

Minutes for SAGAS AGM 17th January 2009

at South Downs Planetarium, Chichester

Chair	Graham Bryant, SAGAS Working Group
Secretary	John Axtell, SAGAS Working Group

1. Preamble

The AGM took place as Item 9 of the main quarterly SAGAS Meeting, but these minutes have been extracted to a separate document as they will be reviewed at the next AGM, rather than at the next quarterly meeting. For details of the other items and the societies present, see the minutes of the SAGAS Meeting held 17th January 2009

2. Co-ordinator's Report (*Item 9.1 on main agenda*)

Here is the full text of Graham's report:

Firstly I would like to thank the Working Group (Keith Brackenborough, John Axtell, Brian Halls, John Murrell and John Stapleton) for their hard work over the past two years. Like all organisations much work goes on behind the scenes which are often unnoticed and sometimes unrecognised.

I was co-opted onto the WG during 2008 after a vacancy occurred on the WG. I was happy to do this as I have been a keen supporter of SAGAS since its first inception in the early 1970s and more latterly through the production with Pete Seiden of the popular **Nightlife** news sheets and events.

As you may all be aware Keith Brackenborough was the WG coordinator until late last year when Keith stated that he would be out of the country for some time during 2009 and could not give the WG the time he felt it needed whilst away. Part of my agreement in stepping onto the WG was to fill any vacancy that occurred on the WG 'executive' – so here I am giving this report instead of Keith.

SAGAS has reinvented itself several times since it was first formed over 30 years ago and I believe the creation of the WG and the work the group has done over the past two years has made us stronger once again.

John Axtell and I gave a talk this week to a society on SAGAS, the history and benefits. In this day of e-mail, easy travel information explosion and the like it is easy to ask why SAGAS and what does it offer. I believe that there are many reasons to still meet several times a year, share experiences, problems, successes, work together as neighbouring societies and share resources and as a group we can be stronger. I feel we should not lose sight of some of those simple human aspects – we are social creatures and meeting face to face is important to us.

I am deeply saddened that a long standing society that have supported SAGAS since the very first meeting and a relatively newly formed society decided to re-join following an e-mail sent out to all many societies by an ex-member of the

WG. I have agreed to pop along to those societies and talk face to face with them.

The WG, aware that we are a group of enthusiastic supporters of the SAGAS principle, wanted to ensure that the organisation, although always having been a loose association, is put on a more formal and democratic footing. I would like to offer a vote of thanks to the working group and a special mention to Phil Alner of Cody AS for the significant work he put in to the development of the Constitution on our behalf which you have now voted to adopt.

I, on behalf of the Working Group (past) and the committee (future), would like to thank you all for your support.

3. Treasurer's Report (*Item 9.2 on main agenda*)

3.1 Brian Halls reported a healthy financial situation. As of 31st December there was \$411.83 in the account. £200 of this had been from the successful application to the Federation for funding for IYA activities. Apart from payments for the hire of the Planetarium and for general running expenses, a large amount of this money could now be used to plough back into SAGAS activities, especially for IYA2009. Brian asked member societies to contribute ideas for such funding.

3.2 The meeting then discussed whether to reduce the annual subscription to perhaps £10. John Axtell mentioned that one item of anticipated expenditure had disappeared, namely because the FAS has now agreed to cover the travel expenses of all Regional reps travelling to Council meetings. In view of the need to build a reserve and to cover likely IYA events, the meeting decided to continue with the £15 per year subscription.

3.3 Brian announced that Doc Sutton had kindly agreed to act as Auditor for SAGAS. He had already conducted a trial run looking at the accounts, and will complete the full run in the next quarter, given that SAGAS's financial year runs until the April Meeting.

4. Elections (*Item 9.3 on main agenda*)

4.1. Nominations

Graham Bryant reported that John Stapleton had announced that he would not be standing for Committee this year. Graham asked the meeting to thank John for all his work during his time on the Committee, with special mention of his work (with Phil Alner) in preparing the SAGAS Constitution.

Janet Young had agreed to stand for Committee, but there were no other new nominations.

All other existing members of the Working Group had agreed to stand again in their existing roles.

4.2. New Committee

There were no objections to those nominated or standing again, and the vote was unanimous to elect the existing members en bloc and to appoint Janet Young as Committee Member with responsibility for Newsletter.

Chair	Graham Bryant	Hampshire AG
Secretary	John Axtell	Guildford AS
Treasurer	Brian Halls	Worthing Astronomers
Committee Members		
Rep to Federation	Keith Brackenborough	Eastbourne AS
Web Master	John Murrell	Croydon AS
Newsletter	Janet Young	Worthing Astronomers

4.3. Auditors

The meeting formally agreed that Doc Sutton should act as auditor, with many thanks for taking on this role.

5 Postscript

At the close of the AGM the meeting continued at Item 10, with the roles of Chair and secretary reverting to Cody AS

John Axtell

Secretary, SAGAS Committee