

## **Report of the ETS Directive Committee (Board) meeting Telephone (skype) meeting - Tuesday, September the 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

The European Turfgrass Society Directive Committee (Board) met via computer for its first skype meeting on September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Mr. Alderton, Mr. Altissimo and Ms. Amendola were in Vicenza, Italy, at Landlab. The other board members participated from their own office.

### **Participants:**

Mr. Marco Volterrani – President  
Mr. Stephen Alderton  
Mr. Adriano Altissimo  
Mr. Stephen Baker  
Mr. Klaus Mueller Beck  
Mr. Alexander Richter  
Ms. Cilluf Svensson

Mr. Stanislav Hejduk and Mr. Gerard van Klooster could not attend the meeting.

As board secretary staff:

Ms. Francesca Amendola

Moderator of the skype conference: Mr. Stephen Alderton.

### **Order of the day:**

1. New fees system for 2010 memberships
2. Economic balance of the Valencia field days and rules to be adopted adopt for the forthcoming events
3. How to improve the rapidity of the decision making process in the board
4. Contacts with the sports community
5. Update on the research project on turfgrass market in Europe
6. Contacts with turfgrass historians
7. Update on the organisation of the 2010 Angers Conference

The board meeting begins at 11,20 AM, after checking internet connections.

#### **1. New fees system for 2010 memberships**

Following the suggestion of the last General Assembly Mr. Altissimo presents a proposal of new fees system:

The 2010 fees system is designed in order both to consolidate the financial balance of the society and to have a sincere and realistic position towards its members, which in most cases belong to the most important companies of the turfgrass sector. Several no-profit associations inspired this kind of fees system.

An organization willing to join ETS will subscribe an annual fee on the basis of its legal status and turnover; a proportional number of individual memberships for the company's staff

is included in the fee. Additional individual memberships for further employees can be requested.

During the General Assemblies, the individual members have the right to vote, not the company, but they are allowed to vote also for their colleagues of the same company in case they are missing, by means of a signed proxy.

- Private member: 90€ - 1 membership included in the fee
- Student member (<26 years old) : 30€
- Public societies and institutions – 200 € - 2 individual memberships included in the fee
- Associations and leagues : 550€ - 2 individual memberships included in the fee
- Companies with turnover < 500.000€ : 200 € - 2 individual memberships included
- Companies with turnover < 5.000.000€ : 300 € - 3 individual memberships included
- Companies with turnover < 25.000.000€ : 400 € - 4 individual memberships included
- Companies with turnover > 25.000.000€ : 600 € - 5 individual memberships included
- Additional individual memberships for companies, institutions, associations: 50€

After a short debate, the 2010 fees system is approved unanimously. The 2010 membership campaign will be launched in October 2009.

## **2. Economic balance of the Valencia field days and rules for the forthcoming events**

The ETS congresses and field days are an occasion both to share knowledge and to gain money to support economically ETS.

The Valencia Field Days were the first field days, so there was no previous experience and little time to organize them.

Mr. Diego Gomez de Barreda, of the Polytechnic University of Valencia, made a great effort to organize them. They were successful, but their economic gain resulted thin. This experience can be used to improve the organisation of the next field days. Regarding the Valencia economic organisation, after a brief discussion the board decided unanimously to ask to for ETS the 50% of the altogether gain of the Valencia Field Days, which amounts at 457.75 € for ETS, while in the previous agreement with Mr. Gomez, he was supposed to share with ETS a bigger profit

The board decided that ETS would ask to the organising committee of every event a part of the profit, redefining an appropriate amount of money for each event.

Concerning the next Field Days, Brussels 2011, the board decided to ask 1000€ plus 50% of the remaining profit.

For the 2010 Angers conference, a bigger gain is foreseen, so that the board accepts Mr. Alderton proposal to pay to ETS 5.000€ plus 50% of the remaining profit.

## **3. How to improve the rapidity of the decision making process in the board**

Sometimes the decision making process is retarded by a slow communication between board members and ETS staff. Moreover, it is difficult to organise board meetings because of travel expenses and time availability.

