

# **Kennedy Society of North America**

## **Minutes of 2005 Annual General Meeting**

The 32<sup>nd</sup> annual general meeting of the Kennedy Society of North America was held at the Kennedy tent at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games on July 9, 2005. Approximately 25 voting members were in attendance (however, more than 25 people were present because some memberships comprised couples/families).

In the absence of a Society Chief (Curt Kennedy had resigned on June 14), Southeast Chieftain Carver Kennedy opened the meeting and ran it up until the election of new officers. In the absence of the Secretary, who was unavailable to attend, New England Chieftain Nina Eppes took notes.

### ***Minutes of 2004 AGM***

The first order of business was to read and approve the minutes of the 2004 annual general meeting. Nina Eppes read the minutes. Paul Key moved to approve them and Laura Kennedy Pittman seconded. The minutes were approved as read.

### ***Treasurer's Report***

Interim Treasurer K.D. Kennedy presented a very comprehensive report of the state of the Society's finances. As of that day (July 9, 2005), the Society account contained \$6011.03. K.D.'s assistant, Karen Thompson, had recently deposited a number of dues checks that had accumulated over the past two years; it remained to be seen how many of them would actually clear (some were over a year old, some might have had stop payment orders applied, etc.).

K.D. reported that it costs approximately \$7500/year to run the Society. The primary expenditures have been:

- Newsletter printing and mailing (~\$1000 each issue)
- Advertising in games programs
- Tent fees at games (e.g., \$500 for tents at Grandfather Mt.)
- Scholarship awards
- Paying for Lord Ailsa's accommodations when he attends games in the U.S.

There was some discussion of how to increase revenue (e.g., attract more members) and decrease expenditures (e.g., produce an online version of the newsletter).

Laura Kennedy Pittman moved to accept the Treasurer's report and Paul Key seconded. The report was approved.

### ***Review and Approval of Voter List and Voting Procedure***

By virtue of the fact that no dues checks had been processed for two years and thus no one at the meeting (indeed, no one in the Society as a whole) technically was a current member according to the bylaws, there was e-mail discussion among the remaining Society officers a week or so before the meeting that anyone present who ever had been a dues-paying member be allowed to vote just at this particular meeting. This proposal was presented to those in attendance and agreed upon by all.

The voting procedure agreed upon was show of hands.

## **Election of Officers**

The following candidates for Society offices were proposed:

- Nomon R. Kennedy, Jr. — Society Chief
- K.D. Kennedy — Treasurer
- Mary Mills Kennedy — Secretary

Paul Key nominated Nomon Kennedy for Chief, and Joan Kennedy seconded. Laura Kennedy Pittman nominated K.D. Kennedy for Treasurer, and Elaine Heskett seconded. Someone nominated Mary Mills Kennedy for Secretary, and someone else seconded (sorry, I didn't catch who).

Nomon then spoke about not needing to follow Robert's Rules of Order dogmatically at today's meeting. This resulted in a bit of momentary confusion about the election process, but in the end, all three candidates were elected by acclamation.

At this point, the newly-elected Society Chief, Nomon Kennedy, took over the running of the meeting.

## **Other Business**

Nomon spoke about his desire for the Kennedy Society to be a democratic organization governed by an Executive Committee, to avoid a concentration of power held by only a few individuals (or by only one).

There was some discussion about whether to continue using the current titles, based on some e-mail exchanges that occurred a couple of weeks before the annual meeting. Some members wondered whether the Society should be using Scottish-based titles such as "Chief" and "Chieftain" when other clan societies generally use titles such as "President" and "Commissioner" or "Convenor." Lord Ailsa explained that when the Society was founded, his father wanted to maintain a connection with Scottish titles and thus proposed the title usage that the Society has been following. Lord Ailsa also said that, while the Society was free to use whatever titles it wanted, he personally would prefer to keep the current Scottish-based titles. Nomon acquiesced to this request but said he would prefer to be referred to as "Society Chief" or "Society Chief/President" (to make a clear distinction from the Clan Chief).

Founding Society member John Flowers was present at the meeting and spoke briefly about the founding of the Society in 1973. It started with about 25 members and has grown considerably. He was pleased to see the enthusiasm exhibited by the members present for revitalizing and growing the Society.

Society Chief Nomon Kennedy then made the following proposals, which will be undertaken via e-mail and other means of communication in the coming months because there wasn't time at the meeting to discuss each one in detail:

- Nomon will form an Executive Committee/Board of Governors consisting of the Chieftains, Treasurer, and Secretary.
- Regional Chieftains should coordinate information from games representatives and members in their regions and communicate that to the Chief and general membership.
- A committee should be formed to review and update the Kennedy Society bylaws by next year's annual meeting.
- Minimum and maximum term limits for Society officers should be implemented.
- Consider holding the annual meeting at other locations, to perhaps boost attendance.

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Prior to the annual meeting, Mary Mills Kennedy had volunteered to take on producing the newsletter (in addition to remaining Secretary) because she has expertise in that area. There was discussion of whether the duties of Secretary and Newsletter Editor could feasibly be taken on by one person, due to the amount of work involved, but as Mary had volunteered and seemed to think it would not be a problem, the members present agreed she should give it a try and see how it works out.

K.D. Kennedy proposed forming a Finance Committee consisting of himself as Chair and two others. Laura Kennedy Pittman and new member Janet Kennedy of Raleigh, NC volunteered.

K.D. also proposed that a new position of Membership Chair be created, to ease the burden on the Secretary. New member Renée Kennedy, who had been married in a ceremony at Grandfather Mountain just the night before, volunteered.

Laura Kennedy Pittman proposed that new members who signed up last year be considered dues-paying members for this year because their checks were never deposited last year and they received no membership information or benefits. To be discussed by the future Executive Committee.

Joan Kennedy presented the Scholarship Committee Report (available as a separate document). The Committee awarded four scholarships this year. Two of the recipients were in fact competing (in piping) at Grandfather Mountain that very day.

The meeting was adjourned at roughly 2:00 pm with everyone feeling recharged and optimistic about the future of the Kennedy Society of North America!