

WFNMC Cambridge-2006 Minutes

THE EXECUTIVE, 7/23/2006

Present: Gardiner; Losada, de; Kenderov; Svrcek; Soifer; and Taylor. Guest attendees: Angans and two ladies (names unknown to the Secretary) – all from Latvia.

0. President Kenderov opened the meeting at 21:00 by announcing that we had only one obligatory issue to decide upon: the venue of the 2010 WFNMC Conference. He proposed to also discuss the next meeting of WFNMC during the ICME-2008 in Mexico. There were no objections to these two items. Tony observed that there was no “written” agenda for the Executive meeting; he wanted to also discuss “other issues.” Petar promised to give Tony an opportunity for such discussions after we fulfilled the obligatory items. This was the agenda for the meeting. It had not been circulated in a written form but was agreed upon at the beginning of the Executive meeting, with everybody having a chance to express her/his opinion and put additional items on the agenda.

1. Petar offered Prof. Agnis Angans of Latvia to present his proposal for hosting WFNMC-2010, with the support of the University of Latvia and the Academy of Sciences. In short, the proposal included the following:

Venue: Central Bldg of the University of Latvia in Downtown Riga and/or Academy of Sciences Complex on the Baltic seaside.

A research on math competitions and work with gifted students will be included.

Proceedings will be published. Rich cultural life of Riga will be utilized.

The International Program Committee will include local people, The Executive of WFNMC, etc.

2. Maria shared the info on ICME-11, for which she is a member of Program Committee. It will take place on Monterey, Mexico, July 6-13. There will be 48 Topic Study Groups, one of which, #6, will deal with Activities and Programs for Gifted Students. There will also be a related to WFNMC discussion group. And of course, there will be time slots for WFNMC. Maria invited to e-mail her ideas related to the above.

The Executive voted unanimously to hold WF meeting during ICME-11. Peter suggested to, perhaps, add a day for WF activities. The need will be clear when we know all details.

3. As the three Latvian guests left, the Executive discussed the Latvian proposal. Soifer moved to grant it; seconded my de Losada, the proposal to accept the Latvian Proposal passed by 5 votes in favour and 1 (Tony) abstention. This decision is to be announced at the Wednesday business meeting.

4. Tony spoke as follows: “I asked for certain items to be addressed; it fails fairness test not to address them. At 9: 58 PM Tony left the meeting “for a sanity break.” He was back at 10:00 PM with the words “I have a strong feeling we are trying to avoid something.”

Tony was asked to report on the Cambridge-2006 Conference, of which he was Chair of Organizing Committee. He reported as follows:

“Problems are extreme. In particular, most who would organize conferences, lack imagination to organize a conference. Bill was fragile, as his wife died a month ago. Adam was his jolly self, but did not do very much. Howard worked hard, but he was very busy. They lacked imagination and were good at only some jobs, like licking postage stamps.

Price should have been 50% higher.

The Organizing Committee was offended by numerous remarks. My Organizing Committee did not want to know, so I spared them by not copying to them.

Venue is good; the program is good. Whether we will hear appreciation, we will see.”

Maria: “I am very happy [with the Conference].”

Petar: “I am satisfied with my group.”

Jaroslav: “[Groups are] very good; a new form of work for me.”

Peter: “Atmosphere is good; facilities are good and everything. The only person I am upset about not being here, is an Erdős Award winner.”

Tony: “If you are concerned about Award Winners, you ought to be concerned about all [of them]. If you are concerned about all and wish to differentiate, you ought to have some way of deciding who is to be supported. It is unfair to support your friend Ali and not Chua.

I was alerted in February that there was a problem. I offered 250 pounds of my own money toward Ali’s expenses. I asked [the] Embassy ‘what would satisfy you?’ Messages were flying around without copying me.”

Petar: “It is not just a problem of money, but Ali writes that the Organizers [refused to help with a letter to the Embassy.]

Tony: “Payment has to be made in advance. I am underwriting it [the Conference] personally. If we lose money, I pay, my wife pays, my children pay. When Ali wrote, he was not clear [about paying], and used very abusive language.”

5. Tony passed around 4 sets of handouts, each containing selective e-mails. They were to illustrate Tony’s pre-Conference opinion that the Program Committee and the MC Editorial Board had not been doing anything throughout the history of their existence.

Tony said he had written to associate editors of the journal group. Peter asked whether the Editor (and the Executive member) Jaroslav had been consulted, and he said not. Peter objected to Tony writing to associate editors without first checking with the Editor.

Tony then moved on to the Program Committee and read an e-mail from Ron Dunkley that alleged that the Program Committee had never achieved its aims and that people who objected about not being consulted were bad sports. [It is worth noting, that this was Ron's second reply to Tony's second e-mail. The first Ron's reply had not been shared. Also, Alexander's July 4, 2006 reply to Tony's circulated e-mail on Program Committee and its membership had not been included in the handouts.]

Peter disagreed with Ron's assessment outlining the consultations, which had taken place when Peter was the Senior Vice President (and thus Chair of the Program Committee) between 1996 and 2000, on two WFNMC conferences and one ICME Congress. Peter said that this was offensive to misinterpret his and his Program Committee's work.

Tony asked Peter for the names of the Program Committee members from the time when Peter had been Chair (so that Tony can write to them to verify the truthfulness of Peter's statement about his and their work). Peter refused to give the names to Tony, and Tony stormed out of the meeting. The time was 10:59 PM. (This time Tony left for good).

6. It was agreed that at the business meeting reports will be made by the Editor, Awards Committee Chair, and Maria on ICME-11.

7. The Executive will prepare a proposal for membership to be considered in 2008.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:46 PM.

THE EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES MEETING, 7/24/2006

The meeting, initiated by the President, was attended by Bellot-Rosado, Tabov, Konstantinov, Webb, Henry, Gardiner, Svrcek, Cheung, Reiter, de Losada, Kenderov, Taylor, Griffith, and Soifer.

Kenderov, the President, opened the meeting at 9:00 PM with the words "I thought it was important for us all to meet. The decision has been made by the Executive to accept the Latvia's bid by Agnis Angans."

Taylor, Past President and Chair of Awards Committee, said "Some nominations are in, regional directors will nominate more. Nominations should include names of at least 3 referees."

De Losada, Member of the ICME-11 Program Committee, informed on the forthcoming ICME-11 in Mexico.

Svrcek, The MC Editor, spoke about the work of the journal.

Gardiner, Chair of Organizing Committee, reported on the Cambridge-2006 Conference: "So far disasters have been invisible – it means they are ahead. We will see whether they will outweigh good things."

Here a discussion of membership in WF took place.

Kenderov: "The definition of the membership is subscription to the MC."

Gardiner: "I know why the membership is an issue, and it is not good."

"It is important that those who came for the 1st time and for the 3rd time felt welcome to come again."

The meeting was adjourned at 9:41 PM.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP BUSINESS MEETING, 7/25/2006

The meeting was opened by the President at 12:20 PM.

1. Agnis Angans invited members to attend Riga-2010 Conference, to start 3 days after the close of the IMO.
2. Maria de Losada briefed on ICME-11 to be held in Mexico in 2008.
3. Peter Taylor spoke for the Awards Committee.
4. Petar Kenderov talked about his vision of the WFNMC.
5. Jaroslav Svrcek spoke about the MC.
6. Kenderov summarized the membership in WFNMC: "Who belongs to the Federation? Everybody in this room; those who conduct competitions are welcome to join. This is a loose organization of people committed to math enrichment."

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 PM.

Recorded for the membership and posterity by Alexander Soifer, the Secretary of the WFNMC.