

MINUTES

IFLA Section for Public Libraries

Spring Meeting, Singapore, 7 and 8 of March, 2002

Present: Assumpta Bailac Puigdellivol, Klaus-Peter Boettger, Barbara H. Clubb (Chair), Kerstin Hassner, Torny Kjekstad, Gunilla Konradsson-Martin, John Lake, Ngian Lek Choh, Bernard Margolis, Tuula Martikainen, Florence Poncé, Mary Sherman, Borge Sondergard (Secretary), Jan-Ewout van der Putten (IC).

Apologies: Elena Boretti, Clara Budnik Sinay, Jarmila Burgetová, and Vladimir Firsov.

Absentees: Georgeta Clinca

Agenda:

1. Opening and announcements (Barbara)

The Chair expressed the warmest thanks to Ngian and her staffs for their very hard work of arranging this Spring Meeting and for planning such splendid library visits and introduction to Singapore that was in store for the Committee in the days to come. Barbara Clubb was very happy for the multitude of members attending this meeting – fourteen out of nineteen possible – and she believed it to be the biggest Spring Meeting in her time with the Section.

2. Welcome to Singapore (Ngian)

Before the beginning of the meeting Ngian had a most interesting and thorough PowerPoint Presentation of libraries in Singapore. This has been passed on to the members, and the Information Coordinator is kindly requested to put it on the Section's website under "Country Reports". Ngian passed out presents and made a library introduction to the members, and on behalf of the National Library Board heartily welcomed everybody to Singapore.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chair went through the Agenda and checked up on the related documents. She particularly pointed out to the members to consider items for Borge Sondergard to bring to the CB-Meeting on March 14'th and 15'th, and bring any suggestions up under item 7 and 16 on the Agenda. The Agenda was approved.

4. The Chairs Report (Barbara)

The Chair was most pleased with the 15,000 NGL that the Section had received from IFLA Professional Committee to the project of disseminating the Guidelines worldwide. She asked the members to be aware of the conference report from the Rabat-meeting in Morocco, and especially note the recommendations listed in the report. "Let's think of a proper strategy related to the results of the Rabat Conference – we have a lot of work to do", she stated. She regretted that she was not able to attend the Rabat Conference due to the circumstances and irregular flights right after the September 11'th-tragedy. Philip Gill, former member of the Standing Committee and Chair of the Guidelines Revision-group, attended the meeting on the Section's behalf and wrote a most useful report on the meeting.

5. Approval and Follow-up of the Minutes from the Boston meeting, August 2001

The Secretary informed that IFLA General Secretary Ross Shimmon had made some objections to the Minutes' description of the problems with placing ROTNAC into the new structure. He wanted to make clear, that he was not in a dispute with ROTNAC, but only trying to find the best solutions. The Minutes were approved. There was no follow-up as the matter was solved through the items on the Agenda.

6. Extension of the Standing Committee to 20 Members?

According to IFLA Rules of Procedures (12.25-12.27) the Committee is allowed to appoint new members in case of casual vacancies. IFLA HQ has accepted to replace Georgeta Clinca, Rumania and Robert Pestell, Australia. The Committee decided to replace Ms. Clinca and Mr. Pestell accordingly and to extend the Committee to 20. The Secretary will ask IFLA HQ to appoint the two unsuccessful candidates with the highest votes in the postal ballot last year Mr. Fernando Platero Ferrando, Spain and Mr. Nerses Hayrapetyan, Armenia to the Committee ASAP.

7. Report from Coordination Board, Division III (Barbara and Borge)

There was nothing to report, as the meeting was to take place later in March. Nor was any Agenda received up until the Section's meeting in Singapore. Barbara expressed that it was often hard to arrange good meetings in CB, but it was a powerful board, as it makes decisions concerning money and projects. The Section will always attend the meetings either by the Chair or the Secretary.

