

**MINUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL SKÅL COUNCIL ONLY PLENARY SESSION  
HELD AT THE VAN DER VALK HOTEL, HAARLEM, NETHERLANDS,  
ON SATURDAY 25 APRIL 2015**

**PRESENT:**

<b>President:</b>	Bernard Whewell	Australia
<b>Vice Presidents:</b>	Kamer Rodoplu	Turkey
	William Rheume	Canada
<b>Councillors:</b>	Alberto Esper	Argentina
	Bob Lunnon	Australia
	Edward Lo	Chinese Taipei
	Katarina Hauptfeld	Croatia
	Marja Eela Kaskinen	Finland
	Jason Samuel	India
	Francis Brennan	Ireland
	Antonino Percario	Italy
	Jorge Luis Moya Huerta	Mexico
	Constantine Panoussi	Monaco
	Frans Staal	Netherlands
	Peter Morrison	New Zealand
	Abimbola Durosinmi-Etti	Nigeria
	Arshad Khokhar	Norden
	Gracia Peregrin	Spain
	Brinley Waddell	Thailand
	Mark Alexander	United Kingdom
	Llana Smith	United States of America
	Armando Chaquiriand	Uruguay
<b>Deputy Councillors:</b>	Martin Hirl	Austria
	Uzi Yalon	Israel
	Julie Dabaly-Scott	Kenya
<b><u>EXCUSED:</u></b>	Gerald Perez	Asia
	Sylvia Liebisch	Austria
	Victor Abboud Fayad	Ecuador
	Thomas Chevalier	France
	Werner Flegel	Germany
	Peter Javorkai	Hungary
	Yaacov Hartman	Israel
	Annette Cardenas	Northern Latin America
	Heine Johansen	Norway
	Patria Chiong	Philippines
	Lavonne Wittmann (Secretary)	South Africa
	Carlos Lopez Gallego	Southern Latin America
	Martin Ahlberg	Sweden
	Igor Viloria Barazarte	Venezuela
<b><u>ABSENT:</u></b>	Jano Mouawad	Bahrain
	Ximena Alvarez	Bolivia
	Ana Carolina Dias Medeiros	Brazil
	Konstantinos Kalogeorgos	Greece
	Victor Osumi	Japan
	Michel Kreitem	Jordan

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**1. WELCOME BY ISC PRESIDENT BERNARD WHEWELL**

ISC President Bernard Whewell welcomed the Councillors to the first ISC Only Plenary with no observers to work through some of the items raised on the previous day and other items that had been ongoing. He would then present to the Executive Committee what the Council wanted to have approved.

**2. NEW MEETING STRUCTURE AND BID PROCESS**

ISC President Bernard Whewell asked ISC Vice President Bill Rheume to explain the new meeting structure for both the Mid-year and the annual meetings. The Mid-year meeting was extended by one day and the annual meeting shortened by one day. The benefits of those changes was an additional part day which would allow for the tasks to be worked through and in some cases completed. Not having the Executive Committee present would assist with the focus on the tasks.

With regard to the bidding format, the International Council wanted to look at the rotation by continent for the Mid-year meeting to give all continents a chance of bidding and hosting. The Bid Document needed to reflect real figures.

ISC President Bernard Whewell confirmed that the new structure and format would be available on Dropbox.

**3. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION ON LINE**

ISC President Bernard Whewell explained step by step the online membership application procedure through the website. He urged the Councillors to encourage their Clubs to use this tool which was a faster approval process.

Arshad Khokhar (Norden) complained that it was difficult to insert the date of birth. ISC President Bernard Whewell agreed that the format needed to be changed and assigned the task to ISC Vice President Kamer Rodoplu.

Constantine Panoussi (Monaco) said that if you made a small mistake or something did not work, the system prompted you back and the information which you had already filled on the form disappeared.

Bob Lunnon (Australia) proposed to have a section on the homepage listing all the membership categories.

Katarina Hauptfeld (Croatia) had noticed that not all the members had their photo on the database. She stated that the Travel with the President section was still showing Immediate Past-President Karine Coulanges. Regarding the Boutique, she suggested that we contact our members from Mexico, specially Taxco, who had made some wonderful jewellery which we could add on the website and purchase.

**4. A) BOB LUNNON AUSTRALIA  
HOW SKÅL INTERNATIONAL CAN EFFECTIVELY ALIGN WITH OTHER SIMILAR/DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Bob Lunnon (Australia) explained that Skål International Australia had put together a five year forward planning document, including a SWOT analysis and a study in terms of the retention and development of membership and formation of new Clubs around the country. He mentioned that the document was available on the Skål International Australia website.

