

The World Dance Organisers Inaugural Meeting Minutes.

Held on Thursday 30th May 2019 in the Spanish Halls, Blackpool.

The meeting was opened at 10.15 am to allow for extra seating to be brought in.

Attendees on the Founder Members Table were: Arunas Bizokas, Tim Howson, Lorna Lee, Richard Gleave (Advisor), Amanda Dokman, Terence Lay, Seyoung Lee, Nino Romano, Maurizio Vescova, Hanson, Junichiro Kusunoki. A special thanks to Ms. Lin Bing for her help setting up this organisation.

Tim, opened the meeting with the following statement:

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, Welcome to the inaugural World Dance Organisers Meeting. I have a feeling today is going to be a great day for dancing. Following on from this week's wonderful Amateur events, I am sure you all agree it should be our duty to improve the World Championships for these extremely dedicated and talented dancers. The many faces in this room today prove we are all prepared to work together for a better future.

We are all here today to do our best to improve the dance world for Amateur dancers. Amateur World titles should be held in the highest esteem from each and every dancer and organiser with an equal opportunity for all.

With your help it is our intention to create events around the world that the dancer is proud to attend and succeed at.

Many events organised by many people here, are renowned within the industry and we believe should be considered as potential World Championship events.

Our goals are to have a criteria for the events to make certain they are of the highest quality.

The founding committee members in front of you are here to commence what we believe to be an exciting opportunity for today's dancing couples.

We intend to appoint 3 non dancer positions for the transparency of the organisation.

'Company Treasurer

Company Secretary

Company Legal Advisor'.

At a point within this meeting we will welcome your questions. For the smooth running of the meeting we will allow 1 question per person and approximately 2 mins per question asked.

The structure of the WDO:

1. A non profit organisation.
2. A Founding Committee of 11 members and one Honorary President to oversee the 2019 titles.
3. Amateur Competitors Registration is free of charge for 2 years.
4. Funds obtained by WDO will be:
Members £50.00
Members wishing to apply for a World title £250.00
Cost for World titles between £300.00 and £1000.00 depending on the event.

5. Proposed that Members have a WDO licence for 2 years to apply for a World title from 2022.

No same event will be organised consecutively in the same country.

No organiser to organise the same event for 2 years.

6. Rules and Regulations to be legally drawn up in the following weeks of this meeting.

The Criteria for organising a World Title will be drawn up. Important points will be:
Fully open, unrestricted events for each and every dancer.

Arunas then continued with the details of the Agenda and plans for the future of the WDO.

He announced that the 'Constitution' was initially drawn up, but it was felt by the founding committee that a legal expert should be consulted and formulated by someone in a legal position. With this in mind the 'Constitution' and 'Election of Officers' were TABLED.

Arunas then asked the Founding Committee Members to say a few words as introductory speeches.

Richard, explained that he was representing 'Freedom to Dance', which was formed in 2010 in response to the banning of couples being allowed to dance in events around the world. It is now established in 35 countries with 77 ambassadors and over 10,000 Facebook members. He congratulated the founder members and everyone attending and supporting this organisation.

Lorna, then addressed the meeting expressing her thanks for the famous people attending who clearly have the same desire as herself and the founding members. Lorna's belief is to promote and look after the Amateur dancers and keep them free from political ideas, so they can concentrate on dancing at prestigious events around the world. As an organiser she wants to be able to produce events without any outside influences from other organisations. To organise events for the dancers and enable them to produce their best performances in the future.

Arunas continued to explain the concept of the WDO was to produce World Championships for Amateur dancers. This is not to stop them from dancing any other current events, but for years now we have had finalists that have chosen not to dance as they have felt they have not had a fair chance of success. He felt it was our duty to address this problem with so many excellent competitions around the world wishing to organise World Championships and then the competitors would decide whether they would support them or not.

The initial interest to arrange the World Championships was a pleasant surprise and in some case more than one country applied for the same titles. Once the Rules and Regulations are drawn up they will be passed to the organisers for this year's Championships to abide by. In many cases the Rules of the country will be used and in harmony with our Rules and the selection of the adjudicators will be assembled on the best interest for the competitors and organisers.

Allocation of World Championships in 2019 /2020.

