

Minutes Financial General Member Meeting

Date: Wednesday 11 September 2019

Speaker: Max Ploemen

Minute taker: Quirijn Somers

Present: Dominique Paulissen, Eline Giesbers, Ivo van Lier, Janne Rutten, Luuk van den Reek, Maartje Slot, Marco Avilez + 31st board

Total number of people present: 13

Agenda

1. Opening
2. Setting the agenda
3. Approval of minutes General Member Meeting 2 July
4. Announcements
5. Updates
6. Evaluation Orientation Week
7. Evaluation Information Session
8. Financial report '18- '19
9. Vote on financial report '18- '19
10. Financial report '19- '20
11. W.C.T.M.
12. Question round
13. Closing

Opening

Max opens the meeting at 7.06 pm.

Setting the agenda

The agenda is approved.

Approval of minutes Semi-Annual General Member Meeting 18 February

Total number of voters: 5 + 6 (11 in total)

Vote in favour: 4

Vote against: 0

Blanc vote: 0

Withhold: 7

The minutes are hereby approved.

Announcements

Max lists the authorisations:

- Patrick van Aken authorises Luuk van den Reek.

Total number of voters is now 6 + 6 (12 in total).

Updates

- Committee Market

26 people already signed up to be part of a committee, among which there are 5 premasters and 1 master student. So that is going well.

Eline: It was quite busy at the Committee Market, right?

Max: Yes, it was, there were a lot of people.

Maartje: How did the lunch go?

Max: The lunch actually was very busy as well. A lot of groups went to the lunch and then went to the Committee Market, or the other way around. The Babylon room was pretty full.

- Ski Trip

The dates of the Ski Trip have changed. The university changed the dates of the exam period, so we had to change the dates. Otherwise we would go in the middle of the exam period, which is of course not an option. The Ski Trip will now be from 4 to 11 January.

Luuk: Is that the week before the exams?

Max: No in the new exam period, the first two weeks of January are resit exams and the last 2 weeks are the normal exams. So, when we leave, we are still in the Christmas holiday, and then we are there for the first week of resits. In that week there is only 1 resit. The week after we come back there are more resits, but the first one is on the Tuesday after we come back. We come back on Saturday. So, this was the best option.

Luuk: Ah okay.

- Website

Niek will talk about the financial part of the new website later on this GMM, since it will be a bit more expensive than budgeted. At this moment, Luc Versteegen, the person who we hired to build our new website is working on it. We don't have an example of what it will look like here at the moment. The new website will mostly be more smooth, faster and better looking. We will also implement a few new things, such as a web shop and an online agenda. Hopefully, Luc will be done with the new website in a few weeks. After that, we can fill in the website in the way that we want to. Then we will also need to test the entire website and see if everything works properly. So hopefully the new website will be finished soon.

Marco: Will the current website, svbabylon.nl, be linked through to the new website?

Max: Yes, we will link the current website to the new website. We want to keep the current website for at least a year, so that there will be a good transition period. During that period, the now current website will be stripped down and be emptied out so that the only thing visible on that website is a message that we have a new website.

Maartje: Why do you want to keep the website for such a long period of time? Isn't a year very long?

Max: Mostly because of our emails. All our current emails are linked to the current website. If we delete the current website entirely, the emails will also stop working. Because we think it will or can take a while before everyone will completely only use our new emails, we want to keep the current emails for some time.

Ivo: You can maybe even keep the stripped-down version for a longer period of time, I think that that is not very expensive.

Marco: That is also up to the next boards.

Max: That is true.

- Merchandise

We also have a new merchandise item. This will be a t-shirt with the text 'Est. 1989' on the chest. (Max shows the t-shirt to everyone present).

Everyone present is positive about the new shirt.

Luuk: What will it cost?

Niek: €12, -

Max: We might also make the t-shirt available in other colours, but we are not sure yet. It was a conscious choice to not put Babylon on it. We spoke to a lot of people beforehand, and most people wanted something that didn't necessarily say Babylon in huge letters on the front or back. So, this way it is a bit more subtle and casual.

Evaluation Orientation Week

A few points of evaluation first. The two main points that could have gone better were the activities that we did together with and at the student associations. So, the cantus at Carolus Magnus and the dinner (and laser gaming) at Ovum Novum. These were sadly simply out of our control. For example, for the cantus, contact was established in February with Carolus. In a few days two members of the Orientation Week Committee will have a meeting with Carolus to talk everything over.

Mentors:

In general, we were very content with most mentors this year. Sadly, there were also a few mentors that the board thinks did not do a very good job. There are a few people that participated in the Orientation Week more for themselves than for their introkids and also did not always adhere to their responsibilities.

Marco: In what way do you mean that they did not adhere to their responsibilities?

Max: It was mostly for example showing or saying clearly that they did not want to do or like certain things and being very unmotivated.

There were also a few examples that we will not personally mention here that were really not okay. It was not that certain mentors only did bad, but there were a few that did not behave as they should have done. So, this is something that we want next year to be paid more attention to.

