

WORLD COUNCIL OF OPTOMETRY

MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BOARD MEETING HELD ON 22 AND 25 OCTOBER 2008 IN ANAHEIM, USA

Present:

Dr. Robert Chappell	President
Professor George Woo	President Elect
Dr Richard Wallingford	Treasurer
Dr Victor Connors	Past President
Professor Kovin Naidoo	Education Committee Chairman
Tone Garaas	LRS Committee Chairman
Ron Fyfe	Public Health Committee Chairman
Dr. Uduak Udom	Africa Regional Representative
Professor Carly Lam	Asia Pacific Regional Representative
Dr Feike Grit	Europe Regional Representative
Dr. Wolfgang Cagniolati	Europe Regional Representative
Daniel Valverde	Latin America Regional Representative
Ange Dakir	Latin America Regional Representative
Yigal Gutman	Middle East Regional Representative
Dr. Susan cooper	North America Regional Representative (Canada)
Dr. Tommy Crooks	North America Regional Representative (AOA)
Dr Peter Kehoe	North America Regional Representative (AOA)

In attendance:

Bryony Pawinska	Acting Executive Director
Laura Prieto	Executive Administrator

Apologies

George Woo, (22nd October), Carly Lam, (22nd October), Akio Kanai, Laura Brusi, Juan Vazquez (new President of ALDOO) (Nelson Rivera attended for ALDOO on 25th October) and Dr. Akio Kanai

Observers: Dr. Janet Leasher, and Dr. Sidney Stern

Welcome and Apologies

GB1 The President welcomed to the attendees. He commented that it is unusual to have an almost full house.

Minutes from previous meeting

- GB2** The Minutes of the meeting held on April 2008 in London were approved and signed by the President as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Matters arising

GB3 WHO renewal submission:

The President thanked Melissa Padilla and Professor Naidoo for sorting this out. It will go before the Executive Board of WHO in January 2009.

Review case of statement

The Acting Executive Director is to meet with Tony Di Stefano to discuss how best to proceed.

Ghana RESC Project

Professor Naidoo provided an update. There were issues regarding the funding which were due to slow accounting by the University. The project is collecting information which takes time in Ghana. Once the information is available the project will start. The training is done and there has been an excellent pilot study.

Other proposals have been put forward for RESC projects but because Ghana is so complex these have been put on the back burner. WHO pushed for RESC studies but Professor Naidoo thinks they are not relevant unless done in conjunction with a study into child eye care needs. With limited resources WCO needs to make tough decisions. Argentina is interested in a RESC study and has raised the funding and want to use it as the basis for a child eye care study. They have asked Professor Naidoo to do the training.

In Argentina they are looking at funds to do a presbyopia study. The President has spoken to the Latin American IAPB chairman and asked if IAPB will support the project.

There are problems in Argentina, where ophthalmologists will not let optometrists get involved in V2020. The toolkit gives optometry a good opportunity and can help with governments taking a friendlier attitude towards optometry.

President's report

- GB4** The President attended to two meetings in Chile: one with the Senate Health Commission. They were very sympathetic to optometry and they were prepared to support it. He had a more difficult meeting with the chairman of the Lower House, who is a doctor. The Lower House is recommending that medical technicians are upgraded rather than training optometrists. This is clearly being driven by ophthalmologists but the President will keep in touch and is hoping that the Upper House will ensure that this does not happen.

Puerto Rico has a very good clinical program. ALDOO has adopted a new constitution and elected new officers and new GB members. Juan Vazquez will be the President for ALDOO and Arnulfo Toledo the President Elect. Daniel Valverde has been driving this with enormous enthusiasm which will continue as he is also President elect of the Educators body for Latin America.

Treasurer's Report

GB5

WCO money has not yet been switched to the UK, mainly because of the complexity of UK money laundering regulations. The money has been invested in the money market, most of it at a fixed rate, so it has not been affected by the problems affecting the investment banking industry.

There will be three accounts in the UK, one in Dollars, one in Euros and another in Pounds Sterling, so that WCO can avoid loss in exchange when making or receiving payments. The budget will be developed using Sterling.

The G2 Meeting in London has generated approximately \$80k surpluses as a result of generous sponsorship and tight management of expenses by the College, who also provided support in kind. The President thanked the College of Optometrists for their help in making G2 a successful event.

