

**Minutes of the Friends of the Museums (Singapore)
20th Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday, 6 December 2023, at the
Seminar Room, National Museum of Singapore**

1. The Friends of the Museums (Singapore) (FOM) President Millie Phuah presided over the 20th Annual General Meeting (AGM) and called the meeting to order at 10 am.
2. The President informed members that electronic voting for Council representatives and resolutions commenced on 22 November 2023 and closed on 5 December 2023 at 12 pm. She thanked members for voting electronically and noted that as per the notification to members, there would not be in-person voting at the meeting. The results of the 2023-2024 FOM Council elections and resolutions would be announced at the end of the meeting.
3. As the required quorum of 10% of membership for the meeting was not met, the President announced that there would be a lapse of 30 minutes before the commencement of the meeting, in accordance with the FOM Constitution.
4. Two FOM-NHB Grant recipients — Stella Woo, Senior Manager (Engagement), Heritage Policy and Research, and Shereen Tan, Senior Manager (Outreach & Education) Malay Heritage Centre, were then invited to present their attachment experiences in the UK and New York.
5. The meeting was called to order by the President at 10.48 am following a lapse of half an hour, in accordance with the FOM Constitution. The meeting was attended by 30 members.

Motion 1 — Vote to confirm the minutes of the 19th Annual General Meeting held on 7 December 2022

6. The President sought approval for the above resolution to confirm the minutes of the 19th Annual General Meeting held on 7 December 2022. Members were informed that as all present had already voted electronically via Absentee Ballot, votes would not need to be taken at the meeting.
7. Susan Fong moved for the adoption of the following resolution to approve the Minutes of the 19th Annual General Meeting of FOM held on 7 December 2022. Michelle Foo seconded the motion.
8. The President opened the floor for any questions regarding the motion. She noted that there were no questions received electronically or in person on the motion to approve the minutes.

The President said that all electronic votes had been collected and the result would be announced at the end of the meeting.

President's Report

9. The President highlighted the work and initiatives of FOM in the past year, as per the President's Report that was made available to members prior to the meeting, as follows:

Introduction

10. Friends of the Museums, Singapore (or FOM) began in 1978 and was registered as a society in 2004 to support Singapore museums with guiding services. We also offer volunteer and learning opportunities for FOM members and the community at large, with a focus on the history, art, and culture of Asia. FOM also organises events, activities, and training programmes towards this.

11. FOM has over the years become a multicultural and diverse community. Our membership as of 30 Sept 2023 was 1,627, with members from over 40 countries.

Museum Programmes

12. At the heart of FOM's mission is service to the museums, heritage institutions and walking trails. This year, we continued to guide for the following, in alphabetical order:

- i. Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM);
- ii. Changi Chapel and Museum (CCM);
- iii. Gillman Barracks (GB) — now under the oversight of the Singapore Land Authority (SLA);
- iv. Indian Heritage Centre (IHC);
- v. Malay Heritage Centre (MHC) — currently closed for a revamp;
- vi. MHC-Kampong Gelam Heritage Trails — now run in partnership with MHC;
- vii. National Museum of Singapore (NMS) — Level 2 galleries are currently closed for a staged renovation);
- viii. Singapore Art Museum (or SAM) at its Tanjong Pagar Distripark location, where we started guiding again in June this year;
- ix. STPI Creative Workshop & Gallery (STPI);
- x. Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH).
- xi. We have also begun guiding again at The Peranakan Museum, which reopened on 17 February this year; and
- xii. URA-FOM Chinatown walking tours in four precincts.

