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European Town Twinning

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MEERSSEN : NIEDERANVEN : OXELÖSUND : PRIENAI : PREVEZA
SESIMBRA : SHERBORNE : SKOFIA LOKA : SIGULDA
SIRET : SUŠICE : TRYAVNA : TÜRI : ZVOLEN

DOUZELAGE - EUROPEAN TOWN TWINNING

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SIRET (RO)
SKOFIA LOKA (SI)
SUŠICE (CZ)
TRYAVNA (BG)
TÜRI (EST)
ZVOLEN (SK)

38th DOUZELAGE CONFERENCE

BELLAGIO

9th May – 12th May 2013

MINUTES



PARTICIPANTS

GM = GENERAL MEETING, EM = EDUCATION MEETING, YM = YOUTH MEETING

AGROS

Papachristoforou Haris

Haralambuous Marios EM

Latzias Andreas GM

Nikolaidou Niki EM

Agathokleous Marios YM

BAD KOTZING

Kerscher Wolfgang GM

Fischer Julia YM

Emberger Isolde GM

Meindl Benedikt YM

Zankl Carola EM

CHOJNA

Salamończyk Cezary Janusz GM

Wołos Stanisław GM

Rydzewska Anna GM

Będzak Andrzej YM

Andrzejczyk Barbara GM

Oleśków Norbert YM

Dłużak Anna GM

GRANVILLE

Vallee Pascale GM

Lamglet Thibaut EM

Michel Marcel GM

Bailleul Helene EM

Guerry Fay GM

Corre Emilie EM

Guerry Jean-Claude GM

Michel Annette ND



HOLSTEBRO

Grith Sorensen Mette GM

Bisgaard Larsen Lene EM

Hingbjerg Jette GM

HOUFFALIZE

Henrard Alphonse GM

Dutrieux Logan YM

Caprasse Marc GM

Close Mathilde YM

Nollomont Luc EM

JUDENBURG

Kober Andrea GM

Haasmann Corinna YM

Hoffelner Manfred GM

Hofer Theresa YM

Hoffelner Marina YM

KÖSZEG

Bakos Zoltan GM

Lasancz Eszter YM

Lepold Agnes EM

Dalos Flora YM

MARSASKALA

Calleja Mario GM

Zammit Matthew YM

Mifsud Carmel EM

Crossely Chloe YM



Gatt Sandro GM

Debono Mary Grace GM

MEERSSEN

Luns-Kruijbosch Annigje GM

Luns Frederike YM

Van Doorn Bert EM

Tum Ernenst YM

Crombag Harry GM

Majoor Karel GM

Crombag-Slangen Marie-Therese

NIEDERANVEN

Poiré Jeannot GM

Braun Monique

Mouton Jos GM

Mouton Liliane

Paquet Marie-Antoinette GM

Poiré Christiane

OXELÖSUND

Thelin Niklas GM

Fredriksson Elin YM

Pettersson Mattias Jensen GM

Rud Emelie YM

Hoglin Monica EM

PREVEZA

George Sakkas GM

Christos Sakkas YM

Barbara Zadraveli EM

Tzoras Nikos YM



SESIMBRA

Costa Felicia GM

Rute Ana Paula

Pessanha Felipe EM

Conceicao Cristina GM

Maldonado Mafalda EM

SHERBORNE

Balfour Michael GM

Waterfall Kevin GM

Barker Jeremy GM

Western Moira GM

Whittick Sara EM

Morrell Michael

Copper Tony

Whittick Michael

Whittick Josh

Joe Ferdinand YM

Townsend Richard YM

Balfour Margaret

Jelbert Clifton

Jelbert Janet

Morrell Pat

Copper Scilla

Whittick John

Whittick Freddie

SIGULDA

Sulte Ilze EM

Elksnitis Uldis GM

Vilkina Ivonna YM

Zvejnieks Guntars GM

Zabers Andris YM



SIRET

Popiu Adrian GM

Mocrei Liliana EM

Razvan Barbuta YM

Rotaru Tiberiu GM

Cusiac Florin Georgel GM

Console Rumeno in Milano Tiberiu Dinu GM

Segretario Console Stelian Gheorghe GM

Haiura Viorel GM

Tiberiu Tcaciuc YM

Bejenariu Eugen MEP GM

Balan Alin GM

SKOFJA LOKA

Jese Miha GM

Louis Elsa EM

Strekeli Andreja-Orchestra GM

Fischer David

SUSICE

Svobodowa Vera GM

Volna Kristina EM

Hofmanowa Lucie YM

Kolar Jaromir EM

Vlachowa Anna YM

Vera Maresowa ND

TURI

Pink Raivo GM

Saar Tea EM

Simson Mattias YM

Sarkinen Sulo YM

Kaljula Silver Taavi YM



ZVOLEN

Babic Ondrej GM

Laszloova Zuzana GM

Schieberowa Zuzana EM

Ticha Lenka EM

Janovska Katarina YM

BELLAGIO

Nettuno Alessandro GM

Gilardoni Maria Angela GM

Floroni Daniela GM

Sancassani Arianna GM

Barindelli Angelo GM

Leoni Luca GM

Gandola Donatella GM

Castelnuovo Monica EM

Lauritano Lucia EM

Taccagni Isidoro YM

Gandola Luigi YM

Quarenghi Michele YM



I. GENERAL MEETING

Words of welcome by Mr. Luca Leoni.