Skål International Australia had launched a Platinum Club of the Year Award with 11 criteria, including the payment of fees by the due date.

Bob Lunnon showed a Power Point presentation on Skål International being viewed as a business focused organisation and the benefits of membership.

Llana Smith (U.S.A.) thought it was a great presentation and she would use it for the United States.

**B) CONSTANTINE PANOUSI MONACO  
THE IMPORTANCE OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERS AND OPERATING ONE COUNTRY AS ONE CLUB**

Constantine Panoussi (Monaco) gave a background of his Skål life and explained the first steps of Skål International Monaco and the hard work behind its formation and its retention. He reminded that Monaco was home of the largest millionaires and billionaires per capita in the world and Skål membership had to be beneficial to these members who were surrounded by luxury and fame, events and activities, with the best jobs, best contacts, best salaries and high revenue.

Constantine Panoussi stated that the only way that we could maintain a successful Club in Monaco and saving it from closing down for a second and final time was by increasing our membership at all possible levels. He added that we needed to have some of the antiquated By-laws changed and to open our membership to individuals who were actively involved with attracting and entertaining tourism in Monaco.

He said that it took him several months to have the application form of the Associate member who had put him in contact with the Minister who had opened the doors for him to reinstate Skål in Monaco.

He explained that an Associate member had been voted to be the Public Relation person for Skål Monaco, however, he had received the response from Yvonne Mansell from the headquarters that this person was not allowed to occupy this position.

Constantine Panoussi stated two other cases and complained that the people sitting on the board were very slow in responding. Changes to the By-laws needed to be adopted in a way that Skål will appeal to people of Monaco.

He added that our system of communication and making decision acting and changes was left in the dark ages of the 60's and 70's.

Constantine Panoussi mentioned that although Skål Monaco was a strong Club, there were some members who were still questioning the benefits of Skål for them. In closing, he asked to have these changes done in order not to lose Skål Monaco and various other Clubs that were in the same situation.

ISC President Bernard Whewell said that the categories were OK, but it was the rules within the categories that did not allow the flexibility and he thought that we would have to change these things.

Constantine Panoussi added that it was frustrating when you sent in a new application and was refused after all the efforts made.

**C) MARK ALEXANDER UNITED KINGDOM.  
THE CHALLENGE OF AN AGING SKÅL CLUB/COUNTRY AND THE IMPORTANCE OF ENCOURAGING A YOUNGER MEMBERSHIP**

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Mark Alexander (United Kingdom) started by telling a success story he had recently experienced within Skål.

Mark Alexander stated that Skål International United Kingdom had lost six Clubs in four years and of the eight Clubs left, three of them had over 50% members retired. In the smaller Clubs with this level of retired members, there were people who had held the presidency at least six times because they could not get anyone else to do it. He commented that we had to avoid the clash of dates because his own National Assembly was taking place at the same time as the ISC Mid-year meeting.

Mark Alexander continued that another big issue was that with a very mature membership like that health had an impact. And when it came to finances, nobody would complain more about an increase in dues than retired people.

Mark Alexander explained the case of Skål Jersey who had no young members who were prepared to stand for office because they felt there was too much bureaucracy in administration. As a lot of the other mature and retired members were not in a position to continue with office, they had no Officers and the Club had to close.

Mark Alexander informed that his Club had focused on getting Young Skålleagues (under 50 and active in the business) onto Council which gave the Club a young image. His Club was keen to ensure that they had a lot of commercial programmes and business events.

Mark Alexander said that the downside of having this young fast track programme was that people had less experience, were not as influential and had not the same level of authority.

Mark Alexander raised the issue of the lack of funds to succeed in the formation of new Clubs. He believed that it was important to have one or two local key people on board.

Brinley Waddell (Thailand) mentioned that a similar situation occurred in Thailand. He complained that there were members who were not enthusiastic and he suggested to have some kind of training programme for Committee members.

Bob Lunnon (Australia) said that in Australia they had a situation with the Gold Coast Club where it was predominantly retirees which was making it difficult to get younger or industry leaders in. They had decided to have two separate cells within the Club, one for the retirees who could have their own events and another cell with regular monthly lunches which would attract the young and new industry leader people.

Jason Samuel (India) stated that it was important to have a second person in command in order to maintain a Club active.

ISC President Bernard Whewell believed that we had to have a development strategy to fix the current problems and grow Skål.

Arshad Khokhar (Norden) wondered why the Honorary members had to pay the dues. ISC President Bernard Whewell responded that within the current structure the dues had to be paid and he suggested that the local Club could host these people.

