

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING OF SIOPSA

Meeting held at the Wits Club, West Campus, University of the Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg, on Monday 31 October 2005 at 17:00.

WELCOME

The Chair, Aletta Odendaal, welcomed members and Adv Nick Guttentag to this important and historical meeting for SIOPSA. She stated that recommendations from senior Psychologists, SIOPSA's advisory committee and SIOPSA's legal council had led the Executive Committee to a unanimous decision to hold this meeting to decide SIOPSA's future.

The Chair stated that it would be a formal meeting and that Ralph Wortley would audit the meeting.

The Chair explained that a non-SIOPSA member, Judith Williamson was present to take the minutes and asked members to state their names clearly when speaking.

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

A quorum being present, as per the signed attendance register, the meeting was declared open.

Apologies were received from Rod le Roux, Abed Moola, Kasthuri Nainaar, Barbara Donaldson, Jonathan Cook, Yoshini Naidoo, Nadene Venter, Gert Roodt and Lezel Bezuidenhout.

TRIBUTE – DAVID LEWIS

Ralph Wortley read a tribute compiled by Dr Richard Holmes to David Lewis who sadly passed away.

HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF PsySSA

The history of negotiations since 1994 was presented to the meeting on overhead projector to read.

REPORT-BACK: PsySSA AGM

The Chair reminded all present of the mandate given to SIOPSA's Executive Committee at the SIOPSA AGM in June 2005. The mandate was:

- full autonomy of Divisions;
- membership of a Division without being a member of PsySSA;
- the Council of PsySSA to consist of democratically elected representatives of members, not nominees;
- election of office bearers to be subject to a national nomination process, postal ballot and proxies;
- a proper dispute resolution process; and
- that a member of the Executive Committee not serve simultaneously on the Board for Psychology of HPCSA.

Against the mandate SIOPSA's Chair then summarised the proposed motions taken at PsySSA's AGM and the resolutions made using the content of the draft PsySSA AGM minutes.

- **Autonomy of Divisions – A Federal Structure for PsySSA**

It was resolved that the structure of PsySSA and the status quo contained in the existing PsySSA constitution be retained.

- **Alignment to the Constitution of South Africa**

It was resolved that no need existed for any amendment, but that the wording would be refined where necessary.

- **Composition of Council**

SIOPSA proposed an amendment to the resolution that was seconded and accepted by the meeting but was not reflected in the minutes.

It was resolved that the Council of PsySSA be mandated to incorporate such additional rules and standing orders into the existing ones as Council may deem necessary to give full and better effect to the duties of Council as defined in Article 8.2 of the Constitution; and

that those clauses of the Constitution dealing with the functions, composition, election and voting regarding the Executive of PsySSA be renumbered and incorporated in the Constitution.

- **Decisions to be taken with majority of office bearers present.**

It was resolved that Article 8.1.2 of PsySSA's Constitution be amended to provide for 50% of the members of Council to be present in person at the commencement of a meeting to constitute a quorum.

- **Election of Office Bearers**

SIOPSA proposed the re-instatement of a postal vote system to elect office bearers in order to enable all members, whether present at the AGM or not to participate fully in the election process.

It was resolved that the election of office bearers take place at the AGM as is presently provided for in Article 5.6.3 of PsySSA's Constitution.

It was further resolved that office bearers of divisions be elected through a postal vote system should a specific division so wish.

- **Full Autonomy of Divisions**

SIOPSA proposed an amendment to the proposal. The meeting accepted that "due consideration" be given to the motivation and alternative proposed by SIOPSA. This was not reflected in the minutes.

It was resolved that the level of autonomy of divisions be determined as provided for in Article 12.5.2 of PsySSA's present constitution and the rules and standing orders be expanded to define and facilitate autonomy of divisions within the context of Article 12.5.2 and the practical needs of members and divisions. Where appropriate, amendments to Article 12 would be recommended.

- **Membership**

It was resolved that the *status quo* be retained and by definition, that only a member of PsySSA may be a member of a division, except for the grace period of one year allowed for new members in Article 12.2 of PsySSA's constitution.

It was further resolved that:

- Divisions who have members who do not want to be members of PsySSA or who do not qualify for such, should identify, define and submit names of members or categories of desired membership to the Council of PsySSA;
- Divisions who wish to have such membership should submit appropriate justification for the need for such membership to the Council of PsySSA; and
- Submissions would be evaluated by the Council of PsySSA for consideration in terms of PsySSA's existing constitution and where a need is identified for change to the constitution, that appropriate recommendations for amendment be tabled at the next AGM

- **Scrapping of Branches**

It was resolved that the *status quo* be retained in respect of the existence of branches.

