



Friends of the Museums (Singapore)

Minutes of the 17th Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 2 December 2020 | Convened via virtual format on Zoom

The Friends of the Museums (Singapore) President Garima Lalwani presided over the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and called the meeting to order at 10.00am, and introduced the 2019/20 elected Council members – Susan Fong, Yasmin Javeri Krishan, Kwan Min Yee, Laura Socha, Gisella Harrold and Michelle Foo.

Since there was no quorum, the meeting proceeded after half an hour at 10.30am. The President advised that the AGM is only for members of the Friends of the Museums (Singapore), hereinafter referred to as FOM.

The President reiterated that due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the existing social distancing rules, voting was conducted exclusively via mail-in ballot this year. The results of the mail-in ballot would be announced at the end of the meeting.

Item 1. Vote to approve the minutes of 16th Annual General Meeting held on 4 December 2019

The President asked for the above resolution to be approved. The Secretary, Kwan Min Yee, informed the meeting that:

- Alison Kennedy-Cooke moved for the adoption of the following resolution to approve the Minutes of the 16th Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Museums (Singapore) held on 4 December 2019.
- Hilary White seconded the resolution.

The President opened the floor for any questions regarding the resolution. There were no questions. The membership was informed that the votes to approve the minutes of the 16th Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Museums (Singapore) held on 4 December 2019 have been cast via mail-in ballot. The final vote would be announced at the end of the meeting.

The President's Report

The President noted that the year 2020 posed unforeseen challenges due to Covid-19. FOM initially proceeded with caution but when Singapore moved to DORSCON Orange on 7 Feb, FOM immediately suspended docent-led tours, public events and many of its member events, moving its members activities online where possible and found new ways to engage

members. In addition, the FOM office was closed on 7 April and has since re-opened on 22 July by appointment only.

The President was pleased to share with the forum some of the key FOM initiatives undertaken this year.

A. Museum Programmes

Service to Singapore's museums and cultural institutions remains at the core of FOM's mission. The museums, arts and heritage institutions we serve remain the same as last year.

In addition to regular guiding, FOM docents guided several special exhibitions such as, *Living with Ink, An Old New World, From the Coromandel Coast to the Straits, From Brush to Lens, Seekor Singa, Seorang Putera, dan Sebingkai Cermin* and the 2019 Biennale titled *Every Step in the Right Direction*, FOM members volunteered for the *Singapore to Singaporean: The Bicentennial Experience* exhibition which was extended until December 2019.

Minimum guiding requirements for FOM docents have been waived for 2019-20 and 2020-21. Docents from all museums continue to research and share their knowledge with fellow guides at Docent Ongoing Training sessions (DOT) held via Zoom. Closed since 7 April, Singapore museums reopened on 26 June. FOM docents resumed guiding on 24 August 2020. This financial year, FOM docents guided 21,905 visitors on 2,337 tours. The visitors included 5,583 students and staff, 642 special needs visitors and 377 visitors guided virtually. Our Japanese Docents (JD) led 2470 visitors on 385 tours.

Docent training for 2019-20 was conducted for ACM, NMS, STPI, SYSNMH, and URA. With social distancing restrictions, docent training went online and mentor tours were hosted virtually. In this round, 102 new docents joined our docent pool, including 25 Japanese Docents. Docent training for the year 2020 has been cancelled due to the current situation.

B. Member Activities

FOM activities moved online and saw an increase in participation across most activity groups. Asian Study Group, Asian Film Study Group, Textile Enthusiasts Group, Monday Morning Lectures, Friday with Friends and the seven Asian Book groups all met virtually for most of the year. Virtual Theatre Session, Textile Study Group and Kantha Embroidery Workshops are new online activities initiated this year. Curio and Explore Singapore! groups met locally, while Study Tours took members on international trips before the pandemic. These groups will resume their activities once restrictions ease up.

With the support of FOM docents, a unique ten-week online certificate program *Asian Art & History for Museum Enthusiasts* (AAHME), was launched for all FOM members with lectures spanning across various museums and institutions where FOM docents guide. A total of 151 Museum Enthusiasts hailing from 27 countries signed up for the course. The AAHME course, along with other new initiatives, Monday Morning Lockdown Lectures and Arm Chair Travel series saw members joining not only from Singapore but also from overseas.

