

Wimbledon Independent Supporters Association

Ordinary General Meeting

Wimbledon Community, St. George's Road, Wimbledon
Thursday 29 January, 2004 at 7.30 pm

MINUTES

1. Apologies for absence received

Gavin Ainslie, Charlie Bell, Joanne Fotheringham, Jo Lewis, Mark Lewis, Dennis Lowndes, Laurence Lowne, Sandra Lowne, Tim Powell and David Silsby.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting (OGM on 25 September 2003) were agreed and there were no matters arising.

3. WISA constitution

a) Formally adopt the previously agreed revisions to the constitution

A number of amendments were agreed in principle at the previous general meeting in September. Formal ratification was deferred to allow time for any further suggestions or amendments to be made. None were forthcoming and no comments were made at this meeting. The meeting therefore agreed to formally adopt the revisions.

b) Add new clause 4.14

"No person shall be eligible to take up a position on the WISA Committee who is a serving member of the Dons Trust Board or subsidiary companies or is a paid employee of the Club. Any serving member of the WISA Committee who takes up a board position with the Dons Trust or subsidiary companies or becomes a paid employee of the Club shall be required to stand down from the WISA Committee.

"The only exception shall be a WISA member elected or appointed to represent WISA in accordance with clause 1.2.2. In the event of a dispute, the remaining members of the Committee shall consider whether a member is eligible and make a binding decision."

Nicole Hammond explained that the WISA Committee is not entirely sure of the wording for this clause. There is no intention to set up a barrier between WISA, the Club and the Trust but as an independent organisation, we feel it would be inappropriate for anyone to be a member of the WISA Committee and be in some position of influence with either the Club or the Trust.

A number of suggestions were put forward, such as defining this clause as a director or anyone deriving a large proportion of their income from the Club or being in a position to decide policy or make major decisions or those having a commercial or contractual relationship. It was agreed the Committee should review the wording and revert at the next meeting. Any member with ideas was encouraged to put them forward.

4. Elections

Two positions on the committee were available, following Mark Lewis's recent resignation to concentrate on impending fatherhood and an outstanding vacancy. Two candidates stood and were duly elected:

Candidate	Proposer	Secunder
Colin Dench	Alice Cuninghame	Ray Downham
Dennis Lowndes	Kirsty Fotheringham	Laurence Lowne

Those present offered their best wishes to Mark and Jo.

5. Treasurer's report

Sean Fox reported that we maintain a healthy balance of £4,911.06 as at the end of September 2003 (as per the accounts distributed with notice of this meeting). Allowing for subsequent receipts and expenditure – including a further purchase of £1,500 worth of shares in AFCW plc – our current balance is approximately £5,500.

6. Report on WISA's recent activities and debate on current and future plans

6.1 Franchise watch

Ian Pollock advised that the end game has started – Franchise FC is likely to escape the clutches of insolvency and get a new stadium built.

Back on 10 September, MK Council gave planning permission to InterMK to build a stadium. The councillors were presented a fullsome report, detailing all the flaws (in breach of government policy, etc) but they voted for it anyway.

A tip-off from the Office of Deputy Prime Minister suggests Prescott will not call in the planning application for enquiry because MK has been designated a growth area and they do not want to undermine this status. The advice from our professional planning advisors is that, unless we are prepared to spend c.£50,000 on a judicial review, there is nothing we can do about it.

Pete Winkelman has made an offer to buy the "club", which is due to be put to a creditors meeting on 20 February. The ongoing fire sale of players suggests there may be sufficient funds to pay off the Inland Revenue and Customs & Excise.

If the government is intent on bending its own rules, this is probably as far as we are able to pursue the matter.

6.2 Plough Lane redevelopment

There are plans for a substantial, high-density residential development and some of our members attended a recent presentation. WISA has written to Merton Council objecting to the plans, refuting the developer's claim that the site can never again be a football ground and that all hope of a football team returning to that site has been lost. We suggested a redesign of the entire scheme to incorporate a small stadium and pointed out that the application as it stands does not include any permanent community facility. The Council's reply is they have "taken note".

Ironically, the self-styled Haydons Bridge Residents Association is apparently so horrified by the scale of the proposed development, they feel they may have been better off having a football stadium on the site instead!

The question posed to the meeting was whether we should ask the developers to commemorate our history. The unanimous view was we should wait and see what happens with the planning application. If approved without provision for a football ground, we should then consider approaching the developers, in conjunction with the Club.

7. Dons Trust

a) Should WISA apply for corporate membership?

The agenda for this meeting was circulated before the DT AGM, at which corporate membership was discussed as part of the constitutional review. Ray Downham advised that incorporated membership is still allowed under the DT constitution though the feeling of the recent AGM was against this category of membership. Voting rights were considered the key issue – no DT member can have more than one vote and a corporate application must be in the name of a specific individual. Therefore, if WISA applied, in the name of an executive committee member, that person would have to resign their individual membership of the DT.

The meeting decided there was no useful purpose in WISA applying for corporate membership.

b) Accounts

The meeting agreed that the Trust should be asked to provide accounts in advance of meetings so that Trust members can study them. Ideally, they would be included with notices sent out for AGMs (and other meetings as appropriate).

c) Publishing DT board minutes

A suggestion was made that the DT board should make other information available to members, in particular attendance at meetings and board meeting minutes. A lively debate ensued and a number of points were made:

- Detailed minutes are not necessary – a summary would probably suffice
- Confidential or sensitive matters would need to be excluded
- Should minutes be published as soon as possible after meetings or with, say, a 2-3 month delay?
- Rather than publishing on websites and mailing to members, individual members could apply to the Secretary
- Comparison was made with the WISA as Committee meeting minutes are not published

The conclusion was this matter would be raised at the next meeting with the DT.

8. AFCW & DT matters

No questions were raised and it was noted that the Club is hosting an open meeting in two days time.

9. Any other business

Sponsoring kit for the ladies team

We had received a request to part-sponsor the ladies team by funding the purchase of four substitute kits, costing £160. This was agreed unanimously.

10. Pub

A fair number repaired to the Alex after the meeting.