13. This financial year, FOM docents, including the Japanese docents, conducted 3,767 tours for 31,078 visitors. In addition, FOM docents also guided special exhibitions, such as:

- i. Now Boarding (Experiencing Singapore Through Travel 1800s – 2000s) at NMS;
- ii. Batik Kita, Body & Spirit, and Andrew Gn's Fashioning Singapore and the World at ACM (Manila Galleons just opened in mid-November);
- iii. The 2022 Singapore Biennale Natasha at SAM;

- iv. Connections Across Oceans (Early Chinese Mutual Aid Organisations) at SYSNMH;
- v. The Japanese docents also guided Doraemon at NMS;
- vi. Our docents across museums also got together to research and help guide the Yip Yew Chong Exhibition entitled “I Paint My Singapore” now on at the Raffles City Convention Centre.

Docent Training

- 14. This year, we had a total of 124 new docents freshly minted at the ACM, NMS, CCM, IHC, Chinatown Heritage Trails, TPM and Gilman Barracks, including new Japanese docents. This is double last year’s numbers.
- 15. Currently, we have 99 trainee docents attending training at ACM, NMS, STPI, Kg Gelam Heritage Trails and Japanese docent training.

Member Activities — MML & Open Morning

- 16. The new season of Monday Morning Lectures (MML) opened on the 4 September 2023. Together with a vibrant and busy Open Morning, we celebrated FOM’s 45th anniversary with a VIP speaker, Prof Tommy Koh, Ambassador-at-Large with our Foreign Ministry. Prof Koh made a speech and helped us cut a lovely two-tier birthday cake — for FOM’s 45th and PASSAGE’s 15th year.

Communications & Tech Refresh

- 17. In our outreach to members, we continue to send out the weekly electronic newsletters refreshed with more activities covered and a Note from the President. The FOM website, FOM’s Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts also keep members and the public informed about our activities.
- 18. In 2023, FOM had a successful social media presence, engaging members and the public with social media campaigns on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube celebrating the invaluable contributions of our volunteers.
- 19. The #FacesOfFOM series, which was done in the lead-up to our annual Open Morning event in September, showcased our volunteers across our activities and museums, highlighting the breadth of knowledge and talents that FOM volunteers bring, and the collaboration that helps our unique FOM community thrive.
- 20. Another notable social media campaign featured our recent docent trainees who shared their docent training experiences and motivations. The campaign was done as a teaser to our annual Public Information Meeting and helped to generate interest for our docent training.
- 21. Looking ahead, FOM is embarking on a tech refresh project to upgrade the tech stack of our FOM website and back-end system to ensure the security of our systems. The project is

expected to be completed in early 2024. Some minor enhancements are also in the works, including PayNow instant credit notification, and a digital membership card.

Accounting Refresh

22. FOM has appointed Singapore Corporate Services to provide our bookkeeping functions as of October 2023. We have also migrated to a new accounting system. The appointment and new accounting software will help FOM streamline and automate operational tasks and ensure accurate depository of documents to support the annual audit process and professional continuity.

Marketing & PASSAGE Magazine

23. Due to our active marketing efforts, FOM welcomed 348 new members this financial year, bringing the total membership to 1,627. In past years, membership hovered around 1,500. Several new advertisers have also been signed for PASSAGE magazine, which we continue to produce for members. We also sponsored copies for guests at the grand re-opening of TPM.

Volunteer Recognition and Appreciation

24. This year, we had a VAN (Volunteer Appreciation Night) instead of a VAM (Volunteer Appreciation Morning). We held our annual Volunteer Appreciation at night instead of in the morning. This was a welcome change, and we had a smashing night of dancing to the theme of FOM Studio 45, complete with disco balls, at the rooftop of the Scarlet Hotel in Chinatown. 365 volunteers were invited to attend. 99 members were also awarded service pins: 40 for the 3-year pin, 19 for the 5-year pin, 22 for the 10-year pin, 11 for the 15-year pin, 4 for the 20-year pin and 3 for an incredible 25 years.

25. The Salome De Decker Award for this year's outstanding FOM volunteer was presented to Hilary White for her enthusiasm, energy, good humour, and 11 years of dedicated service to FOM.