Something that did go very well was the weekend activity. We, again, organised a real-life Mario Kart race, which a lot of people really liked and were very enthusiastic about. So also a shoutout to the committee, who all did a very good job.

For the week in general, we were very content. There were certainly a few points of improvement, mostly time schedule wise, which were all taken into the script for next year.

Marco: I heard that during the HAN introduction, which is the week after our introduction, two people wore their Babylon mentor shirts to get into a party. If this is true, we should investigate to find out who they were or who they got the shirt from, since this can reflect badly on Babylon.

Maartje: If that is really the case, we should indeed try to find out who they got the shirts from, because that is really not okay.

Max: I think the biggest danger is if something happens with of to them that Babylon will be associated to them. We will try to find where these shirts came from.

Evaluation Information Session International Committee

The International Committee is a new committee and the Information Session was their first activity, so we wanted to share our evaluation of this activity. For the Information Session, 11 first year international students were present. We noticed that the hardest thing was to actually specifically reach all internationals. So, the committee visited a first-year lecture and had a small lecture talk telling all of them that after class they could go to the Information Session. We think it was actually a nice turnout and think the activity went well. The feedback we received was also very positive, which was nice. For next time, it would probably be better to focus more on the subject of living in the Netherlands and less on the rules of the university, since these rules are also said during the Orientation Week and in the first lecture of every course.

Eline: What kind of things did you discuss on the subject of living in the Netherlands?

Max: Mostly explanations about things like the public transport, supermarkets, useful apps, etc.

Financial report '18- '19

[Maartje takes the floor]

Everyone had the change to look at the financial report, not a lot has changed with respect to that plan. One thing that is not sure yet, is how much we will receive from StudyStore for the sales of all books of the second semester. For the first semester we received €1500, for the second semester we expect to receive around €300. We already requested to receive these figures from StudyStore, but they have not yet given them.

Eline: Why do we get such less money from the second semester?

Maartje: That is always the case. In the first semester, a lot more books are sold than in the second semester. This is mostly because in the first semester all first year always buy all of their books.

Luuk: Did Stagemax already pay their sponsorship fee?

Maartje/Niek: Not yet no, but we had contact with them, and they are going to pay. There was a small misunderstanding between them and us but that is now resolved.

They also said to have never received the Babylon Magazine in the past year, so we send them all editions of last year.

All expenditures:

As you can see in the report, most expenditures were as planned. The website and maintenance to the website did not cost a lot. Furthermore, there were not a lot of extras. All in all, we ended with a surplus of €366,30. Maybe this can be used for the new website or for a new camera.

Lustrum budget:

Most of the lustrum budget was used, around €250 was not spend, so this will go the budget of the next lustrum.

Marco/Eline: I don't see the lustrum budget on this financial report sheet?

Maartje: Yes, that is correct, the lustrum budget was not put on there.

So, on that report, the surplus of €248.97 of the lustrum budget should be added.

Luuk: I see that we spend €700 for the name and logo change, is that correct?

Maartje: Yes, we spend all of that on the notary.

Vote on financial report '18- '19

Dominique entered during the discussion of the financial report.

Total number of voters: 7 + 6 (13 in total)

Vote in favour: 7

Vote against: 0

Blanc vote: 0

Withhold: 6

The Financial Report of '18-'19 of the thirtieth board of Babylon has been approved.

Financial report '19- '20

[Niek takes the floor]

[everyone looking at the financial report of '19- '20]

Let's start at the top with membership fee. We based this income on 530 members, which is a higher amount than what we thought we would have during the change of the board GMM. This means that we will have an income of around €500 euro's more than first expected.

Then the next post, Oubaha beheer (the company that owns the bars in the Molenstraat): we will get the same amount of money from them as last year, but they will offer the barbeque during the orientation week for only €1 per person, and the barbecue on the end of the year for free. This results in a reduction of the costs of €480.

Husk offers us a discount of €7,50 per member.

The new roll banner, which is necessary because of the logo and name change etc. is part of the post 'promotional material'. The new roll up banner will cost around €107.

We will also order new Babylon stickers, these are also part of the 'promotional material' post. We ordered 1000 new stickers.

Other points of interest:

The budget of the International Committee changed: the total budget of the committee is now €350 in total. They can decide for themselves how much of the budget they want to spend on their activities and how much of it they want to spend on the lunches.

Also, on a positive note: due to the budget being bigger than expected beforehand, we will offer all monthly lunches for free.

The biggest point of interest is the new website. As Max already said, we will temporarily keep the current website after we implemented the new website. The costs of maintenance will probably go down after stripping down the website, but we are not yet sure how much the maintenance will exactly be. Also, the maintenance for the new website will be less than we currently pay for our current website. The new revised budget for the new website is €1250, instead of the €700 that was budgeted in the previous GMM.

Dominique: I don't see a post for the cost of hosting the GMM in the Waagh, are there not costs for that?

Niek: No, as long as we finish before 00.00, we do not have to pay anything.

All invoices we received for the Orientation Week are paid, except for the cantus at Carolus, since we have yet to receive that invoice. We still have to receive money from the university for all people that took part in the Orientation Week. We expect that money to be transferred to us within a week now.