Luca Leoni, vice mayor of Bellagio, welcomed all the delegations, the President, all young people who arrived to work with music and sports. Luca was happy to be there with Luigi, a very well-known chef on TV who would look after all the young people who came for the cooking.

The President of Douzelage Mr. Janusz Salamończyk announced the mayor of Bellagio – Mr. Angelo Barindelli. First of all, he welcomed the company to Bellagio and thanked for choosing Bellagio for these important meetings and wished all a lovely stay and good work. Bellagio has been a member of Douzelage since the beginning (1991). Bellagio has always believed in Europe, Bellagio has always wanted a Europe which supports all people who need help. Bellagio really believes that Europe is for everybody, believes in a democratic Europe. Every delegation would speak that day; the most important is friendship, which would grow and he wished for a really united Europe in the future, even from a political point of view. He really wished the towns good work during their meeting.

Mr. A. Barindelli would like to thank their member of Douzelage since the beginning: he would like to give a small gift to Alessandro Nettulo. Mr. Barindelli also wanted to present a gift to Maria Angela Gillardoni who was a president of the Douzelage of Bellagio. And he wanted to remember Donatella Gandola for her good work of all those years, organizing all meetings. Thanks for everybody and good work.

Mr. Leoni also thanked Donatella for her work and love for Douzelage. Not only for what she did during recent months, but for all she does for Douzelage.

Next, there was a speech by the President of Douzelage, Mr. Janusz Salamończyk: ‘Mr. Mayor, ladies and gentlemen, dear Douzelage friends. Delegations of our organization are meeting in Bellagio, a beautiful place full of fine architecture, where history lives on every corner of its narrow streets. It is the 38th General Meeting of Douzelage. Douzelage witnesses many changes in the European Union. Let me repeat here a few of the things I said at the opening of the Douzelage exhibition in the European Parliament buildings in April 2013. Words we hear most often these days are crisis, agriculture, banks and unemployment. Problems in all these fields, in my opinion, are not reasons but consequences of a human relations crisis. European countries are far ahead with economy and infrastructure, but have left behind the most crucial things:



solidarity and understanding. There is a psychological theory of inhumanization and dehumanization. According to it we more often exclude or do not trust people who represent a different culture. It is the real cause of our difficulties. The solution is to aim for contacts, friendship, meetings and mutual understanding. This is what Douzelage is all about. I checked the unemployment rate for young people this morning. It is 12.4%. 73.4 million people all over Europe between 15 and 29 not studying or working. 7.9% in Germany, 9.9 in Austria but 28 % in Poland, 31% in Ireland, 39% in Portugal and 55% in Spain. I would like to ask all of us: can we do something about it, at least on a very small scale? Can we help young people from small towns find themselves easier in European Labor Market? Douzelage has changed as well. We are bigger, our meetings are more expensive and difficult to organize. But I hope we manage to save a very special value: Douzelage spirit. Many thanks to Granville, the first capital of Douzelage. The Douzelage presidents: Karel Majoor, Jeremy Barker and Ed Weber. I would like to greet Ed, who was not able to be here with us today.

Mr. Mayor, Luca, Donatella and all friends in Bellagio, thank you very much for your time and efforts. Let the magic atmosphere of Bellagio help us work and better the future for Douzelage. Thank you.”

Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. President of the Douzelage, and dear friends: welcome to Bellagio. I am not officially invited to make a speech, but I feel it is necessary for me to say a few words to such an important assembly of European citizens. Today is a special day for me. If I go back in my mind to 1996, I see myself become a member of Douzelage and having the great honour of meeting so many European people during these meetings. Thanks to everybody and Mr. President of Douzelage. Today during all these discussions you will speak about music and food, particularly dedicated to young people. In Austria a very famous orchestra conductor used to say that life without music would be a mistake. Regarding food. Our main activities are linked with tourism, so we consequently produce excellent hotel staff and expert cooks like Mr. Gandola who is here, who will show you the art of cooking. Maybe when you return to your country you will try to develop some recipes. Be careful not to burn the kitchen, if possible: it is not part of the lesson.

In two years' time Milano involving the entire world will organize a conference and the theme will be *Feeding the planet*. This is an element of primary importance. It is a responsibility and enormous opportunity. Bellagio I would definite as a magic place. For centuries distinguished people have lived here and many are still attracted by this place, theatre of very famous love stories. I hope you



will be able to see a part of our beauties and enjoy this stay. I wish good luck to the whole family of Douzelage. Thank you.

The President of Douzelage asked Agnes Lepold to inform the Educational meeting delegates about Saturday morning.

Agnes Lepold: “ Hello everybody, it is nice to see you all again after a year. I would like to inform the representatives of the Educational Meeting about our programme, because it might be not clear from the invitation. Today we are going to join the youngsters in the projects. They are going to do the singing and music project with Isidoro in the Tower of Arts, so if you are music teachers or not, but you are interested in this project please join the youngsters and Isidoro. The other session will be Europe united in taste. If you are teachers of cookery please join the youngsters for that workshop in Bellagio Sporting Club. Tomorrow we are going to meet at the library, to have sessions there. At 9.30 teachers are invited to the library, we would like all delegates to the Educational meeting to join there. The library is very close to the hotel Splendid. So, if you meet me at 9.15 I can show you the way. If you have any problems I am quite prepared to help. I will be here at the end of the General Meeting today. So, if you need me you will find me here this afternoon. Thank you very much. “

The young delegations went with Luigi and Isidoro to their classes. The cooking class was at the restaurant.