Bernie Margolis drew the Committee's attention to the fact that a major surplus from the Boston Conference should have been allocated. He suggested to the Committee that this money should go into a fund to support active working members of Section Committees from poorer and developing countries. The Committee had a long discussion about this with many different aspects and diversities of opinion. The Nordic Countries representatives argued that it was important to bring active working librarians from public libraries into the sections' steering committees and not people from e.g. National library Boards/Authorities and so on. It was stressed that It was also very important to break the Western hemisphere's dominant position in the IFLA work. Especially Spain and France

representatives found it was hard to find ordinary librarians who could afford to join IFLA and its sections and committees, but everybody agreed, that it would be a good thing, if it were possible to support committee members from poorer countries. It was decided, that the Secretary should bring this matter to CB and ask them to discuss it as well. If support here, CB could go on investigating the matter of money from Boston and the possibility of setting up a fund. John Lake argued, that there should be very strict rules for spending the money, in order that only the most needing ones were supported.

8. Report from Professional Committee

The Minutes from PC's meeting in December 2001 had been distributed to the members. The Secretary highlighted a few things. As it was the first real meeting in PC a great deal of introduction to division and PC-work had been conducted. PC also dealt with the strategic plans, and were planning and deciding contents, Open Forums, Workshops and Discussion Groups in Glasgow. There was no debate in the Committee on the Minutes.

9. Report on Membership (Borge)

As of March 1st the Section has 321 registered members (286 in good standing). The deadline for counting members in order to calculate next years administrative money is August 1'st. We should be able to keep above the 300 needed registered members. There was a major discussion on the subject of getting more members. We need a new brochure before Glasgow and we should try to translate it into the official IFLA-languages. It was decided that the **Information Coordinator** should come up with a revised brochure ASAP. We should also consider developing and marketing special benefits, which you can only obtain by being a member e.g. on-line conferences and list-serves. Kerstin Hassner brought up the question and the importance of raising awareness in ones own country to become an institutional member, or if you are already an IFLA-member to choose Public Libraries Section as a first choice. When your country is organising the annual IFLA conference it is a good opportunity to campaign among public libraries to become institutional members. Denmark did so in 1997 and still today Denmark has more than 40 members of this Section – far the biggest number of all countries. Another idea was to bring in "IFLA-people" from other countries to conferences in your own country – spread the word and put faces on the whole IFLA-thing. Bernie Margolis raised the question whether it was an issue for the Committee to get new members for IFLA – or should we concentrate on campaigning within IFLA to get members to join our section. Why don't we see an IFLA-marketing letter from Kay Raseroka?

Borge, Gunilla and Klaus-Peter argued that it is of the utmost importance to get new members. The aim should be to become the biggest section within IFLA. Only by being this would we get the attention and the position, that public libraries should have within IFLA, which is heavily dominated by national and scientific libraries. Should we use the new guidelines as means of promotion and should we argue for a low entry fee to IFLA? It is very important to built network and to show best practises. It was agreed that every member of the Standing Committee would have the goal of getting at least 3 new institutional members before next year.

We decided to institute a new on-line newsletter to be published more regularly that the printed one.

The Chair concluded that: a new pamphlet should be made before Glasgow (van der Putten), that we should get more attention within IFLA and that we should try to promote our section in our own countries.

Borge was asked to take up the matter of IFLA promotion at the CB meeting later in March. He will try to get answers to the questions: What exactly do IFLA HQ, GB and PC do to promote IFLA?

10. Finances (Barbara)

Barbara went through the budget, which had been sent out in advance. There seems to be a good balance, and we should be able to fund the things we want. She strongly urged the members to use all their allocated project money every year, so we don't have to have so much carryover. Sometimes IFLA HQ deducts the carryovers before new money is approved. "This is bad for business"! A question concerning a split of surplus from the sale of the guidelines between SAUR and the Section was not regarded as possible. SAUR has many other expenditures and provides the text for free to go on the website. The Budget was accepted.

11. Strategic Plan 2002-2003

Draft 3 of the Strategic Plan had been sent to the members and to PC. It was decided in PC, that the chair Winston Tabb together with Josche Neven from IFLA HQ should try to arrange and rewrite all the strategic plans into the same common IFLA frame. We have received Winston's version of our own plan, and there were only smaller revisions. We could go along with most of them, but wanted to stand firm on goal 1, that Winston had changed. We insist on our own phrasing.

