
**MINUTES OF THE 59TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC
SOCIETY HONG KONG, HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24TH APRIL 2019 AT THE HONG
KONG CLUB, CENTRAL, HONG KONG.**

The meeting commenced at 6:42 p.m. with a quorum of members present.

Welcome by the President

The Hon Secretary, Mr David McKellar, welcomed everyone to the 59th Annual General Meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong.

As a preliminary point, the Secretary noted apologies had been received from a number of members and recorded. Further apologies were received from the floor.

1. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 58th AGM held on 25th April 2018

The Honorary Secretary presented the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting, held on 25th April 2018. No questions on the Minutes were tendered. Receipt and confirmation of the Minutes was proposed by Mr Don Gasper and seconded by Ms Janet Spence. They were passed unanimously and were duly signed as a correct record.

2. Vice President's Report for the year 2018-2019 on the activities of the Society and Ride Fund

The Vice President presented her Report and included thanks to the Administrator and the HK Club.

Mr Don Gasper expressed his hope that the Report would still be included in the Journal in due course. Mr Michael Broom asked that Sir Adrian Swire's name be included in the list of members who had passed away over the preceding year.

There being no further questions, receipt of the Report was proposed by Mr Michael Broom and seconded by Dr Patrick Hase, which proposal was passed by the members present, with some acclaim.

3. Reports of the Honorary Librarian, Hon Editor, Hon Activities Co-ordinator and Hon Archivist

The Hon Secretary noted that the Reports had been posted to the Society's website, affording members time to digest the same; and were included in the bundle for the meeting. The reports are to be taken as read. The Hon Secretary invited members to discuss issues with the office bearers during cocktails.

4. Honorary Treasurer's Report for the year ending 31st December 2018

The Hon Secretary referred the Meeting to the Financial Statements of the Society for the year ended 31st December 2018. He noted that the Hon Treasurer summarised the financial status of the Society as "healthy". Questions from the floor were invited, but none were received. Receipt of the Report was proposed by Mr Peter Stuckey and seconded by Mr Robert Bunker, which proposal was accepted unanimously.

5. Report of the Accounts of the Sir Lindsay and Lady Ride Memorial Fund

The Hon Secretary referred the meeting to the financial statements of the Fund for the year ended 31st December 2018. Dr Patrick Hase noted that the Fund was reducing, and more donations were needed, as the Fund could not reduce to \$0. Mr John Strickland, Chairman of the Fund, reassured the meeting that the Fund had sufficient assets to last a few years yet, and that the year end asset balances were recorded at low market rates.

6. Report of the Chairman of the Friends of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch in Britain

The Hon Secretary noted that the Report of the Chairman of the Friends of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch in Britain was unfortunately not available as the Chairman, Mr Paul Bolding – who sent his apologies - was undertaking a long visit to the USA.

7. To discuss a plan for the future of the Society

The Hon Secretary said he had been asked by the Vice President to address the meeting on this agenda topic.

The Hon Secretary noted that although the Society had stable finances, thanks to prudent management, the Society had stretched resources. Not least, the slate for Councillors for 2019-20 which had been shared indicated the prospect of no President and only one Vice President. He noted that the Council needs regular new blood, to keep running and innovate, and that the Council needed new blood now! He informed the meeting that the Council had during the previous year considered the role of the Society, and Council believes the Society has a continuing and valuable role to play in straddling the academic and the popular, in our community and globally, in our mutual understanding of South China, in particular Hong Kong. He noted over 30 events, over 8,400 volumes in the library, the Journal in its 59th volume and the archival, documentary and photographic collections of the Society.

The Hon Secretary said that Council would greatly appreciate volunteer(s) as Hon Activities Co-ordinator or to join the Activities Committee; to stand directly as a Vice President; to stand for Council generally; to edit the Newsletter; to propose an event and be the co-ordinator therefor; and to contribute IT or social media skills to increase exposure of events. He reiterated that without new blood, the future, beyond our 60th AGM in 2020, might look bleak; and Council was seriously querying the Society's longevity.

Mr Peter Stuckey stood and said that while being President is a demanding job, noting Mr Michael Broom had done a lot for the Society, he queried whether too much might be expected of the role. He said that a President should be expected to serve a year or two only. The Hon Secretary said that Council entirely agreed with that proposition. Dr Patrick Hase said that the Hon Activities Co-ordinator was a critical role. The Vice President agreed, noting it was hard to do the two roles of Vice President and Hon Activities Co-ordinator. She said that she would be happy to explain that or any other office to any member who might be interested. Mr Steve Tenant noted that the office of President might be considered to be surrounded by the Immediate Past President and the President Elect.