MEMBER	WDO - ALLOCATED TITLES 2019	PLACE	COUNTRY	MONTH
LATIN				
TBC PROMOTIONS	AMATEUR LATIN	WATER WAKE	ENGLAND	4 th OCTOBER
ITALIAN DANCE FEDERATION	YOUTH LATIN	NAPLES	ITALY	DECEMBER
MAURIZIO VESCOVO	JUNIOR LATIN	TREVISO	ITALY	NOVEMBER
DANSINN POLAND	JUVENILES	WARSAWI	POLAND	SEPTEMBER
BALLROOM				
DANSINN POLAND	JUVENILES	WARSAWI	POLAND	SEPTEMBER
YANG CHAO	AMATEUR	CIMEN	CHINA	NOVEMBER
10 DANCE				
ITALIAN DANCE FEDERATION	U16/O16	NAPLES	ITALY	DECEMBER

WDO - UNALLOCATED TITLES 2019

LATIN				
SENIOR				
BALLROOM				
CHINA ART ASSOCIATION	YOUTH	Beijin	CHINA	DECEMBER Pending
CHINA ART ASSOCIATION	JUNIOR	Beijin	CHINA	DECEMBER Pending
CHINA TIMES CULTURE & SPORTS ORG.	SENIOR	SHENZEN	CHINA	NOVEMBER Pending
LATIN SHOW DANCE				
U16/O16				
BALLROOM SHOW DANCE				
U16/O16				

MEMBER	WDO - ALLOCATED TITLES 2020	PLACE	COUNTRY	MONTH
LATIN				
JAMES PROUTON	YOUTH	SOUTHAMPTON	ENGLAND	FEBRARY
NINO ROMANO	AMATEUR	NAPLES	ITALY	DECEMBER
SVETLANA KARMAZ	JUVENILES	ELCHE	SPAIN	JUNE
RENATA SHVARTS	SENIOR	NEWARK	USA	JANUARY
ITALIAN DANCE FEDERATION	JUNIOR	ROME	ITALY	JANUARY
BALLROOM				
AMANDA DOKMAN	AMATEUR	LONDON	ENGLAND	MAY
CHINA TIMES CULTURE & SPORT ORG.	JUVENILESfgh	SHENZHEN	CHINA	NOVEMBER
RENATA SHUARTS	SENIOR	NEWARK	USA	JANUARY
ARUNAS BIZOKAS	JUNIOR	VILNIUS	LITHUANIA	MAY
AMANDA DOKMAN	YOUTH	LONDON	ENGLAND	MAY

WDO - UNALLOCATED TITLES 2020

10 DANCE				
U16/O16				
LATIN SHOW DANCE				
U16/O16				
BALLROOM SHOW DANCE				
U16/O16				

The meeting was then opened to the floor for anyone to ask questions regarding the organisation.

Point 1 Raised: was a request to organise the Youth and Junior World Championships in 2019 from China Art Association.

Arunas replied and explained that forms were here today to fill out and following the meeting the founding committee would have a meeting to make a decision.

Point 2 Raised: A question if any American style World Championships had been considered to be organised by the WDO?

Arunas explained that we had a request from an American organiser to hold Rhythm and Smooth World Championships for Amateurs. Clearly it is becoming more popular now around the world so it was going to be considered by the founding committee.

Point 3 Raised: Excellent that this organisation now exists, and in such a contrast from the other meetings held this week, this meeting has a friendly and good atmosphere about it. The speaker was delighted that there were so many previous champions in both styles here and that maybe positive changes are in process. It was explained that the WDO was already formed in a country by the speaker themselves but if any rights were needed to be passed over it would not cause any problems.

Arunas replied thanking the speaker and was happy to hear that we are sharing the same goals for the future and if any copyright was needed we would work together with them.

Point 4 Raised: Could the committee give more details about the constitution and governance that it is proposing. Other organisations have had 70 years to form constitutions. Arunas explained we could give the speaker more details but the speaker felt it would take too much time for this meeting but *Arunas said that we would be happy to share this information as we got closer to the final document.* Non Profit and Ltd company rules were also raised by the speaker. *Arunas replied explaining that that was the reason for seeking legal advice to set up a structure that would be acceptable and transparent to the members. He continued that the company was already registered by Ms. Lin Bing as we needed that for the name World Dance Organisers.*

Point 5 Raised: Any thoughts on organising Pro Am World Championships?

Arunas replied, stating that Arthur Murray has the title and trademark and appoint those mentioned events each year to a chosen organiser. It would be up to the committee to request the information to see if was possible to organise those World Championships under the WDO.

Point 6. Raised: Any thoughts on Professional World Championships being organised by the WDO?

Arunas replied, at the moment no, as the system that the professional world championships is organised by is a good one. Different countries are able to organise the events and competitors have felt that it is a good system that works well. If organisers would like to organise Professional events alongside the Amateur World Championships that would be up to them.

Point 7 Raised: How will judges be selected?

Arunas replied that it was under discussion and we wanted input from the floor today. The founding committee would like a structure that the organisers would need to adhere too, and that was reasonable for the organiser to achieve. The highest level of adjudicators for competitors was a priority and whether that would be 1 judge per country or 2 from a country would need to be discussed in and after this meeting.

Point 8 Raised: What structure were we proposing for membership and committee members to the WDO?

Arunas replied that different type of memberships could be possible with 'introductory' and 'full' membership then a structure of voting to follow on from that. Today without the lawyers in place it did not seem correct to finalise a structure.

Point 9 Raised: A recommendation that an equal number of male and female judges be submitted for World Championships.

The committee applauded.

Point 10 Raised: Adjudication selection, it would seem that some events already have judges selected.