**5. STRATEGIC ALLIANCES BETWEEN SKÅL AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

Bill Rheume (Canada) referred to the benefits of connecting with a corporate association like existed between Skål and Sealed Air/Diversey and opened the floor to talk about what strategic advantages and where could we find strategic advantages with corporate sponsorships in each area and what further could be done.

Mark Alexander (United Kingdom) explained that in Northern Ireland they looked at strategic alliances or corporate companies related to the tourism industry to create relationships on a commercial basis and a win-win scenario that helped fund the events.

Brinley Waddell (Thailand) mentioned that Thailand would bid for the 2017 World Congress and the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau had already pledged that they would assist financially with the bidding process. He added that the partner had to see a very real benefit in return.

Arshad Khokhar (Norden) stated that in Denmark the companies did not give them the money, but they were even.

Katarina Hauptfeld (Croatia) suggested to lower the prices of the advertisements in the Skål magazine and to take on a PR agency, but in the meantime someone from the head office could approach all national tourist associations.

Constantine Panoussi (Monaco) informed that the Ministry of Tourism had committed themselves to sponsor the 2016 World Congress. However, they had looked at the Skål website, but they were not interested in appearing in there because according to the Ministry it was not very presentable.

Mark Alexander (United Kingdom) advised that the trade fairs gave a commercial opportunity to our members and there was a great potential there.

Bob Lunnon (Australia) suggested to have a strategic alliance globally with credit card companies where there would be a two way benefits.

ISC President Bernard Whewell gave a couple of examples of sponsorships at Club level in Australia. He then explained that ISC Vice President Bill Rheaume would collate these thoughts and work those around and focus on three or four of them.

## **6. FVF NEW IDEA**

Brinley Waddell (Thailand) raised the issue of the 1 Euro to be levied for the Florimond Volckaert Fund approved during the ISC Mexico City meeting and ISC President Bernard Whewell confirmed that he would raise the issue with the Executive Committee who had to approve it.

ISC Vice President Kamer Rodoplu stated that one of the items on the agenda was the Florimond Volckaert rules and regulations for the silent auction and raffle. The team had proposed to use the Fund not only for the Skålleagues in need, but also for the Skål Clubs in need. This would require a lot of changes in the management of the Fund. It had also been suggested to form another fund for the Clubs in need.

Mark Alexander (United Kingdom) said that the Council would have to put forward a structured proposal which would go to a vote at the General Assembly to make this happen. He added that he would put the business plan together within the next couple of weeks and get it through to the Council.

Brinley Waddell (Thailand) suggested that the raffle and the silent auction proceeds could go to raise funds for membership development.

Uzi Yalon (Israel) mentioned that Skål had a Reserve Fund which was established to be used in times of chaos and that we could consider using it now, but not the Florimond Volckaert Fund.

ISC Vice President Kamer Rodoplu said that the ISC Board would now discuss the issue and come back to the Council with some concrete proposals.

**7. B2B**

ISC Vice President Bill Rheaume said that the idea was to accomplish a call to action in order to get the new B2B programme in place and operational for the 2015 World Congress in Mombasa.

Katarina Hauptfeld (Croatia) explained that we had to decide whether it would be a workshop or a networking session with the possibility to look for the local interest of non Skål members. She proposed to use some money from the Reserve Fund for advertising purposes through the local/area newspapers. She suggested to organise a cocktail party.

Jason Samuel (India) mentioned that the timing was very important.

Bob Lunnon (Australia) wondered if B2B was the correct name and proposed to look at a name change.

Mark Alexander (United Kingdom) said that it needed to be organised in a professional manner.

Llana Smith (U.S.A.) said that each exhibitor should be given the opportunity to stand at a microphone and explain who they were.

Katarina Hauptfeld (Croatia) said that we needed pre-arranged appointments.

**8. SPECIAL INTEREST TOURISM**

ISC Vice President Bill Rheaume explained that although the Medical Tourism classification had been finalised and approved by the Council and then forwarded to the Executive Committee for implementation, it seemed that the process had stopped there due to a lack of clarity between the Council and the Executive Committee.

A discussion followed on Sport Tourism. The Council had to consider any gaps that could fall between the stones and forward a clear By-law wording to the Executive Committee.

ISC President Bernard Whewell concluded that the Council would work that up and he would battle for it at the Executive Committee level.

**9. ANTONIO SPECIAL PROJECT**

Antonino Percario (Italy) gave some details of the “Gondola for All” project. He informed that Skål International Venezia would organise the first Accessible Tourism Symposium next year. He mentioned the Milano Expo which offered a special offer to all Skål members. He then showed a couple of videos on these projects.

ISC President Bernard Whewell thanked all the participants for their time and efforts and he closed the meeting.