Philanthropy

26. FOM continued its commitment through the FOM-National Heritage Board Heritage Grant, which gives our museums' education and programme staff members the opportunity to gain valuable experience at the world's leading museums. This year, the grant, which is matched by NHB, went to Stella Chan, Senior Manager (Engagement), Heritage Policy and Research. The second recipient was MHC Assistant Curator Muhammad Zinnurain Bin Mohd Nasir. (However, I have just been updated that Mr Zinn is unable to carry out his attachment and that a replacement will be announced soon).

Conclusion

27. In conclusion, we find FOM at the end of FY2023 active and in good shape, not just financially but also in the myriad activities we continue to organise for our members, and at the same time contributing in no small way to the vibrant arts, history, and heritage scene in Singapore.

Treasurer's Report

28. Honorary Treasurer Linda Lim presented her report for the Financial Year from 1 October 2022 to 30 September 2023 (FY23).
29. FOM ended the financial year with a net deficit (excess of expenses over revenues) of \$3,366. This was well within the FY23 budget forecast of a deficit amount of \$47,486.
30. While total revenue increased by 204% from \$141,136 to \$429,488 from the previous year, total expenses also correspondingly increased by 232% from \$130,137 in FY22 to \$432,854 in FY23. Expense per Revenue Ratio was in line with our FOM by-laws as a non-profit organisation, being operationally self-funding.

Highlights — Income

31. Net surplus from Museum Activities increased by \$26,596 (53%) year-over-year (YOY). This was mainly due to an additional five Docent Training programmes offered and an increased number of Corporate Tours delivered.
32. This year, the surplus from Docent Training increased by 55% with the Expense Ratio capped at 60%. Income from Corporate Tours also increased by 187% from \$7,590 to 21,810.
33. Revenues from Member Activities increased from \$13,348 to \$258,905. However, expenses also increased corresponding with an Expense Ratio of 91%.
34. Membership fees received over the year increased by 12% with net revenue from \$69,121 to \$77,146. As of Sep FY23, the total number of active members was 1,627 as compared with 1,536 as at Sep FY22. FY23 saw an increase of 348 new memberships issued versus 53 in FY22.
35. FOM's excess funds of \$400,000 were placed in Fixed Deposit with an interest income of \$2,031.80.

Highlights - Expenses

36. Management expenses and Volunteer Appreciation expenses of \$48,620 were within the FY23 budget of \$49,100. The higher expense of \$24,815 versus \$19,350 under Volunteer Appreciation was attributed to the FOM 45th celebrations as well as FOM's contribution to the FOM-NHB Grant of \$10,000.

Balance Sheet

37. As of 30 September 2023, FOM had Accumulated Funds of \$603,836 that were fully backed by Cash and Cash Equivalents at the end of the financial year totalling \$686,645. This was three times more than the requisite minimum six months operating balance as per FOM by-laws at \$226,883.

2023-24 Budget

38. In next year's budget, the Council has allocated funds to an overdue refresh to our aging FOM website (86% of our 2023/24 budget). Docents were also allocated more funds through their Museums/Heritage Institution committee's budget in recognition of their contributory efforts. Approval was also given to Explore Singapore to reduce their pricing to better benefit the FOM community.
39. While we continue to practice financial prudence, we are also committed to ensuring FOM's continued financial viability and astuteness as far as possible.

Motion 2 — Vote to approve the Audited Accounts of the Friends of the Museums (Singapore) for the Financial Year that ended on 30 September 2023

40. The President sought approval for the above resolution to approve the Audited Accounts of FOM for the Financial Year that ended on 30 September 2023.
41. Sophia Rao moved for the adoption of the motion and Akiko Lim Dumas seconded the motion.
42. The President opened the floor for any questions regarding the motion. She noted that there were no questions received electronically or in person on the motion to approve the Audited Accounts of FOM for the Financial Year that ended on 30 September 2023. The President said that all electronic votes had been collected and the result would be announced at the end of the meeting.