It was noted that the pounds is at five year low against the dollar, which is good news for WCO.

Acting Executive Director's report

GB6

The Acting Executive Director has sent reports on a monthly basis to keep GB members up to date the Governing Board. She provided a brief overview of what the College has put in place to put WCO on a firm footing.

Committees

GB7

There was discussion on the skills required of committee chairmen, and whether they should also automatically be members of the Governing Board. It was agreed that chairmen need to be members of the Governing Board as the committees carry on vital WCO business. It was agreed that the committees need Terms of Reference.

The issue was referred to the Executive Committee, along with discussions on the Constitution and Bylaws, with a request that the Executive Committee bring proposals to the Saturday meeting of the Governing Board.

Report from LRS Committee

GB8

The Governing Board received a presentation from Pelle Knudsen a web-based scope of practice resource, based on a questionnaire to WCO members. It was agreed that we need to pilot and seek input and refine before going out to WCO members. The development of this resource was funded jointly by the Norwegian Optometric Association and the UK College of Optometrists.

Report from Public Health Committee

- GB9** This Committee has focused on trying to set up regional Workshops on the WCO Vision 2020 toolkit. They have run workshops in Norway. It was intended to run one in Puerto Rico but due to a lack of funding this has not happened.

The Public Health Committee together with Sandy Block and Tim Wingert are trying to collate information about the colleges of optometry that incorporates a public health curriculum in their courses. Sandy and Tim require an official request from the Governing Board to go ahead with this project.

Report from Education Committee

- GB10** WCOE6 will be discussed in by the Executive Committee

It was announced that Dr Bina Patel will be the Chair of the WCOE6 Steering Committee. The other members for WCOE6 are Professor Naidoo, Mr. Gutman, Dr Cooper, Mr. Roosen, plus a representative from Latin America to be confirmed.

At the GB in London in April 2008, it was agreed that, given the aims of the WCOE it would be appropriate to hold WCOE6 in Korea. The President-elect was authorised to discuss this further with KOA. A deadline for payment of KOA's subscription was given which expired on 24th October. KOA have informed the Secretariat that a bank transfer has been made. Subject to confirming its receipt the Executive Committee recommended that the GB reaffirm the decision to hold the meeting in Korea in 2010.

Professor Naidoo confirmed that this was in accordance with the recommendations of the Education Committee But if Korea cannot host the event, then the Governing Board will consider other options.

Dr. Connors recommended that the Governing Body reaffirm WCO's commitment to Korea hosting WCOE6 on condition that they meet the subscription payment conditions. This was seconded by Ron Fyfe.

It was agreed that the back up option would be to hold WCOE6 in parallel with the Refractive Error Conference in Durban in September 2010. This would maximise the attendance. This proposal went to a vote, with all in favour and 3 abstentions.

Awards

- GB11** The President congratulated Dr. Grit on receiving the Essilor International Award from the American Academy. The Secretariat will make sure that this information is circulated to all regions and posted on the web site.

It was agreed to review the procedures for making WCO Awards to ensure transparency and confidentiality. It was agreed that serving Governing Board members should not receive an award until they have been off the Board for at least two years.

It was agreed that the Selection Panel for Awards should be set up to include the Immediate Past President as Chairman, plus two past presidents. The names of

nominees will not be revealed unless the selection panel makes a recommendation to the Governing Board.

It was agreed unanimously that a nominee who received two thirds of the Governing Board votes would be approved for an award.

Fellowship Report

GB12 Dr Cooper reported on a meeting of the Fellowship Committee held on 25 October. Dr Cooper said that the current procedure is very complicated. It was agreed that the Secretariat's role is to review applications against the criteria, to get more information if required and to pass this to the Fellowship Committee once all information is Available. The Fellowship committee's role is to consider the application and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee should have delegated responsibility to make the decision, and will have responsibility for securing funding from WOF. The Governing Board will be informed of applications that are successful.

It was agreed that the application documentation should be reviewed, so that there is not an inappropriate level of administration required to approve a modest application for travel costs. The application forms will be refined, and linked clearly to the criteria. There will be three levels of applications.

- For travel Bursaries
- For technical support for projects defined by WCO. These may attract sponsorships e.g. HOYA
- For ad hoc applications from individuals.