The president informed the meeting that the secretary would hand out the agenda with annexes and the codicils with all the stamps and signatures (excepting Karkkila’s).

Mr. Salamonczyk announced Mr. Tiberiu Dinu, Consul of the Republic of Romania in Torino, Member of Parliament. He is a director of general export in Milano.

We arrived here with the Romanian delegation . It is the first time we are here and we are very happy to see what is going on here. We find a very big association which is composed of people from 27 European countries. What we read about you we found very interesting and we would like to say hello to everybody on behalf of the Romanian government. We hope to organize a future meeting in Romania in the town of Siret. We read what you are going to work on today and tomorrow. Unfortunately we do not have enough time to stay, though it would be very interesting for us, for our future, for Europe. We thank you very much for inviting us here and hope



in future this meeting will take place in Romania. I hope you manage to do very good work and enjoy yourself. Thank you.

Mr. Salamonczyk thanked our two great translators: Jean- Claude and Fay, who are working very hard, as always.

1. Business Matters

1) Approval of the Zvolen GM minutes

- approval of the minutes of the Zvolen GM 17th – 20th May 2012,
- approval of the Education Committee Report,
- approval of the Youth Workshop Report.

The President: You received draft minutes, some towns returned suggestions for improvement, we included them and we sent the minutes to the towns again. Do you have any comments regarding the minutes of the last GM in Zvolen? Any questions? If I do not hear any objections I assume that the minutes of the last GM in Zvolen are accepted. Thank you.

The same goes for the report of the Education Committee in Zvolen. If there are no comments, the report is accepted, as is the youth workshop report. Thank you very much. All the reports from Zvolen have been accepted.

2) Approval of the accounts 2012 – 2013

- the Douzelage accounts are checked by two Honorary Auditors.

The accounts were checked by two auditors: Pascale Vale and Donatella Gondola.

Donatella Gondola spoke for them stating that the accounts are OK: the auditors have found nothing amiss.

Some additional information about the accounts is presented to the meeting. On 1 April there were 3500 euros in the Presidential account and about 4400 for translation equipment. After that there were some expenses. We partially financed the Douzelage Exhibition in Brussels. Partially, because we got help from the mayor of Chojna, who covered the cost of transport to Brussels and back. The Köszeg delegation received 250 euros for the storage, maintenance and transport of the translating equipment.



I just would like to add a few comments . First, a few towns are sending me checks. If it is possible it would be more convenient to transfer money directly to the account. With the checks it takes a lot of time: the checks are sent to the National Bank in Warsaw and there are additional fees to be paid.

Secondly, Mrs Anna Rydzewska, the Douzelage Secretary, will give you invoices for the year 2013 during our lunch break. Some towns will receive invoices for 2010, 2011, 2012. Some towns did not pay the annual fee. I think that all together 3500 in debt. We try not to spend too much in Chojna so it means that I try to save money but it is the first time that so many towns did not pay the annual fee. I will talk to some of the towns individually. We can discuss things and, if the situation is difficult, we can postpone again. I think, however, 350 euros is not overmuch, and all of us know this cost will be incurred annually.

Do you have any questions, comments? If you look at the agenda one of the points later on is the changes in the Douzelage Constitution. One of the points is connected with the annual account and the fiscal year. The invoices which have not yet been paid, were written again with 2013 on them. So, if I do not hear any objections I will assume that the accounts which were checked by the auditors are accepted by the general assembly. Thank you very much.

3) Annual Douzelage membership.

- It is proposed to remain at 300 EUR for the annual fee according to the decision taken in Sesimbra.

It is proposed to keep the fees steady, as decided in Sesimbra. It means 300 EUR per year for the annual fee and 50 EUR as the annual contribution for maintenance and transport of the equipment according to the decision taken in Oxelösund. We can see that the equipment works, even if it is not new. Last year Köszeg bought two additional sets and we have enough at the moment. I asked my friends from Köszeg to check the price for the whole equipment: it is something like 10,000 EUR. So, it is very expensive but at the moment it works and it is our only property.

5. Programme for further meetings.

- a) Spring 2014 Sigulda
- b) Spring 2015 Siret
- c) Spring 2016 Tryavna



d) Spring 2017 Marsaskala

We are having situations that next four years are already planned. Next year we go to Sigulda. Tomorrow we will have a presentation about Sigulda, the town and the idea for the GM.

In two years there is a meeting in Siret. And we are going to meet people from Sigulda and Siret and talk about application, to cover two meetings together. After Siret Tryavna (2016) and then Marsaskala. Going back to Sigulda the date for the meeting is already set - 24-27 April, the weekend after Easter. We have four years planned. If any town wishes to propose to host a meeting in 2018 or 2019 that would be welcome.

Bad Kötzing would like to invite all for the GM in 2018.

Mike: there is one town which hasn't hosted the General Meeting yet. It is Prienai, but Prienai is not here. Perhaps they will follow Bad Kötzing. We shall see.

Skofia Loka would like to invite in 2020 because in 2019 it is their 300 anniversary of Skofia Loka. There is not necessity for today to think about 2021 but if somebody would do that it would be great. It is a happy topic; now we must consider a sad topic.

6) The resignation of Karkkila from Douzelage.

