

Minutes of the MROA AGM held at Barnsdale Hall Hotel on Sunday 7th June 2015

Present

Committee members

Tim Bulmer (Chairman)
Howard Stride (Treasurer)
Jenny Mathieson (Secretary)
Helena Bell
Tony Haynes
Arthur Fowle
Debbie Miller
(Sheena Mathieson was unwell and unable to attend)

Plus 68 further MROA members giving a total of 75 attending

Apologies

21 email apologies were received

1. Welcome - Tim Bulmer

- a) To all MROA members able to attend
- b) Committee members
- c) Special mentions to;
(John Townend for his continued assistance)
Howard for his significant assistance and support this last year
Helena for the continued outstanding newsletter content
Jenny for helping with me matters miscellaneous
Colin Grimes for arranging the badges

2. Annual Report - Tim Bulmer

- a) Madeira in general
Signs of improvement
Tourist figures continue to rise with hotel occupancy appearing considerably higher than in recent years
- b) MRC - most of the news is on the NOTICEBOARD but the latest ownership news is that the Millennium Bank (MB) with acting manager Manuel D' Silva (Mds) are still looking for a buyer. Rumours abound but, whilst understandably unprepared to disclose details, they are confident a buyer will be found before Christmas.
The FNTC are handling the finances of the club and the Madeira Hotels Management Company (MHMC) with Antonio Martins in charge are handling the day to day running
Occupancy levels are currently very high
Maintenance levels are just about OK - works are planned as outlined elsewhere
MRC AGM report circulated to all members
No flexi are weeks are being sold - a €210 surcharge applies to existing certificates on arrival
Pier works finally commenced w/c 18th May
- c) MRI contracts (without voting rights) - proposed option to switch to MRC (with voting rights) agreed with the FNTC in principal - further details to follow

- d) Madeira Regency Palace
Occupancy levels high
Maintenance levels are just about OK
The roll out of in room Wi-Fi with new flat screen TV's is on hold but expected to resume
The MB is expected to make an announcement shortly concerning the hotels finances. A May closure was planned but an appeal was successful and the hotel remained open - however a 2 month closure from late June now looks certain while the business is restructured. The MB and the MHMC may be again involved.

3) Treasurer's Report - Howard Stride

- a) Financial matters
Paid subscriptions are up with much of the arrears collected and a few written off - those paying by credit transfer are requested to state their membership number as a reference
- b) Membership levels
Holding at between 250 and 280 though we are looking to now increase to and beyond 300
- c) MROA subscription rate for 2016 - currently £10.00 and the committee agreed that this should remain
- d) No questions raised on the audited accounts to 31st December 2014 - members approved
- e) Keith Porteous approved as auditor for the year ending 31st December 2015

4) Newsletter Appraisal - Helena Bell

- a) Confirming 3 per year uploaded to the website with email notification. The Christmas edition is also sent via Royal mail with the Subs. Non email members also receive a hard copy.
- b) Colin happy to assist in newsletter content where possible
- c) Helena thanked people for their support and input - and requested new newsletter material and suggestions for items that could be covered in future months
- d) It was agreed that the Chairman would supply a copy of Microsoft Publisher 2013 to update the software tools required for future newsletter editions

5) Website Appraisal - Tim Bulmer/Howard Stride

Association Enterprises are currently updating the website to the latest Java platform, which should remove the gremlins of the past, whilst also adding some new features. The launch date is imminent and an announcement will be made to all members when the new site goes live.

The latest club Resolutions & Constitution will be uploaded to the new site - Paula Rodrigues (FNTC) to assist

6) MROA AGM venues - future

Alternatives were considered but it was again felt that Barnsdale Hall offered the best balance of benefits for 2016 - the provisional date for next years MROA AGM is Sunday 5th June

7) Election of the MROA Committee for the year to 2016

All existing committee members and chairman were unanimously re-elected

8) Any other business

- a) MRC updates - pier, improvements to meet the latest fire regulations, fixing the leaking roof and installation of a new boiler are the major ones at a total cost to the MB of £1.6m. A 'Member +4 star improvement plan' is being considered for 2016 once new ownership is confirmed.
- b) The Management Committee (MC) - the post Roger Brooke era. It was recognised that Roger worked tirelessly for the club but had to resign after a stroke of sorts before Christmas. So thus currently Tor Jorgensen & recent addition Leo de Kok - however the big news is that the MROA is now able to work more closely with the MC with myself co-opted as a formal member on the 31st May. The first formal MROA/MC meeting will be scheduled ASAP.
- c) Luis Camacho (LC): part of much high level corruption in Madeira
He has many creditors but equally as many friends in high places - an example was given. The MROA feels that it is unwise for individual members to consider legal proceedings.
Though his level 9 office is now closed, his secretary, Magda still occupies a small part of the accounts office on level 2. MdS has now given notice so LC should now not be expected to be seen around the club other than 'occasionally in public places'.

9) Open Forum

- a) Sheila and Stewart Grainger - 'Would the MROA seek information on how the Sinking Fund is to continue or otherwise'

To be raised as part of the first meeting with the MC

- b) Julie and Nigel Houghton/Anne and Ken Tate - 'What is MROA's view on how these improvements are being/will be funded and is it likely that further demands for levies will be made on those members who have stayed loyal in wanting to see MRC survive and return to a period of future stability?'

Hopefully covered in 8) Any other business

- c) Francis and Joan Connolly - 'We would like any update on the matters that were reported, particularly in respect of the financial position of The Club. Also whether the repair work to the jetty is still planned?'

Hopefully covered in 2) Annual report & 8) Any other business

- d) M J Brown

Raised a variety of questions that were related to the past and concerned the club activities not the MROA

- e) Rosie Eade - 'What was the 2014 maintenance levy for?'

To cover the shortfall in missing maintenance monies from April to December 2013

- f) Josy Davis - 'What has happened to the weeks handed back?'

The FNTC allows the MHMC to use for hotel purposes - then after a 2 year (owner cooling off) period* they become the property of the owner (MB currently).

*No mention in the constitution though so cannot be guaranteed.

- g) Jenny (MROA committee member)/Maureen Currie - 'Can an owner sell back an unused week for a nominal fee to the MHMC for hotel use?'

Unfortunately, despite the club sometimes being full, the MHMC do not buy back individual weeks permanently or for an individual weeks use. Neither do the FNTC refund maintenance.

- h) Kirsten Mares - 'How do the UK MROA co-operate with foreign members?'

The UK and Scandinavian MROA 'information share' with growth of the UK MROA in particular expected now it has a UK member on the MC

- i) Liz Wondergem - 'Will a club refurbishment program start before a new owner is found?'

No - covered in 8 a)

- j) Freda Wright - mentioned that 'with a newly elected President and corruption at the highest level a real issue, locals were looking for a change. The feeling was now much more positive.'

- k) Alan Currie - 'What has happened to LC's boat?'

Repossessed by the Social Security department

- l) Stephen Wright - The issue of missing sinking funds was again raised

See 9 a) - but hopefully the openness and clarity moving forward will ensure this doesn't ever happen again

- m) Jimmy Backhouse - Expressed concerns about the legal side of the current timeshare problems at the MRP

The high priority issues of the MRP will be a focus of MROA attention in due course

10) Conclusion - Tim Bulmer

A special mention was made to Arthur Dowty - and 5 members present celebrating their 25th MROA anniversary were given a special gift by John Townend (himself one of them)

Special pens were handed out to each member group attending

Thanked again all those able to attend

Tea & coffee was served

Several members thanked the committee for all their effort

At which point the meeting was concluded