C. Communications

We have transitioned smoothly from Webmail to G Suite. This year we invested in Zoom as our events and activities moved online. Personalized emails were sent for major events to get information out to members. We continue to update the website with the latest offerings. FOM's flagship bi-monthly magazine, *PASSAGE*, with well-researched articles written especially for our members continued to be delivered to our members unhindered by Circuit Breaker measures. FOM Members can keep themselves informed on all FOM related events via our Website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter page, Newsletters, and *PASSAGE Magazine*.

D. Volunteer Recognition and Appreciation

This year appreciation certificates were awarded to all members who had volunteered for a minimum of one year with FOM. Of the approximately 350 volunteers invited for the Volunteer Appreciation event, 95 volunteers were awarded a pin for 3, 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of volunteering with FOM. Ms. Roopa Deewan was the recipient of this year's Salome De Decker Award, which is given to a volunteer who epitomizes hard work and humility.

FOM has been selected by the National Heritage Board to receive the 2019 Patron of Heritage Awards (POHA).

E. Philanthropy

A new initiative, *FOM Members Care* activity group was launched to provide opportunities for all FOM members to give back to the community. The inaugural *Walk for Rice* event in November 2019 saw 230 participants walking 1,087km to donate 10,870 bowls of rice and 5,435 bowls of oatmeal for families in need.

Docent workshops on *Guiding the Elderly & Persons with Dementia in Public Spaces* and *Guiding Seniors* were organized to raise awareness under the FOM Cares initiative. Launched last year, the FOM Cares initiative aims to support Singapore's museums and art and heritage sites in their efforts to become inclusive spaces. FOM docents guided 642 visitors on the FOM Cares tours.

FOM has committed to continue giving to education through the FOM-NHB Heritage Grant. The grant provides our museums' education and program staff members with the opportunity to gain valuable experience with some of the world's leading museums. This year's grant recipients are Ms. Shereen Tan, Manager (Outreach & Education), Malay Heritage Centre, and Ms. Mandy Lim, Assistant Manager, Education and Community Outreach.

F. The Future

For now, we have managed to keep most of our existing members and even added new members due to the multitude of online offerings. However, the coming year will be financially challenging. We are likely to dip into our reserves. Cancellation of the 2020/21 Docent training, restrictions on events and activities, and members relocating from Singapore will have a negative impact on our revenues. Due to the prudent practices of previous councils, we have healthy reserves to help us through this time, though we will have to tighten our belt. We in the FOM family are lucky to have supportive members and volunteers as we navigate our way through these unprecedented times.

Finally, the President thanked all FOM volunteers for their contributions, members for keeping faith in us, and FOM partners for their unwavering support this year.

The President invited Hon. Treasurer, Yasmin Javeri Krishan to report on our financial year 30 September 2020.

Treasurer's report and presentation of Audited Accounts

The Treasurer informed members that the financial statements are available on the FOM website on the About Us/AGM page.

We ended the financial year with a net surplus of \$25,774. This is 6% higher than the surplus of \$24,246 in our last financial year (FY19). While total revenue increased by \$67,809 (13.3%) from \$510,894 in the previous year to \$578,703 in FY20, total expenses also correspondingly increased by \$66,281 (13.6%) from \$486,648 in FY19 to \$552,929 in FY20.

A. Income

Net surplus from Museum Activities decreased by \$6,946 year-over-year (YOY). This was mainly due to a fall in the number of Corporate Tours due to the pandemic (net surplus for Corporate Tours dropped by \$16,954 YOY).

This year, the total number of docents (including Japanese Docents) who completed training was 102. The surplus from Docent Training went up from \$12,300 to \$20,476 YOY.

Member Activities like Curio and Explore Singapore! decreased, together negatively impacting the surplus by \$5,218. Study Tour surplus increased marginally by \$1,214 YOY despite having only four tours conducted this year as compared to seven in the previous year.

Membership fees received over the year increased slightly by \$1,460 from \$79,422 to \$80,882. At the end of FY20, the total number of active members was 1,633 as compared with 1744 at the end of FY19.

In Sept 2019, we were awarded a Heritage Participation Grant of \$17,400 by the National Heritage Board (NHB) to extend distribution of our magazine into Singapore's community for a year. Of this grant, \$2,900 was recognised in FY19 for the Sept/Oct 2019 issue. The rest of this grant (\$14,500) was recognised in FY20 although we will receive the last tranche of the grant (\$3,480) in Feb 2021.

