

BKA National Committee AGM

Date: Saturday 22 May 2010

Time: 3.30 - 5.30pm

Venue: Caroline Chisholm School, Wooldale Centre for Learning, Wooldale Road, Wootton Fields, Northampton, NN4 6TP

Present

NC members:

Errol Blake (NC Chair), Hilary Hadley (NC Vice Chair), Debbie Bevan (NC Secretary), Jock Hopson (Director International Affairs), Malcolm Smalley (Membership Secretary), Chris Mansfield (Iaido DRC) Lesley Drewe (Jodo DRC), Gary O'Donnell (Kendo DRC)

A total of 97 BKA members were present (quorum 64).

MINUTES

The Chair (Errol Blake, EB) declared that a quorum of members had been achieved and opened the meeting. EB thanked the local dojo, Jinmukan, for their help in organising the venue.

Agenda item 1

Apologies for absence

Received from Gavin Thripland, Paul Esslinger, Victor Harris, Malcolm Goodwin, Anna Stone, Gill Wacey and Keith Holmes.

Agenda item 2

Complaints, suspensions, expulsions

The NC Secretary (Debbie Bevan, DB) explained that for the year 2009, 3 complaints had been received from 3 different Kendo Bu members against Kendo BuEC officers. The Jodo Bu Complaints Committee had investigated the complaints. Owing to confidentiality issues no other details were disclosed to the meeting.

No suspensions or expulsions occurred in 2009.

Agenda item 3

Minutes of the previous AGM (30 May 2009)

Motion - acceptance of minutes.

1 abstention, 96 for, none against.

Motion carried.

The minutes of the AGM of 2009 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Agenda item 4

Matters arising from BKA AGM (May 2009) minutes

Ric Schofield drew the meeting's attention to the efforts of Amanda Allen (AA) in presenting the BKA's case to the small claims court (regarding the claim made by Paul Budden against the BKA). This had saved the BKA a considerable sum of money. It was noted that the NC had shown their appreciation to AA by treating her and her husband to a meal. There was a unanimous vote of thanks to AA.

Agenda item 5

Presentation/matters arising/acceptance of NC Officer's reports (the reports were previously published on the BKA website):

- Membership Secretary
- Director of International Affairs
- PRO
- H&S
- Chair

Membership Secretary

The Membership Secretary (Malcolm Smalley, MS) said that in 2009 we had taken on 410 new members but lost 492. This was a net loss of 82 members, across all Bu. This trend has continued in 2010, probably due in part to the economic climate. In 2009 we had only 147 junior members, this was 50% of the number in 2006.

MS announced that we had had an overhaul of our membership records with the introduction of the on-line visibility of records. Every member and dojo leaders/secretaries can view relevant membership records. On-line payment had been introduced in time for 2010 membership renewals. Over 65% of members had chosen to renew this way. MS explained that on line renewals are more convenient and save the BKA money. We also now have event booking via the on-line system.

The meeting gave a formal thank you to MS for all his efforts regarding setting up the online system.

Director of International Affairs (DIA)

The DIA (Jock Hopson, JH) thanked John Howell (the BKA's previous President) for the good relationships that he had formed with the EKF and its officers. This had assisted JH in his work.

JH also thanked MS for his part in providing members intending to grade abroad with the required Eligibility to Grade Abroad letter. The new system for obtaining permission to grade abroad was introduced last year. It had been accepted by the EKF for gradings in Europe. Gradings in Japan are also going ahead; this requires that the DIA sign a pdf document which is then sent to Japan.

With regard to the Shogo situation, JH said that EB had represented him at the recent EKF AGM. The meeting voted on, and passed (13 for, 8 against), EKF member countries awarding their own Shogos. The BKA had not supported this.

PRO

The PRO (Paul Gray, PG) explained that previously there had been a PRO team representing each Bu. Following reorganisation PG had taken on the task of being the BKA's PRO. PG said he thought that the job required a team rather than just one person, with PRO and website management being separate. Phasing out of 'News Online' had made significant savings in time and money. PG stated that he was giving up the PRO position as he needed to focus on his business, but would like to return at some stage.

H&S

The Health & Safety Officer (Donald Gordon, DG) explained that the BKA is well placed safety-wise.

Importance of members informing their GP of what kendo/iaido/jodo involves if they have a pre-existing medical condition.

There are no apparent trends with regard to accidents reported. DG asked the meeting to email him if there is an accident in the dojo so that he can monitor for trends.

DG said that he has written the level 2 coaching health & safety information for Iaido and Jodo. The Kendo coaching level 2 Health & Safety information was already on file ready for when a level 2 course is run.

Chair

EB explained that the Bu are now enjoying more independence under the new constitution. However, this means that Bu are more accountable to the membership.

Need to monitor how expenses are processed

With regard to NC activity:

- 4 NC meetings had been held, each meeting 4-5 hours long.
- 5 E-debates and 5 E-votes.
- 4,579 emails handled by the Chair.

EB said that in a year's time he hoped that we would have achieved a more open, friendly association.

The officers' reports, previously published on the BKA website, were accepted. There were no other matters arising.

Agenda item 6

Treasurer's report/acceptance of annual accounts for 2009.

The Treasurer (Patrick Brehenny, PB) explained that he had fallen behind in assembling the BKA annual accounts owing to work pressures and a computer virus. He presented unaudited accounts.

PB noted that Honda sensei's donation of £1900 (tax refund) had, by the time it had been received back from the accountants and had gone through bank accounts, been reduced to £1400, a shortfall of £500.