Applicants do not need to be members of WCO, but preference will be given to those from members of Associate or Affiliate members

It was agreed that the process needs to be more open and transparent. The refined application forms will go on the website. It was agreed that there should be a fixed amount available each year for each level of application, with a date by which applications should be received. WCO Committees should input suggestions for defined projects.

It was agreed that there is a need to publicise the good work that WCO funds, and get recognition for WCO's role. It was further agreed that there should be a contract between WCO and fellowships recipients, to include WCO's requirements of fellows, for example publication of an abstract, poster, presentation at an annual WCO event and acknowledgement of WCO funding. The potential for making Awards to Fellows who do outstanding work was discussed; these awards could be presented at an annual WCO event.

It was agreed that the current committee membership is too large. It was recommended that the committee should be comprised of four people, one to be the chairman, plus an academic, a representative of NGOs or not for profit organizations, and someone with financial skills. It was agreed that Jerry Vincent should be the NGO representative on the new Committee.

New Terms of Reference would be prepared for the committee to include membership and the skills required of members, so that potential members can

be identified prior to the 2009 GDM.

It was agreed that because of the confidential nature of the committee's discussions meetings will be closed. However, recommendations to the Executive Committee will be minuted as will Executive Committee decisions, ensuring transparency.

Motion: That the Fellowship Committee will make recommendations to Executive Committee, who will secure funding from WOF. The motion was passed unanimously.

The President welcomed Nelson Rivera (as observer) in the absence of Juan Vazquez, President of ALDOO.

General Delegates Meeting 2009 – 2-7 June, Melaka

- GB13** The Director of Member Services and Communications from the UK College of Optometrists, Ian Humphreys, is going to Melaka at the beginning of December to meet with the Association of Malaysian Optometrists and discuss arrangements.

It was agreed that the programme should include items to attract WCO members who are not on the Governing Board or committees, including workshops of interest to members from around the world. The AMO event would be run in conjunction with the GDM. The President-elect confirmed that it was likely that the Department of Health would sponsor the event and that the Minister of Health would attend.

Presentation by Professor Brien Holden

A vision for the Future of Global Optometry.

- GB14** The President introduced Professor Brien Holden. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes. Professor Holden highlighted the cost efficiency of optometry versus ophthalmology. Optometrists can save public money as they are able to provide services in the community after three or four year's optometry training whereas twelve years medical training doesn't give ophthalmologists the same skills. Reduction in visual functioning increases mortality, morbidity, depression and social functioning. Deaths resulting from visual impairment including falls, are the same as those from asthma or malignant melanoma. 153 million people in the world have visual impairment due to refractive error. There are 8M people blind because of URE, which is the 2nd highest cause of blindness after cataract (13M).

The next big frontier for WHO is presbyopia. Over 90% of people in developing countries have uncorrected presbyopia. Far more than are affected by myopia or low vision. The cost of not correcting refractive error is \$269 billion after adjustment for country specific labor force participation and employment rates.

WCO and WOF should get behind the development of education as the number one goal in areas where people have no eye care provision

Report from WOF – Dr. Scott Brisbin

GB15 Dr Brisbin suggested that in order to be effective all the WOF trustees must be a role player. WOF needs people with energy and contacts.

Dr Brisbin suggested there should be seven trustees: three WCO officers and four others who need not be optometrists. This recommendation was approved.

Dr Brisbin indicated that he would step down as President of WOF as soon as the new Board was in place. The President thanked Dr Brisbin for his hard work for the Foundation.

Report from Meeting of Executive Committee held on Friday 24 October.

GB16 It was agreed that the Executive Director post should be reviewed and readvertised. The President and Acting ED will prepare a shortlist and circulate the CVs of the shortlisted people to the Executive Committee for comment. The Chairman of the LRS Committee, the President and the Acting ED would be the Interview panel. In the meantime the College would appoint a part time interim manager to proceed with the new governance documentation.

It was recommended and agreed that Chairmen of Education, PH and LRS should be nominated by country members and elected by the regional and officer members of the GB.

It was agreed that the GB should have power to co-opt up to two members, with voting rights, for a period of 2 years with the possibility of being renewed for a further 2 years.

It was agreed that any regional member who becomes a regional president or president elect should have the right to remain a member of the GB during their term of office at the request of their region.