B. Expenses

Administrative expenses, Marketing expenses and Volunteer Appreciation expenses were significantly lower (in line with the move from actual to digital events) by \$22K. On the other hand, Office expenses were up by \$1,695 in FY20.

In FY19, an average of 2,850 copies of the Passage magazine were printed per issue whereas in FY20 this increased to 3,000 per issue as per the condition of the grant. Magazine expenses were at imperceptibly lower levels at \$44,198 compared to \$46,470 for FY19.

We finished the amortisation of the cost of developing our new website at \$20,330 annually for the third and final year.

C. Balance Sheet

Fees received in Advance for FY20-21 (\$62,605) were remarkably lower than for FY19-20 (\$451,166) due to the inability to plan for Study Tours and Docent Training in FY20-21. This was also reflected in our lower Bank Balances - down to \$201,030 at YE FY20 from \$433,412 at YE FY19.

As of 30 September 2020, FOM had Accumulated Funds of \$584,287 that were fully backed by Cash and Time Deposits totalling \$635,743.

We were able to add to the accumulated reserves this year despite the pandemic. The Council continues to practice financial prudence and find alternative innovative methods of generating revenues. We are committed to ensuring FOM's continued financial viability and astuteness as far as possible.

Item 2. Vote on resolution to approve the Audited Accounts for the financial year ended 30 September 2020

The President asked for the above motion to be approved. The Secretary informed the meeting that:

- Jyoti Ramesh moved the adoption of the resolution to approve the Audited Accounts for the financial year ended 30 September 2020.
- Melissa Yeow seconded the resolution.

The President opened the floor for any questions regarding the resolution. There were no questions. The membership was informed that the votes for approval of the Audited Accounts of the Friends of the Museums (Singapore) for the Financial Year ended 30 September 2020 had been cast via mail-in ballot. The final vote would be announced at the end of the meeting.

Item 3. Vote on resolution to approve the appointment of auditors PlanPartners PAC for the financial year ending 30 September 2021

The President asked for the above motion to be approved. The Secretary informed the meeting that:

- Clara Chan moved the adoption of the resolution to approve the appointment of PlanPartners PAC, or successor organisations, as auditors for the year ending 30

September 2021.

- Leong Lee Chew seconded the resolution.

The President opened the floor for any questions regarding the resolution. There were no questions. The membership was informed that the votes to appoint PlanPartners PAC, or successor organisations, as auditors for the financial year ending 30 September 2021 had been cast via mail-in ballot. The final vote would be announced at the end of the meeting.

Item 4. Announcement of Resolutions vote and Election results for 2020-21 Council members.

With the results of the mail-in ballot were tallied, the President introduced Durga Arivan, Chief Vote Teller, to read the results.

1. The Motion to approve the Minutes of the 16th Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Museums (Singapore) held on 4 December 2019 was APPROVED by a majority vote. The motion was passed.
2. The Motion to approve the Audited Accounts of the Friends of the Museums (Singapore) for the financial year ended 30 September 2020 was APPROVED by a majority vote. The motion was passed.
3. The Motion to appoint PlanPartners PAC, or successor organisations, as auditors for the Friends of the Museums (Singapore) for the financial year ending 30 September 2021 was APPROVED by a majority vote. The motion was passed.

Next, Durga Arivan announced the election results for the FOM 2020-21 Council Members.

The following 2020-21 Friends of the Museums Council members were ELECTED by the membership:

Position	Council Member	Vote
President	Garima Lalwani	Elected by a majority vote
Vice President	Susan Fong	Elected by a majority vote
Honorary Treasurer	Yasmin Javeri Krishan	Elected by a majority vote
Honorary Secretary	Kwan Min Yee	Elected by a majority vote
Council Representative	Laura Socha	Elected by a majority vote
Council Representative	Gisella Harrold	Elected by a majority vote
Council Representative	Christine Zeng	Elected by a majority vote
Council Representative	Michelle Foo	Elected by a majority vote

Council Representative	Kim Arnold	Elected by a majority vote
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The President asked if there were any further questions on the business of the day. No questions were received. The President congratulated the newly elected members of the 2020-21 FOM Council and thanked the 2019-20 FOM Council for their dedication.

The President thanked everyone who attended and adjourned the meeting at 11:00am.

Minutes recorded by Kwan Min Yee (Honorary Secretary)

Minutes approved by Garine President FOM

Date 9 Dec 2020