

Minutes of a meeting of the Basic Income Earth Network General Assembly held at the BIEN Congress in Hyderabad, India, on Sunday 25th August 2019 at 15:00

Present: 35 members and several observers

1. Opening of GA and welcome: As the Chair of BIEN, Louise Haagh, was absent, Karl Widerquist asked the meeting whether it wished to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation that Malcolm Torry should chair the meeting. Members agreed nem con. Malcolm Torry (hereafter 'the chair' – lower case) opened the meeting and welcomed members and other attendees.
2. Roll call and confirmation of membership: The chair confirmed that members' names were being checked and that ballot papers were being given to members.
3. Approval of the rule-keeper: Karl Widerquist was appointed.
4. Approval of the agenda: The agenda was approved.
5. Approval of the minutes of the 2018 GA: The minutes were approved (proposed by Olaf Ostertag, seconded by Ali Köylüoğlu, agreed nem con.)
6. Matters arising from the minutes and not appearing elsewhere on the agenda: The meeting studied the Executive Committee's responses to questions asked at the 2018 General Assembly. The Executive Committee was encouraged to continue to try to fundraise to pay for bursaries for congress attendance, and possibly to earmark BIENfactor donations for this purpose. Local Organisation Committees were encouraged to facilitate online participation in congress sessions and the General Assembly.
7. Treasurer's report: Robert van der Veen proposed, and Philippe Van Parijs seconded, that the treasurer's report, the 2018 audited accounts, and the half year accounts for 2019, should be received. The meeting agreed nem con.
8. Appointment of auditor: Tony Garrood ACA was appointed auditor, proposed by Guy Standing, seconded by Almaz Zelleke, and agreed nem con.
9. Elections to the Executive Committee: The following trustees (members of the Executive Committee) had been elected for a term of one year at the 2018 General Assembly: André Coelho, BI News; Leah Hamilton, Volunteer recruitment and training; Jamie Cooke, assistant treasurer. These posts had therefore fallen vacant. The chair explained that elections had been held for the three posts, and that only the existing trustees had stood as candidates. They were therefore deemed to have been elected. The Executive Committee had agreed that a confirmatory ballot should be held. The ballot was held, and each of the three candidates achieved a majority of the members' votes, and their appointments as trustees were therefore confirmed.
10. Report from the Chair and Vice Chair: The report was received.
11. Other reports: Julio Linares introduced the report on outreach, and spoke about the survey of affiliated organisations that had been carried out. A suggestion was made that the kind of interaction between affiliated organisations that had occurred in the past should again take place, and that summaries of what is happening in different countries should be published. The authors of reports on BI News, volunteer recruitment and training, and research, communication and fundraising, were not present. A suggestion was made that at future General Assemblies the authors of reports should briefly introduce the main points of their reports, and that if they were not going to be present then other ways of introducing the reports at the meeting should be found.
12. Proposal: That additional internal rules should be as follows:
 - a) That no individual can hold more than one post on the Executive Committee, and for the purposes of this rule the Congress Local Organising Committee representative counts as a post. (Proposed by the Executive Committee.)

After questions for clarification, the new rule was agreed nem con.

- b) In the interest of the time, no item on the GA agenda shall be discussed for more than 30 minutes. When a single item has been discussed for 25 minutes, the rule keeper will interrupt the chair of the meeting to warn them that time is getting short. At that time the chair shall call for the GA to bring

the discussion to a close or make an affirmative decision to extend it for another limited amount of time or do something else to deal with the time limitations. If no affirmative decision of what to do next is made, the item automatically comes to a close, and the chair shall move on to the next item. The GA can make any decision it wants about whether and how to deal with the time pressure, some possibilities include (1) vote to make a final decision on the issue, (2) vote to appoint a group to lead a discussion on the issue between then and the next GA, or (3) vote to continue discussion of the issue during the current meeting for another limited amount of time (but the GA should be careful not to extend discussion too long because the beliefs of the people who have less time available are as important as the people who have more time available). (Proposed: Karl Widerquist; seconded: Louise Haagh)

An amendment was proposed: that the rule should begin ‘Unless otherwise stated on the agenda ...’ The proposer of the rule accepted the amendment. The meeting voted on the proposal: for the rule, 15; against, 6; abstentions, 6. The new rule was therefore agreed.

13. An announcement was made: That the Chair and Vice chair have asked that a working group should be set up, of which Toru Yamamori and Annie Miller will be leading members, and which other BIEN members will be able to join, to discuss draft wording of a new page or pages on the BIEN website to provide clarification on the definition of Basic Income, the wording to be amended and authorised by the Executive Committee before publication. The Executive Committee thanks Annie for her initiative to set up this working group.

Guy Standing and Ali Köylüoğlu reported on a meeting of the group that had taken place during a parallel session of the congress. A discussion took place as to whether the group’s deliberations should appear on a publicly available website. The meeting agreed that Annie and Toru should be asked to make a proposal to the Executive Committee, which would then decide.

14. Affiliation request from Turkey: Discussion took place. A vote was taken: for the affiliation, 26; against, 0; abstentions, 2. Citizen’s Basic Income -Turkey’s affiliation was therefore agreed.

15. Venue for the 2021 congress: Hyosang Ahn introduced the bid from Korea, and answered questions; and Barb Jacobson introduced the bid from Scotland and answered questions. A brief discussion took place. A ballot was then held. The results were as follows: Scotland, 24; Korea, 15. The 2021 BIEN congress will therefore be in Scotland. [Note: 6 proxies were appointed, hence the vote total being higher than the number of members present]

16. An announcement was made: The agenda of the 2020 GA will contain an item asking whether BIEN congresses should continue to be annual, or should revert to being biennial, with perhaps regional congresses during the intervening years. A working paper is being prepared by Tyler Prochazka to form the basis for consultations between now and the 2020 GA.

The meeting encouraged the Executive Committee to publish details of the consultation process as soon as possible.

17. Any other business: Two items had been notified to the chair before the beginning of the meeting.

- a) Ali Köylüoğlu gave details of the next European Citizens’ Initiative about Basic Income.
- b) Greg Marston and his colleagues in Australia had asked for advisory indicative votes on the time of year for the 2020 congress in Brisbane, and on the part of the week during which it should be held. Voting was as follows: Time of year: July, 8 votes; late September, 13 votes. Those not voting were taken to be expressing no preference between the options. Part of the week: Saturday to Tuesday, 8 votes; Monday to Thursday, 8 votes. Again, those not voting were taken to be expressing no preference between the options.

18. The chair closed the meeting at 17:00.