It was agreed that the Executive Committee should have the power to co-opt up to two members on the same basis as GB co-optees, this would be subject to GB approval. To ensure a balance of representations and skills. The EC co-optees could also be the GB co-optees.

It was agreed that the three main committees should have up to 11 members to include the Chairman, one member from each region nominated by the region plus up to four members appointed from volunteers.

Legal status of WCO

GB17 WCO is currently incorporated in Switzerland. Following a detailed debate it was agreed that, subject to legal and auditor confirmation that the best solution for WCO would be for to be incorporated as a charity in the UK.

It was agreed that the Constitution and Bylaws should be reviewed and rewritten to comply with UK charity law. It was agreed that these documents be circulated to the GB for comment and approval in time for submission to the General

Delegates Meeting in Malaysia in 2009.

It was agreed that WOF should continue as a tax efficient fund raising arm of WCO in the US.

It was confirmed that the accounts up to December 2008 will be audited in the US but from Jan 2009 onwards the accounts will be audited in the UK.

WCO Events Program 2009 –2019

- GB18** It was agreed in principle where each meeting will be held in the next ten years to ensure a fair distribution amongst the Regions. Whilst these plans must be flexible, this will enable the Secretariat to liaise with the member organizations in the specified region, identify a potential host well in advance, and proceed with negotiations.

IAPB

- GB19** The President will provide the IAPB minutes to be added to the website.

The President congratulated Professor Naidoo on becoming Chairman of the Africa region of IAPB, which is a reflection of Professor Naidoo's commitment and also of significant credit to optometry. The President reported that the subscription has gone up considerably for Group A membership which includes WCO. Only Group A members can have a seat on the IAPB Board, and the Group subscription has increased from \$35k to \$55k a year. It was agreed that WOF will find the funds to pay for increase.

It was confirmed that members can use the V2020 logo and this should be included in the list of benefits that will go to members with their renewal notice

The problem of the representation of optometry on Latin American IAPB committees was discussed. Where optometry is recognized there is no problem with its involvement in V2020 but where it is not recognized membership is refused.

WOF has authorized some money to enable Professor Naidoo to go to Argentina to move Vision 2020 related project forward which should assist with the recognition of optometry there..

Membership

- GB20** The key points from the Membership committee meeting were as follows:

- It was agreed that no member has been "expelled", their membership had been deactivated.

The Membership Committee recommended that an amnesty be granted for all deactivated members advising them of the benefits of WCO membership. This was agreed as a one-off offer with a limited time scale and that the subscription for 2009 should be received by 30 June or six months after the offer was made. It was agreed that the Membership Committee needs to

have clear reasons for a request for a reduction in the fee before it can be considered. The policy for reduction in the subscription fees is to consider any applications on a per case basis.

New Applications

The Chairman of the Membership Committee, Dr. Connors, recommended:

- **School of Optometry, Chung Shan Medical University, Taiwan** as affiliate member. Seconded by Professor Woo. Affiliate membership was approved unanimously.
- **Iranian Optometric Institution**, as associate country member. Seconded by Dr Valverde. Associate membership was approved unanimously.
- **FECORA: Colegio de Ópticos de la Provincia de Buenos Aires**: to be approved as an associate Member. Dr. Valverde seconded it. Associate membership was approved unanimously.
- **KOA**, have been approved by electronic vote
- **Syndicat des Opticiens et Optométristes du Liban** was de-activated but would like to be members again. It was agreed that they would be covered by the amnesty.
- **Tanzania Optometric Association** It was agreed that TOA should pay 25 % in the first year, 50% in the second year, 75% in the third year, and 100% in the fourth year. This was agreed unanimously.
- **Asociación Venezolana de Optimetría** needs to provide more information and define reasons to ask for a reduction in the membership fee.
- **Indonesia Optical Association** would like the arrears to be written off. It was agreed that they were included in the amnesty.

Item 21. Any Other Business

- GB21**
- WOF approved a \$10k grant to the school in Malawi being funded by OGS, Sight savers and WCO.
 - WOF also approved a grant to Professor Naidoo for the project in Argentina.
 - OGS USA had a meeting this morning where it was announced that Professor Holden is standing down. Dr. Connors is now Chairman and CEO of OGS USA.

Date and Time for next meeting.

- GB22** TBC – at General Delegate Meeting to be held between 2-7 June 2009.