Arunas replied, that no panel for a World Championship had been ratified yet, but once the Rules was set we would be able to do this by the end of June.

Point 11 Raised: Selection of judges. That a judge would not be used more than twice in the same year.

Arunas agreed and stated it would be added to the suggestions.

Point 12 Raised: Asked who would draw up the constitution, will the election be according to the constitution, understanding this is a non profit organisation is there a budget currently and who has the final say of the criteria for adjudicators?

Arunas replied, the constitution will be drafted by the founding members and sent out for the members to view. The election of officers will be according to the constitution with an input from our members. The budget, as yet we are in our infancy and only a small amount of income has been available. The plan was to use that income for administrative purposes. Once we are in our second year we would seek approval from our members on how the budget was spent and it would be made public. The final adjudicator's selection will be by the founding members once the organiser has submitted the proposed adjudicator's names.

Point 13 Raised: Would Amateur judges be used for World Championships?

Tim replied, as yet it had not been discussed, but it was hoped that we would not allow Amateurs to adjudicate. As 'x' dancers we all had hoped for the highest esteem of adjudicators and he could not see a reason for that changing now we had retired.

Point 14 Raised: Would Professional competitors be accepted to adjudicate?

Tim replied, in his opinion NEVER. He has never found it acceptable that a competitor that you were dancing against the day before the championships was mixing with the same adjudicators that were adjudicating you.

A short break followed to give everyone a chance to talk to each other about the matters so far.

Arunas re-started the meeting stating that no Terms of Office (excluding a non dancer position) will be longer than two terms. The terms will be decided in the constitution.

Tim continued re-iterating Point 9, and welcomed any lady willing to be elected onto the committee would be very welcome.

Point 15 Raised: Repeated that the Founders promote the Art of Dance and not sport. To work together with the WDC.

Arunas replied that promoting 'dance as an Art' was a WDO concept and we were certainly not fighting the WDC instead we are working to promote, enhance and cooperate with the WDC.

Point 16 Raised: Congratulated the committee for forming this organisation. When the Amateur League was formed there was no risk involved. In 2007 at the WDC AGM, 32 countries voted to form their own Amateur organisations within their countries. The IDU was formed and World championships arranged. Currently a third party control the Amateur League and we are unable to see any constitution or accounting since it was formed. During the WDC meeting this week many of the questions we all have were called 'out of order', and were unable to be answered. It is clear that we should have separated World Championships around the world for Amateur dancers and wished the committee a great success in achieving this.

Tim replied by suggesting everyone was attending the meeting for many different reasons and peoples thoughts on the current situation was clearly dissatisfied. All the founder members will promise, is that we will be honest and transparent in everything we do. The future is bright if we all work together in this way.

Arunas brought forward the question of age categories for Juniors etc,/ prize money /and a Ranking List. He informed the meeting that age categories will be in the Rules within the constitution and yes the prize money was set for each organiser and if WDO funds were available the WDO would help organisers with this. Ranking List, once again if the organisers were for the idea, then we could implement it at a later date.

Point 17 Raised: Was there any thoughts on Fund Raising for the WDO or a place where people could donate to the WDO?

Arunas replied stating it was a great suggestion and would be taken on board to the next founders meeting.

Point 18 Raised: Was there going to be a structure of the best couples being invited to attend, or were they strictly open events? Were there air fares and hotel fees to be paid?

Arunas replied that those questions were spoken about. Open events were preferred currently and would work best. Some of the organisers had stated that they were willing to pay for the accommodation for a certain number of couples, but it seemed that would be case by case depending on the event and country it was organised.

Tim continued stating that you give any dance couple and equal chance of becoming a champion they will attend with no prize money, no flights, and no accommodation.

Tim brought a comment to the floor that was mentioned in the break regarding; How IT informed were we? He believed it was a very important point and that should also have a position as a non dancer within the officers on the committee. The next generation will all demand it!

Lorna then remarked on the criteria of adjudication for the events. Lorna pointed out that if a country were not selected then it did not matter what status you had as you were never in favour as a country. In years gone by, the same British adjudicator was selected for years and years to adjudicate the World Championships. By allowing the organiser to select a panel and having a committee oversee the decisions was her favoured position. This would stop previous World Champions never even being asked to adjudicate at a World Championships.

Point 18 Raised: The World is round! Why is it expected by the current organisers of the World Championships that dancers from the other side of the world are expected to pay the huge costs of travel and accommodation along with suffering jetlag to attend their event in the same country each year? With World titles being held in one country by the same organiser, this does not aid the growth of dancing economically. Opportunities to raise the level of sponsorship and TV coverage are limited. Should any competitor, organiser or judge for any reason fall not in favour of the current World Championship organisers, then your chances of being welcomed or included are pretty small. To bring the World Championships to different countries has to be a great decision.

Arunas thanked Michael Williams for attending and providing the room for the WDO

The meeting closed at 12.00