Mike Blafour: This is very sad, Karkkila is leaving us as a partner of Douzelage. It is very sad personally for me. I am very fond of Karkkila, I have friends there, I have experienced a very good meeting there; a Comenius meeting which was wonderful. For many years they have not taken part in General Meetings or other Douzelage events, and the message has come from them time and time again we are reviewing the membership of Douzelage. After Cezary became president, I became one of the vice presidents. Cezary wrote in a supportive way to encourage them to stay and be active again. Later, I did the same thing and constantly we were saying let us come and see you. We encouraged them to set up a committee; the volunteers could do the job, but nothing happened. We spoke to other people in Karkkila whom we knew personally and they said 'we are sorry, but cannot persuade the town council to be active in Douzelage again or to change this sort of drift', which in their opinion was to leave.

There was one man who was moving to Karkkila, was interested in Douzelage. We tried to use him to invigorate the Douzelage activities again and he tried, but he could not to persuade the mayor



and the council. So, we thought about it a lot when we met a year ago and Cezary, Mario and I sat down with two past presidents of Douzelage to make sure that we were doing everything we could. Their message was 'be patient, keep trying'. But always the message was 'we are leaving'. So, I think we did what we could and the email came saying Karkkila decided to leave.

Cezary added that the email came just after Mike decided to go there without being invited.

Mike said that Cezary had said that we needed a formal letter and still we were saying please reconsider. The message was sent back with: we cannot change our mind.

Cezary asked Mike to read an email from Karkkila. The final email: Thank you very much for your offers and all you effort has done for Karkkila. Unfortunately the decision of the Town Council cannot be changed. Definitely it would be better for Douzelage to find a new active town in Finland. It seems also very probabl that in the near future there will be no town known Karkkila because most small towns in Finland are forced to join together. I wish you both all the best in the future, personally I am very happy that I had an opportunity to participate in Douzelage, especially the Douzelage play, the meeting in Karkkila, and visiting some Douzelage towns. They are unforgettable experiences . With best regards from Karkkila.

So, it is very sad but we have to formally accept their resignation. Is there anyone who would like to say something before we vote?

Bad Kötzing -Mr. President, we should think about two options. One option is to be patient and wait at least one year, to see if they will change their mind, if there is a group of persons on non administration basis to form a new Douzelage committee or if we decide to let Karkkila go and to find a new partner in Finland. I think we should wait for at least one period if there are options to find people in Karkkila who might do that. We could compare with the situation in Holstebro. They are still active, there are school exchanges. So, it works even without the town hall.

The President said that Mike informed just partially. He didn't mention a lot of formal calls and how many situations that we got nothing. It was very short version of the things we tried to do over a very long period of time. The main difference between Holstebro and Karkkila is that in Holstebro there is a group of people who had been active all the time. So it is why we tried to do that in Karkkila as well. There were three people; we contacted them separately, but when they approached the town council they were just discouraged. They were told thank you very much



for your help, but we have already decided what we are going to do. Of course, you are welcome to have different opinions. I am simply presenting the presidency's point of view.

Meerssen, Karel Majoor- I admire all your efforts to keep Karkkila on board and it is difficult to imagine that Karkkila will not be a member of Douzelage anymore. The report shows that Karkkila is in the process of giving up and is in the process of becoming a bigger town together with some neighbour towns. The new town might give a new platform to Douzelage when the process stops. So, I wonder if it would be wise and I agree with Wolfgang in that respect to let things rest for the time being and wait and see if that new contact would convince them to be an active partner again. Accept that they are not being active now, and hope for better in the future.

Sherborne, Kevin – Sherborne feels that you put big effort to keep Karkilla on board but nothing happened. Jeremy and I have good contact with a mayor of another Finnish town which is a partner of Prienai. We know he requested, completely unsolicited, if he could join the Douzelage. So, there are other towns out there. We sadly think we should say goodbye to Karkkila.

Sherborne, Jeremy Barker – I would agree with what Kevin said. I do remember going to Karkkila. I figure it is time that you went to a new Finnish town to start the process to include a new town.

Oxelösund – We think it is wise to support the resignation, we should respect that. Also, the new Karkkila structure may not fit Douzelage.

Cezary – I received an email from Karkkila and they asked why the letter of resignation is not on the agenda. The agenda was prepared at the end of February and their letter arrived in Chojna at the beginning of April. That is why it was not included in the agenda. I promised, though, that everything will be on the agenda and they will be informed about that.

Agros – crisis in Cyprus pushes us to do the same as Karkkila. So, small towns become bigger and this will take time. If we will wait one year it will not be finished.

Mike- Can we just take a vote to accept Karkkila's resignation. We should also vote to look for, search for a new Finnish town. That comes next. Each delegation should raise one hand to accept Karkkila's resignation. Would anybody like to vote against or to abstain? Thank you very much. Now we have to think about a new Finnish town.



Bellagio, Luca – Bellagio will be also joined by two or three towns but the name Bellagio will still exist and Bellagio will stay as a member of Douzelage. Being bigger town gives us opportunities to do more and different things.

Mike-We know that Bundoran is having the same problem at the moment with the government's reorganization.

Prienai has a twin partner in Finland and that town is interested in joining Douzelage. This is just an idea. We certainly would like to know if anybody has connections with Finnish towns or knows Finnish towns which should be considered. We would like you to vote that the presidency can pursue the idea of finding a new town as a partner from Finland.

Zvolen – There is another option: Zvolen has a partner town in Finland . It is a bigger town, about 20,000 inhabitants, we could ask them .

Mike- the next step is if you could send us an email with the name of those towns and we can have a look. The criteria we set for the Douzelage town is that the population is similar to all of us. The town must have the whole range of schools, especially secondary and primary schools. We also would like a town which is reasonably easy to achieve, not too far from the national airport. The town must be interesting, cultural, scenic and have the enthusiasm to do projects, to join Douzelage.

