership Development Officer replied that the numbers would be limited to 400 so it would be 'first come first served' but there were a number of other events planned throughout the 18 month period so hopefully everyone hoping to celebrate the anniversary would be able to do so.

It was asked if 'no speeches' could be advertised as a selling point for the Ball!

The Partnership Development Officer also showed the committee the brochure that had been produced to illustrate the events planned for the anniversary and informed them that it would be mailed out along with a form which would try to capture more information about former students including a request to record their 100 words of memories about the College.

Geoffrey Hardaker has made good progress in reorganising and evaluating the material currently stored in the Alumni Office. Due to ill health both of Geoffrey

and his wife he has been unable to continue with the project. The Secretary agreed to write to Mr Hardaker to ask if he had any objections to other members of the Heritage committee continuing with the project. Michael Brand and Roger Garrard volunteered to continue with the project.

Action - Secretary

7. College Matters

The Principal reported that the College could report a good year for examination results, although not its best. There had, however, been a number of excellent individual results.

The work on the new International Centre on the site next to the water tower is in progress and ahead of schedule. The cost of the project has been revised down to £1.2million. The project will provide classrooms for modern foreign language teaching as well as a high Tec ICT suite. The centre will also host the Secretariat for the Model European Parliament for the UK. This building would be the first phase of the Estate Master Plan which will also encompass a Traffic Management Scheme designed to make the site safer.

The Principal reported that the Thetford Academy, of which the College is lead sponsor, is now in existence. The Principal is Chair of Governors and Mr Peter Rout (Chair of Wymondham College Governors) is also a Governor of the Academy. There have been a few teething problems but the spirit of staff and students is good. The Principal noted that he had been more aware of the existing link between the students of Thetford and the College. The Principal reported that the amount of capital funding for the College as a result of the sponsorship of the Academy was not yet clear and would be part of the spending review.

The Principal reported that an Extraordinary General Meeting of Wymondham College Governors will be held on Thursday 16th September to discuss the College bid to become an Academy. The Principal will propose that the College should apply for academy status with effect as soon as possible.

The change of status would add £400K to the revenue of the College for the maintenance of the school for the first two years although there would be no guarantee of this for subsequent years.

The role of the Governors would change with them becoming directors of a company which will hold the freehold of the land and buildings in trust. The Secretary of State would limit the disposal of the site but it may be used as collateral for a loan which would enable the College to undertake capital projects which currently are not possible. The directors would then be charged with providing services for the school from this government funding.

The initial contract with the Government for the maintenance of the school by this new company would be for seven years.

The benefit of the change in status happening as soon as possible would be that the staff restructure and the curriculum review planned for the coming months could then be carried out on this basis.

The Principal reported that one issue which has arisen is that VAT could not be reclaimed from the Local Authority in the normal way, however this would be returned to the College by means of a grant. The Local Authorities had also agreed to sign indemnities for financial and pension purposes.

The admissions process would not change should the College become an academy and it would still have to follow the statutory admissions code of the Local Authority. The College would still charge for boarding as at present.

Mr Brand asked if the school would still be eligible for membership of the SBSA. Mr Roffe replied that it would.

The Principal also reported that Lady Knollys had agreed to be patron of the 60th Anniversary Celebrations and would be seeking sponsorship for the core events of the celebrations.

8. Election of President and Vice Presidents

The Principal reported that Norman Lamb MP had agreed to become president of the Old Wymondhamians with the proviso that it would not impact upon his parliamentary duties. It was hoped, however, that he might be able to attend one or two events during the year.

Norman Lamb was proposed as President (Julie Harding), seconded (Michael Brand) and agreed unanimously by the committee.

The Chairman asked if the Secretary would write to Mrs Patricia Howard, who had kindly stayed on as President until a replacement could be found, to appraise her of the situation and convey the hopes of the committee that she would remain as a committee member.

ACTION: Secretary

The committee discussed the election of Vice Presidents. David Spinks was proposed as a Vice President (Jack Smith) seconded (Roger Garrard) and agreed unanimously by the committee.

The Secretary reported that she had written to two former students who had expressed an interest in joining the committee and might possibly fulfil this role, she had yet to receive a reply. The committee agreed to wait to elect a second Vice President until replies had been received.

9. Any Other Business

The Chairman reported that a small but good reunion had been held in Boston, USA in the summer and the evening had incurred no costs. At least one of the attendees had expressed an interest in attending the anniversary events in 2011.

The Chairman reported that John Beales has had a major operation but is making excellent progress. The members of the committee asked the Chairman to convey their best wishes to John.

The Chairman reported that Bob Rowell would like to fix a date for his Golf Day in 2011. Ideally this would be linked to another event at the College. The committee agreed that a reunion should be held at the College on 2nd July with a similar BBQ format to that of 2009. The Principal suggested that the piazza outside the Enid

Ralphs Building would be a good location and this was agreed. It was noted that a 'twilight' programme of events for the time between the end of the Summer Fayre and the start of the BBQ Reunion would be necessary.

It was suggested that advertising a 'Reunion Weekend' to include the BBQ and the Golf Day would be mutually beneficial to both events.

It was noted that a representative should attend the Governors AGM on 8th October , the Secretary would remind the Bursar's secretary.

ACTION: Secretary

10. Date of Next Meeting

Saturday 5th February 2011, 12 noon. In the conference room.

There being no other business the meeting ended at 1.40pm