

SOA Executive Committee

Minutes of the Meeting

25 March 2015

1. The SOA Executive Committee met on the 25 March 2015 in the PAO Conference Room. Attendance apologies received from Steve Covington, Alan Jeavons, Jean Vanderwal, Scott Sunquist, Jack Haas and Jean-Marie Boulet. The Agenda and the minutes from the previous meeting of 14 January 2015 were approved.
2. **Action Items and their status from the previous meeting and General Assembly:**
 - a. SOA Membership List. The SOA Membership list has been converted to a usable application and is available to all members in tabular format sorted by Name and by Nationality. The membership list will be distributed via email once a year. Action completed
 - b. Newcomers Welcome Guide. The current Newcomers Welcome Guide will be updated to include SOA membership information. Deadline for 2015 input has passed and next update for the guide will be later this year. (Action: JW)
 - c. SOA Representative to the NMR,s. The search for a volunteer to be the SOA representative to the NMRs is completed. B/G Richard Laurent BE AF (ret) has accepted the position and has been invited to be a member of the committee. Committee members welcomed him to the executive committee. B/G Laurent (RL) and the committee discussed the history of NMR involvement and disengagement of the NMR's with the SOA and issues that have to be overcome to regain their involvement. The starting points are to be the letter from the president and the interaction of RL with the NMRs.
 - d. Facebook Account. The ExCom gratefully approved the transition of the US Chapter Facebook Account to become the official SOA Facebook Account. Volunteers are being sought to become Facebook Account administrators in addition to the current US Chapter administrators. (Action: GB)
 - e. SOA Web Page. Training is ongoing to enable access for SOA administrators to the SOA Web Page. The current web page will be updated when the training is completed. Item still open.
(Action: JV & JW)
3. **Implementation of the SOA President's Objectives:**
 - a. A letter from the newly elected SOA President to the Dean of the NMR,s has been drafted and was reviewed and suggested changes provided by committee members. The letter was finalized and was forwarded to the President by GW 26 March 2015. The letter included many of the points identified below.
 - reports to promote understanding of Alliance activities,
 - support and advocacy of Alliance activities,
 - assuring relevance of SOA,
 - increasing SOA membership,
 - receiving members feedback,
 - effective and useful communications to members,
 - informing members about NATO, SHAPE and SOA activities;
 - b. A letter encouraging SHAPE Officers and Equivalent civilians to be members of the SOA was reviewed and corrected. JW put the letter in final form for committee member approval

and it will be used in the newcomers welcome package manual and is envisioned to have the NMR,s distribute it (with an SOA membership application attached) to their newly assigned officers on their arrival and on their departure.

4. Actions for the 2015 Symposium:

- a. Hotel Selection: Rooms at the Casteau Moat House (Best Western) have been reserved. Messages received indicate that it was the preferred location by out of town attendees. Action completed by VL. Note : The merits of the Hotel Utopia were discussed but the consensus was that the hotel would not be able to accommodate the needs of a group of 50+.
- b. Happy Hour : A location for the Happy Hour needs to be confirmed: Problems with the Casteau Moat house and the Wine Bar across from SHAPE was discussed and its merits revisited : Action still open. Action VL.
- c. Friday Evening Event : With the cancellation of the Tops in Blue, the Annual Friendship Concert could be held at the Mons Theatre on Friday 9 October. If so, it was proposed and accepted that the SOA would participate in funding a part of the event under the condition that the SOA members would be invited to the Vin d'Honneur following the concert. Action JV.
- d. Saturday Events : Golf Tournament and Cultural Visit . JB will cover the Golf Tournament and for the Cultural Event the event will occur in conjunction with Mons 2015 and the event needs to be coordinated with Mons . Action for next meeting
- e. Annual Dinner: The SHAPE Club has been tentatively booked but GB proposed looking into the feasibility of holding it at the Grand Hotel in Valenciennes Fr. RH to check out the place and report to the committee on what is possible.
- f. Transportation : Once requirements finalized MO will request SHAPE transportation and VL will arrange supplement if necessary. Note : The treasurer (VL) just received and paid the transport bill for the 2014 Symposium.

5. Social Activities for 2015 Status;

- a. Van Gogh Exhibition: Visit conducted 20 March and appreciated by all attendees.
- b. Brussels Auto Museum: Good potential visit but delay until the fall perhaps after the Symposium. Action JW.
- c. Ascenseur and River Cruise: Project accepted and the date of Friday , 12 June 2015 agree to by committe (later changed to 27 June as 12 June was no longer available). Details, publicity, coordination to be accomplished. Action JV.
- d. 5KM Hike /St. Denis Arts et Saveurs Festival : Interest in having the 5 km hike in the woods ending up at St Denis Arts et Saveurs Festival was raised by a number of members. The proposed date for the event is Sunday, 30 August. Albert Lefebvre will again be the guide. Publicity, details etc need to be worked. Action CH.

6. Additional Orders of Business

Change to the constitution: The reintroduction of the “Associate Member” requires a change to the constitution. This item will be addressed when the committee has more members in attendance.

7. Next Meeting

Wednesday 13 May 2015 at 14:30 in the PAO conference room.