Motion 3 — Vote to appoint Plan Partners PAC as auditors for the financial year ending 30 September 2024

43. The President sought approval for the above resolution to appoint Plan Partners PAC as auditors for the financial year ending 30 September 2024.
44. Tina Sim moved for the adoption of the motion and Wang Li-Ching seconded the motion.
45. The President opened the floor for any questions regarding the motion. She noted that there were no questions received electronically or in person on the motion to appoint Plan Partners PAC as auditors for the financial year ending 30 September 2024. The President said that all electronic votes had been collected and the result would be announced at the end of the meeting.

Elections results for voting in of 2023-24 Council Members and to approve the Resolutions — announced by Elections Administrator and Head Teller Durga Arivan

46. The President invited Durga Arivan, Elections Administrator and Head Teller, to present her report on the results of electronic voting.

47. Elections Administrator and Head Teller began by thanking all our members for their timely voting for the 20th Friends of the museums Annual General Meeting. The FOM introduced the format of e-voting last year and members had shown good enthusiasm and acceptance to the process.

48. As per the FOM constitution, the election results were retrieved on 5 December 2023 and the voting percentage was recorded as 28%, which was almost similar to 2022. She thanked the Head of Nomination Committee Susan Fong, Honorary Secretary Lee Hong Leng, and the Registrars for the day, Katherine Lim and Leong Lee Chiew for their time and support.

49. The Elections Administrator announced the results of the voting for the resolutions as elected by the membership, as follows:

- For the Resolution to approve the minutes of the 19th Annual General meeting of the Friends of the Museums, held on the 7 December 2022, there were 326 votes in the affirmative and 3 votes in the negative. There were 47 abstentions. The resolution was APPROVED by a Majority Vote of 87%.
- For the resolution to approve the Audited Accounts for the Financial Year ended 30 September 2023, there were 328 votes in the affirmative and 1 vote in the negative. There were 47 abstentions. The resolution was APPROVED by a Majority Vote of 87%.
- For the resolution to approve the appointment of PlanPartners PAC as Auditors for year ending 30 September 2024, there were 341 votes in the affirmative and 1 vote in the negative. There were 34 abstentions. The resolution was APPROVED by a Majority Vote of 91%.

50. The following members of the 2023-2024 Friends of the Museums Council were ELECTED by the membership:

President	Lee Hong Leng	Elected by a majority vote of 93% as the President
Vice President	Karen Ng	Elected by a majority vote of 92% as the Vice President
Honorary Treasurer	Linda Lim	Elected by a majority vote of 93% as the Honorary Treasurer
Honorary Secretary	Michelle Lim	Elected by a majority vote of 94% as the Honorary Secretary
Council Representative	Tabitha Manresa	Elected by a majority vote of 93% as the Council

		Representative for Museums
Council Representative	Robyn Lloyd	Elected by a majority vote of 93% as the Council Representative for Activities
Council Representative	Larissa Wiegele	Elected by a majority vote of 91% as the Council Representative for Communications
Council Representative	Rupa Tamsitt	Elected by a Majority Vote of 93% as the Council Representative for Marketing
Council Representative	Paroma Sen	Elected by a majority vote of 91% as the Council Representative for Volunteer Appreciation & Membership

Closing Remarks

51. The President asked if there were any further questions on the business of the day. No questions were received from the members in attendance. There were also no questions received electronically.

52. The President congratulated the newly elected members of the 2023-2024 FOM Council. She expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve FOM as President for the last two years and thanked the 2022-2023 Council members, FOM leaders across the museums and activities, Katherine Lim in the FOM Office, and FOM members at large, for their support.

53. The President thanked all the volunteers who helped in the running of the AGM and members for attending the meeting.

54. She added that the FOM spirit of passion, dedication and generosity, and the strong friendship bonds among members, would keep FOM going.

55. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:23 am.

Minutes recorded by Michelle Lim, outgoing Council Representative for Communications and covering Honorary Secretary

Minutes approved by:



Millie Phuah, President, FOM

Date: 8 December 2023

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