

Minutes of the Meeting of the Walking Commission, Blansko/CZ
the 26 September 2008

1. Welcome and chairman's Remarks

The chairman of the Walking Commission welcomed the new participants.

Agenda: The Czech organization will present a short introduction on their work.

2. Apologies

Absent persons with notice: Kristin Krohn Devold from Norway and Anne Mari Aamelfot Hjelle.

3. Minutes of last meeting in Laulasmaa/Estonia, 2007

No remarks.

It was decided to approve the minutes.

4. Tasks of the Walking Commission

This year the ERA presidium discussed the strategic goals of the Walking Commission.

GOALS

Walking paths: Rights of access and passage.

The ERA presidium decided that this is a task of The Walking Commission.

The proposal for a working group has been accepted in Laulasmaa. The basis of the results of the working group will be the outcome of the Malaga Conference in 2008. The working group has not started yet. Alison Mitchell (Scotland) asked for an extra person to assist her for her part in the working group. Maro Kazepi, from Cyprus (who is not present in this Conference) would do the work for Eastern Europe. Alison will contact her to ask if she is still available to do the work.

Members of the working group are: Ingemund Hägg; Antonio Turmo; Maro Kazepi and Alison Mitchell.

It was decided that the working group can start.

Protection of Nature

Alex Vella (Ramblers Association, Malta) is commenting upon the protection of nature. Because Malta is a very small and densely populated country, they have to limit the numbers of ramblers. The association gives out a country code with recommendations to take care of nature.

Code of good behaviour on walking trails

The chairman asked to send him examples of codes that are already in existence. Also Sweden has already such a code.

Arthur Howcroft (UK): our association works together with organization that protects the environment. It might be worthwhile to know who is already working together.

Daphne Forrest (UK): It will be a good thing to emphasize walkers to take public transport instead of cars. The start of walks should preferably not be from a parking lot, but from a bus stop/train station.

Anja van Kooten Niekerk (Stichting Wandelplatform, Netherlands): our organization is cooperating with the Dutch railways and offers each year a new series of walks from station to station.

Guido Leibur proposes to work on the strategic goals and gather the information. Then we can decide next year. The chairman assessed that the Walking Commission will not take decisions. That is up to the ERA Presidium.

Gérald Gagliardo: Portugal has a special project on protection against fires, with the help of French consultants.

Security in hiking

The Ramblers' Association of Malta lets walkers sign an indemnity paper which says that the walker him/herself is responsible in case of accidents.

Proposal of the chairman:

We will send out a questionnaire on the protection of nature, family walking and security in walking with a date on it before which we wanted the answers back.

5. European Walking Day

The chairmen pointed out that the European Walking Day is already on the agenda for many, many years. France and Spain had created an extraordinary experience with 120 participants.

The ERA presidium decided to continue promoting and stimulating The European Walking Day. From now on it is not absolutely necessary to organize the day on the 2nd weekend of September. Preferably the European Walking Day is being held in September or August. It should be done under the name of the ERA, use the ERA flag!

You can take any event and put it under the theme of the European Walking Day.

Daphne Forrest (UK) suggested to make flyers or little cards to promote.

The Comité Lorraine organized a 40 km walk to Schengen with 2000 participants.

The new president of the French Organization, Mrs. Claude Hüe wants to promote the Friendship chart (Charte d'Amitié). The ERA presidium decided to translate the chart in different languages.

6. The training of honorary walking guides within the ERA

The comments and remarks from the participants of the Walking Commission have been discussed during the meeting of the working group in Paris in the month of March. The ERA presidium approved the document during their board meeting on La Palma.

The list of competences is a basic list. The Presidium decided that the goals should be on a medium level.

The ERA wants to help organizations who are not (yet) active in this field.

The chairman will present the document for approval to the Members' Meeting.

The list will be placed on the website.

7. International seminar "Rambling and Territory in Europe", Malaga/Spain

270 delegates from 23 countries were participating in the seminar. The seminar has been very well organized. Big compliments!

Antonio Turmo: the seminar is not yet finished. The information will be available on the website

http://www.juventud-deportes.org/seminario_senderos/seminario_senderismo.html

8. Any other business

Adriana Stránská (CZ). Officially the ERA has 3 commissions: the Walking Commission; the Footpath Commission and the Youth commission. Is this last commission still part of the ERA organization? From 1994 the Youth Commission didn't meet or made proposals for plans/projects.

Czech tourist club proposes to make a questionnaire on the Youth Commission and present the results next year.

The chairman remarks: This process of reactivating the Youth Commission is perfectly okay. It is in the statute of the ERA. The Walking Commission though, is not the place to make the decision. It is mandatory to ask the ERA Presidium. But, please continue with this work.

Ingemund Hägg speaking on behalf of Norway: Norway has a very enthusiastic and active youth commission with a lot of really young members.

Herbert Reinelt proposed to reactivate the Youth Commission making as a present of the 40th birthday of the ERA. The Deutscher Alpenverein with 600 000 members decided to pay a lot of attention to the young members and youth activities.

The chairman agreed with the idea, but it is again up to the ERA presidium to decide.

9. Date and place of next meeting

10. Work in 2 groups to 2 different themes: "Walking with Disabled" and "Eurorando 2011"

Jean Hirschinger made an updated presentation on the project "Walking with Disabled". The objectives of the survey have been enlarged and should be more conform to the actual needs in that field.

Marcel Grandjean presented the rough concept of the project "Eurorando 2011". The final event will be organised by the Andalusian organizers. The preliminary events should take place all over Europe on and/or around E paths starting in Autumn 2010.

November/2008

for the Walking Commission:

Anja van Kooten Niekerk
Secretary

Marcel Grandjean
Chairman