Cezary- I would like to ask not to offer the membership to any town at this stage, please. Secondly, we should do that quite fast. When we went to Brussels in April we had several meetings and discussions and all the politicians from the European Parliament were emphasizing that Douzelage is the organization of one town for each European country. We are very proud of that and I think we have to find a new member town quite fast. I would like at the moment to propose some kind of subcommittee consisting of the vice presidents, and a representative from Niederaanven, Bad Kötzing and Holstebro . I would like to ask the general assembly to give us the responsibility to work together and inform all the member towns of our progress in finding a new partner. It would be better to work in a bigger group than the presidency.

Jeremy, Sherborne – we should give the President power to choose a town.

Mike- By the end of May towns can suggest Finnish towns for the committee to have a look at. If we go through the process and we find a town and circulate details by email



and attachment and so on and if everybody approves, would you be happy if we invite the town to Sigulda next year for the GM, with the idea that the decision will be formally taken there.

Mike asked three towns (Niederanven, Bad Kötzing and Holstebro) if they agree to help form a committee for looking for a new partner in Finland. All of them were happy to do that.

7. Amends to the Douzelage Constitution.

4. ORGANISATIONS

(a) the Representatives of the member towns shall meet twice a year and at such other times as may be deemed necessary.

The text after the amendment:

(a) The Representatives of the member towns shall meet once a year and at such other times as may be deemed necessary.

Justification:

The towns have already decided to have one general meeting a year, so the amendment confirms present situation.

(e) An annual subscription should be paid to the Presidency at a level to be agreed at the Spring meeting of the Douzelage. The financial year shall run from 1 April to 31 March and Annual Accounts will be submitted at the Spring meeting for approval. The money thus subscribed is to be used for the expenses incurred by the Presidency.

The text after the amendment:

(e) An annual subscription should be paid to the Presidency at a level to be agreed at the general meeting of Douzelage. The financial year shall run according to the rules in the town which holds the Presidency and Annual Accounts will be submitted at the general meeting for approval. The money thus subscribed is to be used for the expenses incurred by the Presidency.

Justification:

The financial year runs differently in various EU countries. The amendment allows to adjust the Douzelage Constitution to this situation.



5. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Amendments to the Constitution shall only be made at the annual Spring meeting. Notice of proposed Amendments shall be given in writing to all towns two months before the date of the meeting. No Amendment shall be carried unless at least two thirds of the towns assent.

The text after Amendment:

Amendments to the Constitution shall only be made at the annual general meeting. Notice of proposed Amendments shall be given in writing to all towns two months before the date of the meeting. No Amendment shall be carried unless at least two thirds of the towns assent.

Cezary added a bit of explanation. Practically speaking in Chojna we have to do that twice because the financial year in Poland is from January 1st till December 31st . We have an Honorary Treasurer who does the job for free. Once it is done for the tax office and then it is done again for the Douzelage GM with different dates. The change will allow us if the presidency in the future will go to another town when the fiscal year is from April 1st to March 31st it can be done like that. So we do not now set dates, but write general rules on how it should be done.

Kevin – Is there any issue, when the presidency changes, with the financial year being less than a year?

Cezary's answer: Actually when it came to Chojna it was like that. So we had this short and longer period. It depends on when you present the accounts. The tax office in a country is not interested in other people's rules. The motivation for the change is that we have to make up the accounts twice a year and it is quite a lot of work.

Because the Ayes had it, the proposed changes to the constitution have been accepted by the GM

2. Projects and activities

1) Projects and activities since the meeting in Zvolen

Mario Calleja said that most towns send written reports about past activities so everyone could read about them. If somebody would like to talk about past activities it was possible, of course. After that Mario suggested the GM talk about coming activities.

The President of The Douzelage added that there are written materials about activities of some towns, but not all. It is because some towns did not send reports on time. If the missing



ones are sent in after all they will be posted on the Douzelage website. Some delegations distributed their forms, which was also OK.

Kevin Waterfall – wanted to mention some projects: Gryphon students ran a Scrapbook Project for students from 12 towns, Volunteering, Youth Project Together Across Generations volunteer activities in Sherborne. They also have been working on Volunteer Organisations in Sherborne. Kevin also mentioned help for Siret.

Marsaskala – participated in Meerssen project Metaphora, Leonardo da Vinci Project with seven cooks from Chojna working at two Maltese restaurants, a delegation of politicians from Marsaskala went to Sherborne to Volunteering, ten students participated in Youth in Action Project in Koszeg “Far in age, close in heart”, Mario together with Mr Salamonczyk and Mr Blafour attended Town Twinning Conference in Antalya, Turkey. Marsaskala was a partner in Comenius Reggio Project.

Mr. Salamonczyk reported on the Douzelage Exhibition in Brussels. The President thanked all towns which had sent materials for the exhibition. Special thanks to *Lin Ashby* who helped with the language. In Chojna posters were prepared using material sent to Chojna by the various towns. Then they were transported to Brussels to the European Parliament. On 9 April was the official opening, many thanks for participating in the event. There were some politicians from Brussels at the opening, and Mr. Ed Weber. The exhibition helped a lot to make Douzelage visible. The exhibition is now in Chojna and each town can have it in its country. The cost of transport must be covered. Some of the towns did not send materials, so their posters were a bit smaller and materials from their websites were used to provide information.