8 and 9. To amend the Constitution

The Hon Secretary noted that items 8 and 9 on the agenda were both to amend the Constitution. He said that the changes were proposed to provide more flexibility to the Council in its constitution and how it organises sub-committees, including to have two Co-Presidents if the Society thought it feasible to share the workload of that office. He asked if there was any objection to voting on the proposed changes together. None were received from the meeting. Before moving the motion to accept the Report, the Hon Secretary asked if there were any Questions from the floor. There were none. Dr Patrick Hase then proposed that the amendments to the Constitution set out below be approved by the meeting. This was seconded by Mr Bob Bunker and unanimously approved by the meeting.

To amend Rule 11.1 of, and add a new Rule 11.4 to, the Constitutional Rules of the Society as marked in red:

"11.1 The Officers of the Society shall consist of:
(1) A **President or two Co-Presidents**;"

"11.4 If the Officers consist of two Co-Presidents, references to the President herein shall refer:
(1) In Rule 10.2, to any past Co-President.
(2) In Rules 15 and 32.1, to either Co-President.
(3) In Rule 16, to either Co-President, as the meeting may decide in any case of dispute.
(4) In Rule 22, to either Co-President and both Co-Presidents respectively."

To amend Rule 13(7) of the Constitutional Rules of the Society as marked in red:

"13 Without prejudice to the general powers conferred upon Council, it is expressly declared that the Council shall have the following powers:
...
(7) to appoint any committee or sub-committee consisting of ~~a majority of Members of its own body together with~~ such ~~other~~ persons as it may think fit, to delegate any of its powers thereof to such committee or sub-committee and prescribe the functions, duties and powers thereof, and to revoke any delegation and determine all or any such functions, duties and powers;"

10. Election of Officers and Members of Council for the year 2019-2020

The Hon Secretary referred to item 10 on the Agenda and the list containing the names of those proposed for election to Council which had been circulated with the Notice of this AGM. He described the changes if the proposed list were accepted: the retirements of Dr Gillian Bickley as a Vice President and Mr Garfield Lam as Hon Archivist, to be replaced by Mr Yip Chun Man; and Dr Kwong Chi Man as willing to stand for election. The Hon Secretary noted that no one was yet proposed to stand as President for the coming year. The Hon Secretary noted that the Council would continue to look for a President, in whose absence meetings would be chaired by a Vice President. Nominations for Council were invited. Mr Roy Delbyck was proposed as an additional Councillor.

The Hon Secretary then proposed to carry out the election en bloc and enquired if there were any objections to doing so. None having been received, Mr Nick Bilcliffe then proposed and Mr Peter Stuckey seconded the election to Council of those listed below. The proposal was carried unanimously and the Hon Secretary declared the following Council elected for the ensuing year:

Office Bearers:

President
Vice President
Hon Secretary

Vacant
Dr Helen Tinsley
Mr David McKellar

Hon Treasurer
Hon Editor
Hon Librarian
Hon Activities Co-ordinator
Hon Archivist
Other Council Members:

Ms Connie Carmichael
Dr Stephen Davies
Ms Vivian So
Dr Helen Tinsley
Mr Yip Chun Man
Mr Don Gasper
Ms Davina Lee
Mr Robert Bunker
Dr Kwong Chi Man

The Hon Secretary noted that Council can co-opt additional members and invited those interested to speak with any Councillor after the meeting about doing so.

11. To elect additional Trustees to the Sir Lindsay and Lady Ride Memorial Fund for the year 2019-2020

The Hon Secretary reminded the AGM that the majority of the Trustees of the Fund are ex-officio Trustees, by virtue of their position as officers of RASHKB: the President, Vice-Presidents, Honorary Treasurer and the Immediate Past President; and that the Trustees might at any time appoint not more than two Trustees. Further the Society was able, at any AGM, to elect not more than two Trustees. The motion therefore was to elect two additional Trustees. The Hon Secretary was pleased to propose Mr John Strickland and Mr John Budge be re-elected, which was seconded by Mr Michael Broom. There being no other nominations, the proposal was voted upon and approved unanimously.

12. Appointment of Auditors for the year 2019-2020

The Hon Secretary said that he was pleased to propose Ian Hasell & Co be re-elected as Auditors for the ensuing year. The motion was seconded by Mr Chris Hall, and was carried unanimously.

13. Any Other Business

The Hon Secretary asked if anyone had any other business to raise or questions.

The Hon Secretary then thanked Dr Gillian Bickley and Ms Ivy Ho for their substantial assistance to the Society over the year and to him in particular all to unanimous acclaim.

The Administrator, Ms Ivy Ho, presented Dr Gillian Bickley with flowers and a card with heartfelt thanks on behalf of the Council. Dr Bickley thanked the Council and Society and wished the Council best of luck for the year to come, to acclaim.

No further business being raised, the 59th Annual General Meeting was then declared closed by the Hon Secretary at 7.46pm. The AGM was followed by cocktails.

Confirmed by Vice President: Date: 21st April 2020