

Minutes of the Meeting of the Walking Commission, Laulasmaa/Estonia, September 14, 2007

1. Welcome and President's Remarks

The president of the Walking Commission Marcel Grandjean welcomes all the participants. The secretary of the walking commission till now, Jarka Sedláčková, is no longer a delegate for the Klub Ceskych Turistu organization in the ERA. Therefore, she will have to be replaced. Her position will be taken over by Anja van Kooten Niekerk, the delegate of the Stichting Wandelplatform - LAW (NL).

At the end of the meeting the participants will split into 2 groups, one French, the other English speaking, for presentations on "Walk on Web" and "Training of hiking guides". Each group meeting will have a duration of 45 minutes. After that time, each group will go to the other presentation.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence from: Jarka Sedláčková.

3. Minutes of last meeting Budapest (H), September 29, 2006

The minutes are approved unanimously. Jarka: thanks!

Please take notice of the fact that minutes and all necessary information will be solely available from the internet.

4. Elections of the President and the Secretary of the Walking Commission

Marcel Grandjean does the job of president for 4 years. He would like to continue the work. The Walking Commission will give a positive advice to the presidium for the continuation of the function of president by Marcel Grandjean.

Anja van Kooten Niekerk, delegate of the Stichting Wandelplatform - LAW, will act as secretary.

5. Tasks and strategic goals of ERA

The presidium has discussed the first version of the paper. The president presents the first results of this work. Hereafter the comments made by the members of the Walking Commission:

European Long Distance Trails. The task of the Footpath commission will be to make the inventory of all European long distance trails and summarize them on the base of the results of the inquiry.

Old trails may be removed if they are no longer in use. Trails, where, due to the present circumstances, it is to be anticipated that they will never exceed the stage of planning, will also have to be removed. Other new ones may be added. A possible questionnaire on this subject will have to be discussed in the Walking and Footpath Commission before distribution to the member organizations.

Eurando 2011 will take place in Spain. The presidium will discuss Eurando in Spring 2008 and inform ERA during the 2008 Conference in Blansko (CZ).

A publication of trail signposting will be produced Spring 2008. The topic will also be examined by a group of experts for the international seminar in Malaga (E) in May/June 2008

Lobbying and public relation work: European Union. The list gives a survey of what ERA is doing in this field of interest. The lobbying work is mostly done by the organizations themselves and by Jan Havelka, president of ERA.

Questions and proposals:

Maro Kazepi of the Cyprus Tourism Organisation suggests making specific plans and time tables, followed by annual reports on the results. The reports are to be presented during the ERA Conference.

Kristin Krohn Devold of Den Norske Turistforening proposes a standard annual report by each organization and to make this report on the basis of a questionnaire. Kristin will make a proposal for such a standard questionnaire.

All members agree with Spain to make a better use of internet.

The president remarks that ERA depends on the input of the member organizations.

All information can be sent to Lis Nielsen (DK); she will take care of publishing it on the internet.

6. European Walking Day

The 2nd weekend in September is dedicated to be the "European Walking Day". The theme "Walking with Neighbours" can be interpreted in many ways: neighbours are everywhere! They live next door; they live in neighbouring countries etc. The idea of European Walking Day has not yet met with many enthusiastic reactions of the member organizations. The Presidium received information about only two events! The presidium asks all participants to make (more) efforts for this event. The Presidium will discuss the possibility of making a "charte de l'amitié" to promote the European Walking Day.

Norway (Kristin Krohn Devold) tells about the Norwegian practice: they involved companies to stimulate their workers. All the organizations (55) are participating. Norway raised funds for the amount of €150.000

7. Right of access and passage

First there will be a Seminar on this theme in Malaga/Spain (June 2008)

A working group on this theme will be created.

Ingermund Hägg (Sweden): mentions the report of 1999 on strengthening the right of access. Scotland made great progress.

The working group will consist of the following sections:

- Northern Europe: coordinated by Ingermund Hägg, STF (S)
- Great Britain&Scotland: coordinated by Allison Mitchell, Ramblers Association (GB)
- Southern Europe: coordinated by Antonio Gonzalez Davo, Federacio d'esports de Muntanya i Escalada de la Comunitat Valenciana (E); (France participates in this section)
- Eastern Europe (including Bulgaria): coordinated by Maro Kazepi of Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CY)

Jean Hirschinger mentions the publication on the research of the FERP on this theme. The publication will be very useful for the working group. Allison Mitchell will be head of the working group.

8. Walking with Disabled

Jean Hirschinger received only two questionnaires back. It's time to re-launch the project and to create an working group, so more attention will be generated to this theme!

Participants in the working group:

- Great Britain: Arthur Howcroft (GB)
- Southern Europe: Jean Hirschinger, FFRandonnée (F)
- Central Europe: through Jörg Haase, Sauerländischer Gebirgsverein (D)
- Northern Europe: Kristin Krohn Devold, Den Norske Turistforening (N) will give the name of a Norwegian participant.

Armand Ducornet, FFRandonnée (F) will send the French publication on the results of research on this theme to the working group.

9. International Seminar June 5-7, 2008 in Malaga (E) about the right of passage and access for ramblers in European protected natural sites.

Antonio Turmo delivers a presentation on the conference. ERA members will receive the presentation by mail.

10. Any other business

None.

11. Date and place of next meeting

September 26, 2008, Blansko (CZ)

After the meeting, participants attended seminars on

- "WalkOnWeb" by Bert Paepen, project leader, University of Leuven (B)
- "Training of Hiking Guides" by Armand Ducornet, FFRandonnée (F), head of the ERA working group

December 26, 2007

for the Walking Commission:

Anja van Kooten Niekerk
Secretary

Marcel Grandjean
President