Karl Majoor said that the exhibition was such a great success and that Mr. Salamonczyk put a lot of work into it.

M. Calleja informed the meeting about financial support for Siret. After the meeting in Zvolen they organized different activities and collected 325 EURO in Marsaskala for Siret.

Karl Majoor informed the GM about three new projects presented in Zvolen. He would like to present a progress report in projects, because Meerssen have not been able to finish them yet. Historical Highlights. Towns were asked to send stories with some drawings. Stories in two languages: in the town’s own language and in English. 15 stories were sent till now. Karl Majoor,



Annigje and Cezary Salamonczyk asked others to send their stories and drawings by 1 July. Annigje showed the GM what the book would be like when printed.

The second proposed project was Metaphora Game. 11 towns agreed at the last meeting in Zvolen to participate in that project. Teachers asked kids from primary schools to write short stories. After that teachers selected 28 most common words and kids made pictures for all 28 words. The words were in a specific language and in English. A team in Meerssen was going to print selected pictures and make kind of domino. Each school will receive cards with drawings, so their kids can learn words in different languages. Perhaps they could communicate by Skype with each other without travelling, which is not easy for young children. It could really further integration.

The third project was Art Tree. The place for the artwork has been chosen and approved by Town Council. It is a really very good place. It is the connection between the basilica in the marketplace and the town park. Now that there is a very good location for our communal work of art, organizing committee are talking about possible materials, the coordinating artist.

M. Blafour gave more technical information about setting up the Douzelage Exhibition in Brussels, about some bureaucratic barriers; it did not prove easy to set up the exhibition. There was not only the exhibition, but also some meetings with MEPs. In the morning before the exhibition Cezary had set up the meeting with a team leader for town twinning action in the European Commission. The purpose for the meeting was to find out a little more about the future of town twinning programs and funding. The general message was that not a lot would be changed and funding was still under discussion. They also talked about general meetings and how we could fund them.

SIRET – TIBI- talked about the Douzelage Club in Siret. The Club shows what we can achieve when we work together.

The heating system in the psychiatric hospital could be improved thanks to Douzelage, its lobbying, which was termed huge. Siret thanked all the towns for their support: a little support comes from a great heart and a great heart could make a great difference.

Susice delegation had a present for the Douzelage club in Siret – coffee cups.

Cezary informed the GM about a visitor from Marsaskala who took part in the Reggio project in Chojna. He had a heart attack, was taken to a hospital in Szczecin by helicopter, stayed there for two weeks and finally was able to go back to Malta.



Köszeg- have had three projects since Zvolen. One project with Chojna, in which 30 people participated. It was very successful, subject was water. Another project was Youth in Action with Marsaskala, Sesimbra, Köszeg and Chojna. They were discussing problems between adults and youngsters, generation gap. The third is a Comenius project of Susice, Judenburg, Koszeg – Isolation in the past, Iron curtain in Europe.

2) Presentation of new projects and activities.

At last GM in Zvolen many delegates expressed the opinion that we should spend more time on future activities than past ones.

The Presidency was informed about the following new initiatives:

- Young Musician (Sherborne)
- Adult exchanges (Sherborne)
- Travel free (Susice)
- Metaphora (Meerssen)
- Meerssen Marathon (Meerssen)
- Historical Highlights (Meerssen)
- Football tournament (Sesimbra)
- Comenius for primary schools (Chojna)
- Focus on quality (Chojna)
- Europe locally: hopes and fears (Chojna)
- Leonardo da Vinci project (Chojna)

Encouraging Adult Exchanges

Michael Morrell listed all the information available on the Douzelage website kept by Stanislaw Wolos. This included Contact names, Clubs and Groups in 18 member towns. and a form to notify the website of possible interest. He urged the 8 remaining towns to send in their lists of Clubs and Groups, highlighting which ones might be interested in exchanges in 2014. He also asked all towns to notify Stanislaw of any exchanges that have taken place in the last year and those already arranged for 2014.



The main problems were Accommodation, Language, Travel difficulties and Cost. Various solutions were also suggested and in particular grants available from the EC under Europe for Citizens 1.1.

Finally he emphasised how important it was that Adults as well as Youth should also be able to share the European Spirit of the Douzelage and not simply rely on events in their own country.

3. Funding opportunities for Douzelage – European funds in years 2014-2020.

Cezary – I was told in Brussels that the program called Europe for Citizens will be the only one which will stay more or less the same for the next six years. We should focus on action 1.1 - citizens meetings and 1.2.

Mr. Salamonczyk said that in his opinion the best way to organize next GMs in Sigulda and Siret is to apply for that. Better, easier is to apply for 1.2.

1.1 You will not get any money until you finish your project. There is huge competition. It is much better to apply for 1.2. The maximum grant is 15000 EURO. The project may last up to three years. If you apply by September 1 this year the decision will be in the beginning of next year, January 2014. The budget consists of three sectors. The first one is for the meetings, it depends on the number of people who participate in the event. The next thing is money for coordination. And the third thing is the communication tools. The rules are very simple. At the end of the project Brussels needs the list of participants with their signatures. It is written that the project organizer cannot make a profit. All the money should be spent during the meetings.

Cezary said that for the whole Douzelage it is very important to cooperate, to join all GMs. Some towns did not come to Bellagio because of their difficult financial situation. In his opinion some of them might have been able to attend after all. Cezary asked all to do their utmost to be present at every GM.

