

Minutes of Committee Meeting 3 December 2023 (amended)

Present: Hannah Bradley Croall

Martin Foreman

Claire Morand

James Scott

Kate Stephenson

Robert Wylie

Non-Committee Minute Taker: Alma Forsyth

1. **Apologies:** Siobhan McGovern, Alastair Smith, Claire Wood
2. **Approval of Minutes of last meeting (5 November):** the Minutes not yet having been circulated, approval was postponed to a later date.
3. **Chalk:** report – Director Hannah was happy with the production which received excellent reviews and attracted good audiences but did not make money. This was partly because of the deal EGTG had with the venue, Assembly Roxy. In return for a lower hire fee, AR received a 6.5% sales commission and insisted on running the Box Office. Robert wondered if EGTG could upgrade its website and run its own Box Office. Hannah replied that it would be very costly to instal a secure booking system where personal data would be stored. Martin added that, in any case, the present deal with AR worked out cheaper than running our own Box Office and paying a much higher rental fee. Hannah agreed but said that she had been disappointed by the lack of publicity from AR's PR department and the fact that there had been hiccups at the online Box Office (and for walk-ins) applying the discount code for members. In future, Production Managers would have to be aware of these problems when negotiating a contract. Martin requested that the Committee's congratulations to Hannah for a successful production be minuted.
4. **Taiwan:** update - Because of conflict of interest, Kate left the meeting for this item. Written by Martin and directed by Claire M, this is the EGTG's entry to the SCDA one-act pay festival in February 2024. Following a read-through and auditions, Claire M reported that the play had been cast, in spite of a lowish turn-out at auditions. She will register for the festival before the December 9 deadline. As author, Martin will give formal permission for the EGTG production. He also intends to enter the play for the Scott Salver award for new writing. Claire M requested that a Production Manager be appointed to assist her. Hannah asked Robert if he would take on the role and he was willing but will be out of the country at the time when a PM would be most needed. Hannah suggested that either Alastair or Claire W might fulfil the role and will contact them. Claire M reported that repair work was continuing at Buccleuch Place, thus putting the main room out of rehearsal use for the moment. At the end of this discussion Martin invited Kate to rejoin the meeting.
5. **Season announcement and organisation thereof:** The Committee should meet at the venue (Home Bar in Home Street) by 19h15 on 12 December to ensure everything is ready as planned. In the meantime, Kate will double-check arrangements with the venue. Entry will be free for EGTG members, with a £5 fee for non-members. Participants will be offered a welcome glass of prosecco (£24 per bottle) or a soft drink. The quiz, drawn up by Martin, should start at 20h15. The use of phones will be forbidden and Martin and Claire W will mark each team's answers. Teams should consist of no more than three members. A small cash prize donated by Martin will go to the winner(s). The possibility of offering tickets to EGTG's

spring show was discussed but rejected on the grounds of expense. Kate pointed out that, in any case, participants would be more interested in socialising than in prizes. After the quiz, Hannah will announce the new season and present the directors.

6. **Production Managers for 2024 season:** *Taiwan* (week of 19 February) – Hannah will approach Claire W and Alastair; *The Fastest Clock in the Universe* (21-25 May) – Martin will assume the role if Claire W unavailable; *Fringe* (5 to 10 August) – Claire M; *Dangerous Corner* (15 to 19 October) – Kate; *Babs* (no dates as yet) – Hannah. A discussion ensued about recruiting production managers from outside the Committee, with the proviso that those new to the role would be monitored or might shadow an experienced PM before tackling the role alone. More backstage help was also essential and Martin suggested that, when calling for volunteers, a specific role for a specific show be mentioned rather than simply calling for general help. Hannah added that, while Newsletters or social media were useful, contacting possible recruits directly or through friends was usually more productive.
7. **Approach to the University Drama Society:** In order to fulfil one of the objects of the EGTG's Constitution ("to assist the University of Edinburgh in its promotion and presentation of drama."), Martin and Robert have had little success in stimulating interest in cooperation at faculty level. They also contacted the EU Drama Society in the summer but received no reply, although, after speaking to a Bedlam participant during the Fringe, Martin felt that an approach in October at the beginning of the academic year might be more fruitful. As a first step, Martin will email EUDS advising them that EGTG will send audition notices and information and would welcome reciprocal information on their activities. Hannah concluded that we will continue to try to adhere to the requirements of the Constitution but can do nothing if the other party is not interested.
8. **Constitution amendment sub-committee:** update - Robert had acquired a skeleton amendment which he will circulate to the others (Martin, Alastair and Siobhan) for discussion. Hannah reminded the Committee that an amended Constitution will have to be presented to the general membership early in 2024 if it is to take effect in 2025.
9. **AOB:** a) Honorarium – In an exchange of emails (excluding Martin and Claire W), the Committee discussed whether members who provide their own work for EGTG to produce could receive payment. Whereas the OSCR does not prohibit remuneration, the EGTG Constitution does. It was decided, therefore, not to offer such payment in 2024. Kate was against payment but suggested flexibility and was supported by Claire M who, however, warned that too much flexibility could lead to abuse if future Committees were less vigilant. At the next meeting of the Constitution Sub-Committee Robert and Martin will bring the matter up for further discussion, particularly with regard to the wording of such a possibility. After enquiring about an honorarium, Hilary Spiers, who has written one of EGTG's Fringe plays, accepted Hannah's reference to the relevant clause in the Constitution. b) Staged Trust – Claire M had been in contact with this organisation which aims to improve the representation of minorities in amateur theatre. The Committee agreed that she (and Hannah) should go ahead and engage the group in conversation. c) Kate introduced three items: 1) Fixed wire testing had been completed at Home Street and some essential extra work was required to maintain safety standards. Smoke alarms had been fitted. 2) Special 70<sup>th</sup> birthday events in 2024 need to be discussed at next meeting. 3) Kate had found among papers at Home Street an Income Bond dating from the 1980s. Hannah suggested asking David Grimes (former long-standing Committee member and treasurer) what he knows about it. Martin will also investigate further and Robert advised contacting the statement issuer if no more information can be found. d) Following an invoice being sent to an incorrect address, Hannah has ensured that Assembly Roxy has all the requisite information for the

future. e) Hannah gave a treasurer update and confirmed that business rate relief and relief from water and waste rate were being applied for. Regarding the search for a permanent treasurer, various contacts so far had led nowhere, in spite of our advert's still appearing on a volunteer website. Robert said he would approach acquaintances who were retiring from RBS to see if they would be interested in voluntary work as EGTG treasurer. Claire M courageously volunteered to step in as a last resort if a new treasurer had not been found by the AGM. Hannah informed the Committee that she and Claire W, being bank signatories for EGTG, planned to move the bank account, probably to the Bank of Scotland.

The next meeting will take place in January and, in order to set this date at which preparations for the AGM will be discussed, Hannah will circulate a poll.