The whole plan was very thoroughly worked through and many things were dropped and other rephrased. Florence Poncé declared that she feels we are concentrating on too much, we must focus on fewer goals or we will lose energy. Hellen Niegard (former member of the standing committee), had informed Borge, that she is sure, that IFLA HQ has gotten money from UNESCO to work more with Information Policies. This needs to be looked into. Hellen has written to Sjoerd Koopman.

Borge was asked to raise the question on registration fees for speakers on e.g. Open Forums at the CB Meeting. The Committee feels that it is most embarrassing, that speakers on a one-day basis should have to be smuggled into the Conference, or that they (or the group, that have made the invitation) have to pay a registration fee. This must be a part of the whole budget for IFLA Conferences.

Conclusions: Barbara will revise the Strategic Plan as quickly as possible according to the decisions in the Committee. She will also make the necessary changes in Winston's frame for the Strategic Plan. The aim is, that it can go out attached to these Minutes and very soon can go on the Website.

12. Review of Ongoing Projects

a. Life Long Learning

Britt Marie Häggström has promised to lead this project until the end although she has left the Committee. She had provided the Committee with a first draft of a major report on Life Long Learning. The plan is to give a small presentation in Glasgow (was later under item

14 diminished even further) and to have a workshop in Berlin. Assumpta Bailac has left the project, which she had announced already in Boston. Torny Kjekstad had replaced her and she will act as the Committee's liaison to Britt Marie.

b. Computer Literacy

The project is led by Florence Poncé and Borge Sondergard and it will come to an end in Glasgow. In spite of the project being only a small project (very little project-money, and none since 2000) it has developed beautifully. The great finale will be a whole day workshop in Glasgow in conjunction with the Scottish Library Association named "Computer Literacy @ Your Library". Seven speakers from around the world have promised to give presentations on how they deal with computer literacy. The aim is through the workshop and the presentations to collect a great number of best practises and to put them on the website. Also it is planned to form a network amongst the workshop participants in order to carry on the discussion through an IFLA mailing list.

c. UNET-evaluation

Kerstin Hassner, the lead of the whole UNET-project, reported that the evaluation group, which consist of herself, Barbro Thomas, Sweden and Hellen Niegaard, Denmark, has finally after some delaying problems started to work and is in good progress. They plan to have a final report for the Committee meeting in spring 2003. Kay Raseroka has agreed to write an introduction to the report. There will be a small presentation in Glasgow. The Chair concluded that the UNET-project had been one of great success and one that the Section could be very proud of.

d. Marketing Guidelines

The Section has received 15.000 NLG project money over the next three years to develop marketing strategies for and to disseminate the Guidelines. The Chair wanted a discussion within the group on how to attack this project the best way possible. IFLA HQ (Sjoerd Koopman) is also very keen on working closely with the Section in order to help as best he can, and Sjoerd has asked for a contact within the Committee on this subject. The committee formed a working group: Barbara Clubb (lead), John Lake (co-lead), Borge Sondergard (contact to IFLA HQ), Bernie Margolis and Kerstin Hassner. Jan-Ewout van der Putten will promote the Guidelines via the website. Borge reported on the translations of the guidelines, which reach the total figure of 18 languages at this moment (some have not yet been published). Assumpta suggested that we put together panels of well-esteemed regional colleagues in Asia, South America and Africa to promote and talk about the Guidelines on conferences in these parts of the world. We should go into contact with our corresponding members. This will be very expensive, so we must look for more money.

13. Website and Newsletter

The Information Coordinator Jan-Ewout van der Putten reported that a newsletter, Issue no 25, had been published in February 2002. Being his first newsletter, he was not quite happy with it, as he found it a little too traditional and with fairly uninteresting contents. He was sure, that the next, which is planned just before Glasgow, would be much better. He had set up an organization at home with Anne Hottenhuis (hottenhuis@nblc.nl) as daily

manager of the website and newsletter. He calculated on yet another newsletter at the end of the year. The Website should be up-to-date.