Cezary talked about some projects like Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius, Youth in Action. The situation was not clear at that moment. The European Commission prepared a proposal for a new program called Erasmus for all. They wanted to put all educational and youth programs in one basket, all together. Erasmus in 2007-2013 was for universities. A lot of NGOs were against the came, were afraid that the new program would be mainly for universities, not for youth, primary



schools, kindergartens. So the European Commission came out with a new program YES. Y- youth, E-education, S-sports. But the final decision has not yet been made, so we still do not know.

It would be great to have a workshop in Sigulda about new programs.

4. Douzelage structure and organization.

1) Activities of the Presidency between General Meetings of Douzelage.

The Presidency visited Turkey, were invited by the European Commission as a kind of example of town twinning. The Douzelage doesn't have a Turkish partner. There were some towns with twinned partners with a population of about 1 000 000 people. It was very difficult to compare Turkish twinings to Douzelage. The discussions were difficult because of different culture but it was a very interesting experience.

Cezary took part in a meeting organized by an NGO in Warsaw. NGOs organize meetings usually in capital cities, making personal contacts is very important. These meetings help a lot to make an application succesful. These meetings are kind of investments in the future.

Karel Majoor had the very interesting idea to publish a Douzelage newsletter. It should be done twice a year, be sent to all towns and to some friends of Douzelage: some members of national parliaments, members of the European Parliament. It would be one of the possibilities for Douzelage to be better known outside the member towns and also in our towns, for that matter.

2) Douzelage activities in towns, contact people, local committees.

Every year after the GM draft minutes are sent, asking for comments. The same situation is before GM. In some towns members of the Douzelage committee do not meet so often. The proposal is to organize meetings in each town in October and in February to be informed about past and future activities.

Jeremy Barker talked about regional contacts. It was much better for the friendship, for personal contacts to have meetings twice a year. If people can meet only once a year, if they do not meet friends every year it is worse for contacts. Maybe it would be a good idea to organize meetings for 2-3 towns and every year a general meeting. Small meetings would be



much easier to organize, less expensive. Separate meetings should not be dangerous, they could help us in the future.

Cezary said that if we organize a project it means that we meet more often. General Meetings should be always a priority and each town should participate in them. Cezary asked less experienced partners to join others, to cooperate with leaders, coordinators.

The delegation of Kőszeg had asked to have six official members because of the equipment. They have to carry the equipment and they think it would be fair to have one more delegate. Cezary asked for comments.

Luca agreed with the proposal, it made sense.

Sigulda also said it was fair to have one more delegate for the equipment.

Cezary added that two interpreters do not pay for the staying, food, transport. They do their great job for free and all their costs are covered.

Cezary also mentioned that there were not any written rules for previous presidents to be guests of honour at the GM. It was a custom that they did not have to pay. The question was if Douzelage needs a written rule. Cezary asked the general assembly for its opinion.

Wolfgang said we should avoid all unnecessary official decisions.

Sigulda – we do not need any formal decision. The system should work as it has worked.

3) Possible Douzelage enlargement.

Croatia was going to join EU on 1st July 2013. Member towns of Douzelage were requested to express their opinion whether we should start looking for a new member town from Croatia.

Mike Balfour said that first we should look for a new Finnish town and after that a town from Croatia.

The procedures are that each new town should present a formal decision by its town council, which is sent to the Presidency in written form, stating that they would like to join Douzelage and that they will organize a GM. After that the Presidency visits the town, discusses, meets the mayor, visits schools.

Skofia Loka – we are very happy Croatia will join EU and possibly Douzelage.



Köszeg- we should be patient, to have time for selecting the best partner town in Croatia.

Köszeg suggested to make new flags because not all towns have it. Cezary said that it is one possibility and the second solution is to leave it as it is even with Karkkila. It is better to make some changes electronically because real flags are very heavy to carry and making new flags is very expensive.

Holstebro suggested to leave flags as they are and make only electronic changes.

Jeremy Barker- we should keep the banner as it is.

Marsaskala agrees to keep the flag as it is because of the money issue.

Sigulda – the flag is in Bellagio at the moment and will go to Sigulda with us.

5. Presidential election.

Mr. J.Cezary Salamończyk has received nomination from the town of Chojna to be the candidate for the position of the President of Douzelage in the years 2013 – 2016.

Mr. Mike Balfour was nominated by Sherborne for the position of Vice President of Douzelage.

Mr. Mario Calleja was nominated by Marsaskala for the position of Vice President of Douzelage.

Luca – the Presidency is working very well, Douzelage is growing and he would be more than happy if the three of them would like to stay for the next three years.

Cezary – Members of Douzelage were asked to report officially if anybody would like to take part in the election. Even so,if somebody wants now to be a candidate for the election he or she will be welcomed.

Wolfgang - the President and two Vice Presidents work very hard and in Wolfgang's opinion it would be perfect if they agree to continue their work in the next three years.



1) On-going and future projects:

1.1 “Metaphora” project presented by Annigje Kruytbosch of Meerssen (NL):

- 11 participating towns have sent letters and drawings to develop the game
- A website is going to be started and skype is going to be used to communicate.
- Samples of pictures and letters and a sample of the game were presented.

