

BALTINGLASS & DISTRICT FORUM

Meeting Minutes
Thursday 5th March 2009

1. Attendance: Mai Quaid, John Vernon, Fran Quaid, Ann Patterson, Noel Lyons, Eamonn Horan, Phyllis Flanagan, Paul McGowan, Cathy O'Toole, Paul Gorry, Andrew Pender, Ken Browne, Orla O'Sullivan, Cait Clerkin, Michael Cogan, Martina Power and Maria McCormack.

2. Apologies: Mary Vernon, Pat Byrne, Liam MacGabhann, Chris Murray, William Patterson, Assumpta O'Neill.

3. Introduction The Chairperson welcomed all the members attending at the new and more salubrious venue (the Parish Centre).

4. The Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 5th February were accepted. Apologies from Fran Quaid for distributing the minutes with an incorrect date and with failing to record in the minutes a short discussion on the subject of elections. Acceptance proposed by Michael Cogan and seconded by John Vernon

5. Matters arising There were no matters arising.

6. Correspondence

A letter was received from Wicklow Co. Co. re the planning permission sought by Gillespies. The letter set out in some detail several reasons for the failure to grant permission, traffic hazard, lack of an environmental impact study in relation to the Slaney and failure to contribute an enhanced streetscape to Mill Street due to poor design.

A press release re the failure of Bus Eireann to live up to the avowed aspirations of the government in relation to increased use of public transport to reduce greenhouse gases and environmental damage caused by private cars. This letter was read out in full by the Secretary and it was agreed that it should be sent but that it could be briefer. It was suggested that the various editors might pick out and feature the more salient facts.

A letter together with a cheque for €200.00 was sent by the Secretary to Rev. McCullagh with the thanks of the Forum for his kindness in providing a meeting venue in Stratford Lodge School. In reply to a question it was pointed out that the Forum had agreed at last meeting to make a gesture towards the cost of light and heating during our stay.

A letter received from Mary Millett indicated that there could be some funds available under the "Community Awards Scheme" to support groups who undertake projects to enhance the quality of life of the local community or increase voluntary activity in the field of "social inclusion".

The Secretary reported that at a meeting of the Co. Wicklow Partnership scheme in the Lalor Centre on Wednesday 4th March it was indicated that €380,000 was available for the first six months of 2009 for all of Wicklow for the development of rural non-agricultural enterprises aimed at improving the employment opportunities and social services for people living in the locale. Siobhan Geoghegan, Enterprise Development Officer, explained that although the funds are provided by the E.U. some projects will be expected to meet 25% of the required funds themselves.

7. Financial Report

The Treasurer reports a balance of €20.00 in the Credit Union.

Reports from Sub-committees

8. Roads and Transport

The sub-committee continues its work on the survey of trans-town routes. Seven out of fifteen have now been surveyed and they hope to complete in the next week. A copy of a disability study/survey on the town carried out recently has been acquired and should be of help in the sub-committee's deliberations.

9. Social Group

The content for the newsletter is nearing completion and work on the layout commenced. With regard to the Community shop project four available shops have been identified which can be used free of rent for the first four months. Subsequent rents should be payable from any profit made on sales.

10. Fund Raising

The group has not met in the last month. The only project planned in the immediate future is a pub quiz.

11. Any Other Business

St. Patrick's Parade

A discussion about the Forum's participation in the St. Patrick's Day Parade arrived at a consensus that the Forum should participate and the Chairperson asked for ideas on how this could best be achieved. It was decided to enter a float in the shape of a Horse and cart (or tractor and trailer as an alternative) with some volunteers on board. A large banner showing the name of the Forum and the mission statement to be acquired. Eamonn Horan to organise some musicians. The Secretary gave her apologies for her unavailability on the day of the parade but said she would donate some sweets for distribution to the on-lookers on the day. Orla O'Sullivan undertook to source the Banner. Michael Cogan said that the Active Retirement Group is marching under a banner also.

Non attendees

It was suggested that a letter be sent to those members who have failed to appear at meetings during the year to establish if they intend remaining as members of the Forum as their input is missed.

12. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Forum will take place on 2nd April 2009 at 8.00 p.m. in the Parish Centre.

Following meetings are scheduled as follows:-

7th May 2009

4th June 2009

3rd September 2009

1st October 2009 (AGM)

5th November 2009

3rd December 2009