The IC wanted to discuss the possibility of going electronic with the newsletter. It was stated, that it was very hard to get updated email lists of the members, and that a great many members may still not have email at all. It was decided, that the IC should consult with Kelly Moore of IFLA HQ on the matter. The Committee concluded that there would be one more printed version of the newsletter just before Glasgow. In the newsletter it will be heavily stated, that members, who still want a printed version must actively indicate so directly to the editor. In all other cases the members will receive an electronic newsletter through e-mail. It was also decided that there should be two major newsletters and three minor (with only hard and relevant facts/links etc.) pr. year. This is a major extension of issues compared to earlier. An editorial help group for the IC was set up to work with Jan E. van der Putten: Ngian Lek Choh, Gunilla Konradsson-Mortin, Barbara Clubb and Borge Sondergard. Major headline on next issue of the Newsletter (no 26) "*We are going electronic!*". The Committee acknowledged that the task of being IC was very crucial to the success of the section, as our website and Newsletter are the prime offers to the members, and the best way of getting new members to the Section.

14. Programme for IFLA 2002 Glasgow.

The Chair had produced a list of all the ideas and offers of presentations, which the Committee had already received. The workshop on Computer Literacy was presented and supported by the Committee. As to the Open Forum there were many ideas and a heavy discussion. It seemed to most members, that we tend to tread on well known paths, and this is getting maybe slightly boring and old-fashioned. We wanted to put new energy into the Open Forum and get rid of all the presentation of project reports. And we wanted to give more time for discussions. We decided on the following:

- 15 minutes update on projects and section work (Q&A)
- 15 minutes presentation of trend setting public libraries in the UK by Jacqui Campbell, LA (Q&A)
- 75 minutes Panel discussion under the theme "The Impact of the new Technology on Public Library Staff and Services" with two or three case studies as inspiration for a major debate. PULMAN-project, Singapore and Malmoe (Sweden) were mentioned.

John will look into the matter of ways to arrange the tables in the conference room. Usually 150-250 people attend our Open Forums. It is also important to promote our Open Forum well among the Conference goers.

Discussion groups: after some discussions it was decided to continue the discussion group on Libraries and Democracy und the following Theme "Libraries in the democratic process", Mary will deal with that. It was also important to market this event.

Looking over the many related events and meetings of the Division III and others, it was interesting to notice, that a great many had public library aspects involved, but the organizers had never bothered to ask for our participation or partnership!

Borge and Barbara will notify the people, who wanted to give presentations on the Open Forum on the decisions of the Committee.

15. Preliminary Programme for IFLA Berlin and Buenos Aires

We have an invitation to partner up with the Section for Library Buildings and Equipments in arranging a Satellite Conference prior to the IFLA Berlin Conference. This meeting is scheduled to take place in Paris. We would very much like this if the meeting will focus substantially on public library buildings. Borge will let the Building Section know of our decision (before March 15th 2002) and Florence Poncé will act as liaison on this event. In Berlin we will go for a workshop on the Life Long Learning project, and the Open Forum will probably focus on "training, retraining and recruiting staff". The Open Forum in Berlin must reflect the experiences we get from the new form in Glasgow, but it is crucial, that we will be able to make final decisions for the Berlin meeting already in Glasgow and not wait until spring meeting 2003. Finally we have been asked to partner a workshop with IFLA Section of Women Issues. We decided to proceed and the chair will respond to the Women's Issues representative.

In 2004 we very much want to focus on public libraries in South America. We decided to rely on our South American contacts: Clara Budnik, Gloria Rodriguez, Elisabeth (Brazil) and off course Assumpta, who has good contacts in SA. Assumpta agreed to get in contact with the people mentioned above and ask them if they will form an organising group for Buenos Aires.

16. Other Reports and Items

- a.** There is a strong wish from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to establish close contacts with the Committee in terms of the Access to Learning Award 2002 and in other matters. They strongly encourage us to use every listserv we know of to tell our colleagues about the Award. This year the Foundation will not make the decisions on the Award receiver themselves, but will rely on nominations from the library communities (not USA). We take it as a good sign, that the Foundation wants more close contact with the Section
- b.** The Chair urged the members, who have not send her their CV's/biographies to do so. We plan to make a small presentation in the Newsletter or on the website.

17. Closing

The Chair heartily thanked Ngian and her staff members for all their work and effort to make this meeting a success. They have certainly accomplished this. The Committee was very grateful for the warm and graceful hospitality of the Singapore National Library Board and its many institutions. She made a wish and a prediction that someday the yearly IFLA Conference would go to Singapore.

Minutes taken by: Borge Sondergard, Secretary