1.2 “Historical Highlights” project presented by Annigje Kruytbosch of Meerssen (NL) :

- Each town should send a storey based on the history of the town, but it’s up to the children’s imagination, too. 2 drawings in landscape format (horizontal) that illustrate the story should be sent with it, too.
- It is important that all Douzelage towns should be involved, but some towns have not sent anything yet.
- The deadline for sending in town’s stories and pictures is July 1st, but we are as late as the last one.
- So far there is no funding for publishing the book, but Meerssen is determined to apply for a grant or get sponsors.
- Printing in another country might make publication cheaper.
- Think it over financially, e.g. if we call it a “contribution to the publication costs”, we can manage it more easily.
- The layout will be sent to towns for editing before publication.
- Requests and things to do:
 - please think about how many copies of the book your town would need/ like to have
 - when you send the pictures please send the originals, if possible, for better quality.

1.3 “Travel free” project presented by Kristina Volná of Susice (CZ):

- The application for funding was not successful because of a small mistake, but Susice is going to apply for a grant next time.



They are going to change some elements and look at the priorities for 2014.

- There are seven partners so far, but it's open, so any other towns could join.
- Susice is going to send the call for partnership again.
- Time: end of June-early July, 2014
- Students of 15-19 will be involved, maximum 60 students.

1.4 “Getting to know each other” presented by Barbara Zadraveli of Preveza (GR):

- Preveza (GR) and Meerssen (NL) take part in it.
- A student exchange program for a half-term at school.

1.5 “Douzelage Scrapbook” presented by Scilla Copper of Sherborne (UK):

- The scrapbook in its current state (quite thick compilation) was passed around the table for each representative to have a look at.
- Some towns have not contributed to it yet, they are kindly requested to do so in the near future.

1.6 “Young musician” competition / exhibition presented by Scilla Copper of Sherborne (UK):

- It's a competition for individual musicians held in Sherborne.
- Date: 13th – 20th July, 2014
- No funding has been granted for it yet, but Sherborne is applying for it.
- There will be several activities for gifted musicians.
- local selection heats should be held by participating towns to choose 4 youngsters per town to enter the final in Sherborne.

1.7 “King of the Keitesberg” – trail running race presented by Carola Zankl of bad Kötzting (GER):

- Date: 15th September, 2013
- It's a trail running race in the mountains, an international competition.
- Accommodation and entrance to the race will be free for participants from Douzelage towns.



- For further details see the website of Bad Kötzing.

1.8

2) Some good examples – activities running or finished since the last Douzelage Conference in Zvolen 2012:

3.1 Susice (CZ):

- “Historical highlights” (see above)
- A partnership of apprentice schools, partner: Cham (GER)
- “Metaphora” (see above)
- GLEARNING – a project week of learning in a different way
- ISOLATION – partners: Kőszeg (HU), Judenburg (AT) and some partners from outside the Douzelage (Cyprus, Spain)
- “Travel free” – planned for 2014 (see above)

3.2 Siret (RO):

- Children of Bukovina - with a partner from Poland
- Community-based activities
- “We have the same roots” – with 5 partners

3.3. Kőszeg (HU):

- FACH (“Far in Age Close in Heart”) - summer 2012 - old people and young people
- “Wave”: the importance of water, partner: Chojna (PL)
- “Isolation”: 2013/14 – partners: Susice (CZ), Judenburg (AT) (and a town from Cyprus and Spain from outside the Douzelage)
- Choir from Susice coming to Kőszeg on 31st May

3) Important matters about future projects

3.1 Projects for primary school students –Bert van Doorn of Meerssen (NL):

- We should do projects with them too.
- It is more difficult than with secondary school students.
- Primary schools are a priority at the National Agency.

3.2 E-twinning - Barbara Zadraveli of Preveza (GR)



- A network of Douzelage towns could make effective use of e-twinning in projects.
- There is no time limit, when to do it.
- Informal connections, like a social network.
- Need participants to follow
- We can send a rough proposal to everyone.
- Educational tools, ready to use.
- Request: Please have a look at the website of e-twinning: www.etwinning.net
- Proposal for the topic of the next Douzelage EM agenda in Sigulda (2014): e-twinning

3.3 Language learning – Elsa Louis of Skofja Loka (Slovenia):

- We should promote learning other languages, too, not just English.
- We should do projects on learning other languages.
- Use e-twinning for language learning, or video conferences.

3.4 Application for funding – Ágnes Lepold (Kőszeg):

- There will be a lot of changes in the EU project funding system.
- Proposal for the EM agenda in Sigulda (2014): how to apply for funding in the new system – maybe an expert could be called from the National Agency

4) Plans for the EM in Sigulda, 2014:

4.1 Sessions:

- The EM has very important matters to discuss, so it should have as many sessions as the GM in the Douzelage conference.
- One session could be a visit to a local school (just like in Zvolen and many other previous meetings) and at the same time the EM representatives could have a quick insight into the education system of the host country.

4.1 Topics:



- Suggestion by Bert van Doorn (Meerssen): We have so many things to talk about that presentations are not necessary.
- Suggestion by Guntars Zvejnieks (Sigulda): national identity and the preservation of traditions – topic connected to the Youth Meeting topic.
- Disagreement with Sigulda’s suggestion expressed by Ágnes Lepold (Kőszeg): the question of national identity might not be as important for all members as for Sigulda, also it might lead to confrontation between towns from countries with a common historical heritage.
- Suggestion by Ágnes Lepold (Kőszeg): the topic should be relevant to all members and should have practical aspects leading to activities. So discussing funding possibilities, especially with an expert from Brussels or the National Agency in Latvia would be very useful.
- The topic of the next EM should be discussed further and it is the interest of the Douzelage that should have priority. Until August the topic should be decided for Sigulda to be able to apply for funding in September.