The board considers that the skype meeting is very useful and works well, so that there will be in the future several skype board meetings per year.

For what's concerning decisions and discussions by e-mail, the board decides that a board member has to answer and give its opinion in 7 days, maximum 10. After, the ETS staff will consider that he agrees with the proposal / question. After 7 days from the request, Ms Amendola will send a reminder.

Everyone, anyway, should answer, at least with a short answer.

#### **4. Contacts with the sports community**

The board discusses on how to establish a sport committee, according with the last General Assembly decisions.

Board members will propose 1 or 2 persons per country, and then Mr. Baker will coordinate the work of the committee.

Mr. Baker will provide a document on the organisation of this sport committee.

#### **5. Update on the research project on the turfgrass market in Europe**

Mr. Altissimo informs the board that there are contacts with researchers in econometrics of the University of Padova, Italy, and from a University of New Zealand. Moreover, IFA, the International Fertilizers Industry Association, is interested in contributing to ETS research on the state of the European turfgrass market.

The research will start analyzing 2-3 countries by means of statistics, interviews and data provided in a confidential way by the companies.

Also turfgrass, seed, fertilizers, machinery associations can be involved.

A student will be dedicated to this study full time.

Mr. Altissimo, after meeting these researchers, will provide to the board a detailed proposal.

The board agrees.

#### **6. Contacts with turfgrass historians**

Mr. Richter updates the board on the meeting and contact he had with a group of turfgrass historians (Prof. W. Skirde, P. Baader, H. Kamp ) in July in Frankfurt. A German institution financed the travel expenses of the professors.

Mr. Richter proposes that ETS could support these historians. They have begun yet a survey by sending a mail to several European turfgrass companies, and ask to ETS an umbrella for this kind of activities.

The discussion of the board is aimed at understanding what kind of actions and of results ETS is asked to support. It is clear, anyhow, that ETS cannot finance this project: sponsors should eventually be found.

The board decides that: Mr. Baker will write a document about this possible project.

Mr. Baker, Mr Richter and Mr. Mueller-Beck will discuss about it and will illustrate the results of their work in the future to the board. Then, the board will decide whether continue or not with this action.

#### **7. Update on the organisation of the 2010 Angers Conference**

Mr. Alderton reports about the state of the organisation of the 2010 Angers Conference, since he belongs to the organizing committee.

The conference website is going to be ready in the first week of October. Hotels have been found, but there will be no bookings: a list of hotels will be available for participants.

Contacts with other universities and search for conference hostesses are in progress. The budget of the Conference is about 50.000€.  
Conference fees will amount at about 250€, field visits included, social dinner not included.

The scientific programme of the conference is up to ETS. Ms. Alessandra Zuin, editor of the proceedings of the conference, is receiving now abstracts and papers. According to the arguments of these papers, ETS will establish the Conference scientific programme.

In the next 6 months, delegates will be involved, sponsors have to be found, the news of the event will be spread.

The board, after short discussion, decides that: all people attending the conference will receive the proceedings, but there will be different fees for ETS members and not members.

SFG (Société Française des Gazons) members will pay the same fees than ETS members and will be considered ETS members for the duration of the conference. ETS members will pay 250 €, the others will pay 320 €.  
All attendees have to pay their own fees (speakers too).

There will be 2 or 3 keynote speakers that will be chosen by the board and invited in the next months.

Mr. Alderton will send flyers to the board members, and they will spread them.

Mr. Alderton proposes that the conference can be more than a classic scientific conference, with the intervention of agronomists and professionals that can add a more practical side to the conference, as discussed also in the past ETS meetings. The deadline for abstracts is September 30<sup>th</sup>, but also papers presented later, until November 15<sup>th</sup>, will be accepted if scientifically and technically correct.

## **Conclusion**

The board agrees that the next skype board meeting will be held in October or November. In that occasion the scientific organisation of the Angers conference will be discussed.

They agree that the definitive order of the day will be spread to all the board members some days before the board meeting.

The board meeting ends at 1.20PM