Ivo: How come we don't have that money yet? Don't people pay us directly for the Orientation Week?

Niek: No, since this year, people pay everything directly to the university, so the cost of the Orientation Week plus the fee for the weekend. After that, the university pays us the amount that is meant for us.

Marco: Did everyone already pay for all activities of last year?

Niek: Yes. It took some time to check everything but as far as possible, everyone paid. There are a few people who still have to pay for the Lustrum Weekend, but those people are not financially forthcoming at the moment, so we granted them a postponement of payment.

Marco: Maybe you can think of a better system for payment this year? To make sure that everyone always pays on time.

Ivo: Maybe you can implement one standard day per month which you use for all automatic collections of money?

Niek: That could be a good idea yes. Also, with the new website, we are planning on implementing Ideal, which would be a partial solution.

W.C.T.M.

Marco [speaking for the advisory board]: We are quite curious about the role of the International Committee, especially regarding the year planning, what will you do with activities in the weekends?

Max: Regarding the year planning, we are planning to organise some activities in the weekends for internationals and people that stay in Nijmegen during the weekend. These will not necessarily be 'official' Babylon activities though. We are also looking into the possibility of maybe creating a buddy programme of sorts, but that is just an idea for the moment. We also already started with a Facebook group with internationals that feel the need to do/attend activities in the weekend.

Marco: And I also heard something about city/day trips?

Max: Yes, that is also a possible plan, but that is not sure yet. Also, if we would organise these for this group of internationals, then that could also be a separate thing with the IC, and not necessarily be an open Babylon activity.

Dominique: I would advise to watch for or avoid doing activities in the weekends. Or to do that separately from the board and only let the IC do those activities. As board you will also need your rest, and if you plan things in the weekend, that could be very stressful.

Max: Yes true, the board doesn't necessarily need to (completely) be there. But we also don't want to create a sort of separate group so to say.

Dominique: You can also just do one trip a year to like the Efteling for example.

Maartje/Luuk: Is that Facebook group only for internationals?

Max: For the moment yes, we want to create and grow the group first. After that, Dutch people are of course also welcome to join activities in the weekends, because the ultimate goals with that group is to let the internationals bond better with each other and other Babylonians.

Ivo: And what will you do when no one responds to a certain weekend activity?

Max: Well the idea is to always first ask who is interested to do something that weekend, and if no one can or wants to do something, then we don't.

Marco: I think that it is often the case that internationals want to be a part of Babylon and want to be more active, but because of the lack of other internationals, they tend to join ISN for more activities etc. Also, I would agree with Dominique that it could be very tough if the board also had to regularly join activities in the weekends.

Luuk: Also, you don't need to make giants leaps in the internationalisation of Babylon. Last year and the year before that, we already made a few very big steps regarding internationalisation. We should also not move too fast.

Janne: I agree with Luuk on that point.

Max: Yes, good points. Of course, we will not make all steps too big. I think the biggest risk we have to look out for is that we create two groups so to say. We will aim to avoid that.

Luuk: Yes, you should look out for that, because there are also associations where the international and Dutch members are actual separate groups and that is not a good thing.

Marco: The idea of a buddy system for internationals could actually be a good idea by the way. That way you could maybe attract more internationals to already existing activities.

Luuk: Maybe first wait out a few activities of the IC and see how that goes.

Max: Yes, that was the plan. The first upcoming activity of the IC will be on 3 October. This will be a 'speed dating' activity of sorts. This will possibly be organised in collaboration with the CIA.

Eline: Why the collaboration with the CIA for that activity?

Max: That way, we think we can possibly attract more members to the activity. The collaboration will then more be in name, and the CIA will not necessarily actually help with the organising. That is as of yet just an idea though, and not completely thought out yet.

Eline: Maybe you can also add small games to the 'speed dating' and not just make it only about talking one on one for example.

Max: Yes, that was indeed also our idea. If we would actually only make it about speed dating one on one, it would be less fun. Also, that would be harder if there would be a lot of people that already know each other.

Luuk: On another point, I forgot to mention it earlier this GMM, but are you also going to evaluate the Orientation Week with the university itself? Because I noticed that a lot of things during the week were only in Dutch, which is not really advantageous for internationals and the international image of the university and also our image.

Dominique: The university is quite difficult about that point though.

Maartje: Maybe also address this issue to for example the study advisors or the department board and not only to the Orientation Week Committee of the university. That way maybe it can get some more track and they will actually do something about it.

Dominique: I remember last year this was also an issue, and then we also discussed it during a GMM of SOFv, but still not a lot came from it.

Luuk: That is a shame.

Marco: Also, for internationals that is really annoying. Especially during the Orientation Week, the university should set an example. That is often the first week the internationals are even in our country, so it is already quite difficult for them. And it only makes it harder when nobody wants to speak English.

Ivo: On the other hand, things like the campus cantus for example would be very different if it was in English instead of in Dutch.

Dominique: Just try to address this issue with the university again, and otherwise we at least did our best.

Max: Yes, we will address this issue.

Closing

Max closes the meeting at 08:07 pm