PB discussed other items in the accounts. There were fees remaining outstanding from visits that Matsumoto sensei (former kendo coach) had made to individual dojo. The Kendo Squad costs were about £26,000, as a team had been sent to the World Championships in Brazil.

The Kendo Bu made a loss on activities of £504 over the year, which was an improvement over previous years. Two kendo seminars led by Japanese sensei had made a small profit. The Iai Bu made a profit of £19,000, mainly owing to the Ishido sensei 30th anniversary seminar. The Jodo Bu made a surplus of just over £3,000.

In light of the profits made, John Howell asked if we were on the verge of incurring a tax liability as we are a non-profit making organisation. PB said that we were not at risk yet.

John Howell asked about the wording in the accounts that £10,000 of the profits from the Ishido sensei seminar would be ring fenced (for the use of the Iaido and Jodo Bu for development work). He made the point that you can't ring fence a surplus, although he understood the sentiment behind it. PB agreed that the wording was not correct.

PB expressed concern that whereas the Treasurer could previously stop inappropriate expenditure, this was no longer the case under the new constitution. The Treasurer can now report on expenditure after it has been incurred, refuse to pay it and take the matter to the NC. PB felt that this was a lessening of financial control.

There was discussion of partial funding of accompanying persons/senior grades to international championships. It was noted that part funding for high grades was an initiative to make our high grades 'leaders' in refereeing. With regard to how Bu funds are spent the point was made that BuEC are answerable to the membership.

The Kendo Bu were asked to take ownership of the issue of Matsumoto sensei's car.

Election of auditors

It was proposed by PB, seconded by EB, that Danzig should continue as auditors.
Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda item 7

Election of NC officers

Vice Chair - it was noted that Hilary Hadley (HH) had been the sole nominee. Elected unopposed.

Membership Secretary - the meeting agreed to accept nominations from the floor for the post of Membership Secretary. Malcolm Smalley was nominated by Jock Hopson, seconded by Chris Mansfield. Elected unopposed.

Co-opted posts

Expressions of interest for PRO were called for.

Child Protection Officer - Amanda Allen put forward and accepted the position.

Agenda item 8

a) Amendments to the constitution (previously published on the BKA website) proposed or already implemented under NC special powers.

- Grading clock
- BKA equipment
- Changes to fee-setting policy
- Travel & Subsistence & Expenses policies - reimbursement of actual expenditure
- Travel & Subsistence & Expenses policies - approval of expense claims
- DRC Chairs attending BuEC meetings
- Reduce the quorum of the NC from 8 to 7 out of 9 members.
- AGM timetable
- Bu Complaints Committee
- Complaints Officer - new co-opted position
- Standardisation of deadlines for AGM agenda items and motions
- Dealing with arrears in payments
- Option to waive a formal complaints hearing
- Clarification majority required for BuEC meetings.

- Allow emails for registering complaints and add additional time limit for receipt of complaints
- Minor changes to AGM scheduling & allow responses to agendas by email
- Allow limited proxy voting if a member is present at the AGM/EGM.
- Taping of meetings

EB proposed that the amendments should be accepted.

2 abstentions, 95 for, none against.

Motion carried.

b) Motion received proposing an addition to the BKA Constitution:

Approval of Strategy

1. The BU/EC shall consult with the DRC and obtain approval in principle from the Dojo Representatives (>50% majority of those voting) of the fiscal policies and general/development strategies to be proposed for adoption by the membership at the AGM.

2. The consultation period shall commence 90 days before the date of the AGM and close 50 days before the AGM to give sufficient time for objections or counter proposals to be put forward at the AGM.

Proposer: G.O'Donnell (1479)

Secunder: J.M.Bates (6818)

Discussion - DB suggested that the wording on point 2 should be amended to '*The consultation period shall commence at least 90 days ...*'. This was accepted by Gary O'Donnell.

HH suggested that point 1 should read '*The Bu/EC shall consult with the DRC and seek approval ...*'. Seconded by John Howell. The meeting voted on whether to implement this change to the wording of the motion.

1 abstention, 40 for, 52 against.

Motion defeated.

The meeting then voted on the motion (with the addition of the wording 'at least' retaining the word 'obtain').

5 abstentions, 75 for, 19 against.

Motion carried.

Agenda item 9

Use of special powers by the NC. These had been granted for one year at the 2009 AGM.

EB proposed that the NC be given another year of special powers to amend the constitution - all uses to be reported to the membership at the 2011 NC AGM.

2 abstentions, 95 for, 2 against.

Motion carried.

Agenda item 10

2011 membership fee

PB explained that, as an organisation, we require a contingency fund. At the moment this fund was not increasing and a £25 Central Services fee would not increase the fund. This would need to be looked at in 2011.

EB explained that the NC operates on a zero balance - if the whole fee is not used in one year it devolves to the Bu.

EB proposed that the central services fee for 2011 should be £25.

Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda item 11

AoB

EB opened a discussion on moving the NC AGM from May to September/October. However, our end of year accounts for the previous year would have to be ready by mid June - any later would be difficult for expenditure to be accounted for and controlled.

The meeting voted on whether to move the NC AGM date to the autumn.

40 abstentions, 41 for, 7 against.

Motion not carried (Required majority for a change in the constitution is >66%).

The meeting agreed to examine this issue after a more detailed case was put to the members, in good time for discussion at the next AGM.

There was discussion that members were responsible for checking their own grading records etc to make sure that they were up to date. It was noted that the EKF should have resolved the situation of delayed despatch of menjo by December 2010.

The meeting adjourned at 5.20pm

Minutes taken by Debbie Bevan