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41st Ordinary General Assembly

President of EAHM, Mr. Heinz Kölking welcomed members to the General Assembly and started by saying a few words about our dear colleague and long-standing EAHM member Asger Hansen who passed away in 2011. After a moment of silence the General Assembly got underway.

Zurich 2010. This year's agenda and the minutes from the 40th Ordinary General Assembly were unanimously approved. After this it was time for Mr. Kölking's EAHM activity report. The objective of this report is to highlight the most important issues and special developments since the last meeting in Zurich 2010.

Activity Report

Mr. Kölking informed members that the Presidium met five times in Brussels while the Executive Committee met twice (20th May and 18th November). He explained that the board has developed a strategy in view of the resource base and have forged partnerships with the healthcare industry. Partnerships with Ecclesia and BD are to be concluded soon. This is a key achievement for the association as the resources are greatly needed.

Looking back at the last General Assembly in 2010 and the congress in Switzerland Mr. Kölking thanked our Swiss colleagues for a very successful congress and encouraged members to show their appreciation. Looking ahead to Athens 2012, he stressed that the situation is not unproblematic due to the economic situation in Europe and recent developments in Greece.

However, he is confident that EAHM and the Greek association will find a way to hold the congress successfully. Currently, this depends on funds. The Executive Committee discussed this matter at their meeting the following day and the final decision will be made in February. We must help and show solidarity to our colleagues in Greece. The scientific subcommittee is dealing with the scientific component of the congresses as well as the key values of the hospital manager (shared identity, ethics etc.).

The EU Affairs Subcommittee has been looking at today's issues and has met twice, as have the Scientific Subcommittee. The Editorial Board has also met twice in Brussels to work out the editorial plan for (E)Hospital. Mr. Kölking stated that "this is a challenge to live up to. Everything we do will depend on how we handle these challenges with the right tools and actions and training of our staff."

Mr. Kölking thanked all three groups for their commitment and the hard work involved. This is important work and a prerequisite for the success of the organisation.

The reflection process was another key topic of the activity report. The president highlighted that at both the European and national association level, the environment in which we are working has changed. There have been major changes in terms of professionalisation and the structures we move in are also changing. This requires the reshaping of organisations/hospitals and in this changing environment, managers need to adapt, hence the reflection process. The focal points so far are press liaison, Internet (through the website) and the IT Working Party with events in Vienna and Lithuania. These regional seminars set up a common language between management and IT professionals and received a very positive response. Mr. Kölking emphasised that the reflection process was not just a discussion, the results will be implemented and the Board and Executive Committee place it on the top of their agendas.

Regarding the membership, some national associations were unable to pay their fees. The Executive Committee decided not to exclude them, seeking solutions to maintain them without risking the financial base, which the association needs.

To close, Mr. Kölking asked, "where is Europe heading? We view ourselves as supporters of management but also contributing to a joint Europe. We need this joint Europe, especially in healthcare, therefore it is important that the EAHM will only do the things that make sense."

Accounts 2010 and Economic Plan for 2012

Secretary General Mr. Willy Heuschen gave the financial reports. The 2010 budget was respected (106 euro overspending) with Mr. Heuschen

specifically thanking the Swiss association for their profit from the 2010 congress in Zurich. Expenditure rose due to an increase in meetings and consequently higher travel expenses. In his summary Mr. Heuschen declared that despite the difficulties of the financial crisis, with the help of the successful Swiss conference, EAHM was able to implement the results of the reflection process without destabilising the budget.

The economic plan for 2012 contains no major changes. Again some national associations might not be able to pay their fees . It is hoped the world will look better in 2012 and we will see a recovery of part of the membership.

A key topic was the new partnership agreements. At the General Assembly Mr. Heuschen said there were six perspective partnerships at the present moment and urged members to help them find more. They are not easy to find as criteria dictates a true partnership and not simply a hit and run business. Partnerships will be concluded for three years.

From the audience an important question was raised regarding these partnerships, asking whether their expected revenue was included in the 2012 budget. Mr. Heuschen clarified that currently EAHM is two partners short but that spending is controlled in line with revenue. Only when the money from partnerships comes in will that money be spent. He did however admit that he is not ignoring the fact that the budget for 2012 is a challenge! Both the budget and economic plan were approved by the General Assembly. The auditors reported and were asked to continue their roles. It was also mentioned that the external audit report is available upon request.

The next General Assembly has been provisionally fixed for Athens on 27 September 2012.

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