- **Proper Dispute Resolution Process**

It was resolved after amendment that Council be mandated to consider and approve comprehensive rules to facilitate a just and appropriate dispute resolution process and disciplinary procedures in accordance with the prevailing behests of the law and the ethical code for the psychology profession.

It was further resolved that in terms of Article 15.2 of PsySSA's Constitution, amendments to the Constitution, Rules and Standing Orders flowing from resolutions taken at the AGM will be submitted to members for a postal vote.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS – ADV NICK GUTTENTAG

Adv Guttentag summarised the legal implications for SIOPSA of decisions taken at the PsySSA AGM with regard to:

- the right to self-government,
- limitations to autonomy of Divisions,
- legal status of Divisions,
- membership and
- financial implications.

DISCUSSION / QUESTIONS

The following issues were raised by members at the meeting and discussed:

- Membership fees were queried. Nick Guttentag answered that SIOPSA's membership fees are paid to PsySSA. The Chair explained that Divisional fees amounted to R120.00 for full members of which 14% VAT must be paid and PsySSA receives 20% for administration cost. Membership of PsySSA is R700.00. The value add of this was queried by members.
- A question was raised regarding new fees for members. It was suggested that full members pay R300.00 plus VAT and students R150.00 plus VAT.

- A question was asked about SIOPSA's current assets. The Treasurer answered that there was ±R560 000 on a deposit account and ±R140 000 in the current account.
- Hennie Kriek added that another ±R300 000 would be available from PAI on the proviso that the money was not available for PsySSA to have control over.
- What would happen to SIOPSA's assets if the decision was taken to dissociate from PsySSA? Nick Guttentag answered that PsySSA would have no right to SIOPSA's assets, but that it would be necessary to act speedily.
- Comments were made that unity in Psychology is important in South Africa and that the membership consider this. If SIOPSA does become independent then relations with key bodies in the field including PsySSA should continue.
- PsySSA currently has a strong clinical orientation. Industrial and organisational psychology differs greatly from this and currently PsySSA does not serve the needs of industrial and organisational psychology sufficiently. An independent SIOPSA would be better able to manage the unique needs of the profession.
- This point was reiterated by mention being made that there was no support for Industrial Psychology in the current Intern Board Examinations. (Although this is admittedly more a board issue).
- The record shows that SIOPSA has acted in good faith for a number of years in an attempt to both work with PsySSA leadership and adequately represent the needs of SIOPSA's members as mandated by them.
- A concern was raised about how independence would affect the relations with the Health Professions Council. The chair answered that SIOPSA has already been identified, as a body in its own right and that current healthy relations with the Health Professions Council of South Africa would continue.
- A concern was raised for unity in Psychology with the current individual/relational issues with PsySSA. A lack of trust in the current PsySSA was raised.
- A lot of energy has gone into managing the relationship with PsySSA and related constitutional issues. This is better channelled into membership.
- It was agreed that people should be encouraged to become members of SIOPSA and that SIOPSA will be an organisation fully inclusive of all population groups and serve the needs of Industrial Psychology on the entire African continent.
- The Chair stated that going independent does not mean that SIOPSA will sit on an island. With full independence, other bodies can affiliate to SIOPSA.

MOTIONS PUT FORWARD

The following motions were put forward:

MOTION 1

It is proposed in view of the legal implications to SIOPSA of the proposed changes to the Constitution of PsySSA, that:

SIOPSA withdraws from divisional membership of PsySSA.

Consequential to the above the amendments to the Constitution of SIOPSA (detailed in Annexure A of Notice of Meeting) be accepted to have immediate force and effect.

Proposed: Unanimously by the Executive Committee of SIOPSA

Seconded: Charmaine Swanevelder

The motion was passed **unanimously**. None abstained and none voted against.

MOTION 2

SIOPSA believe in the collaboration of all psychologists in the interest of Psychology in South Africa and that it will find and explore all options to collaborate with other Psychologists in the interest of greater Psychology.

It is proposed that based on the independent status SIOPSA immediately enter into negotiations with PsySSA for affiliate membership without in any way compromising its status as an autonomous Society.

Proposed: Theo Veldsman

Seconded: Heinz Schenk and Charmaine Swanevelder

The motion was passed **unanimously**. None abstained and none voted against.

MANDATE

Theo Veldsman **proposed** a mandate to SIOPSA's existing Executive committee to take whatever appropriate action required and to make whatever decisions are necessary to give effect to the above motions. Heinz Schenk **seconded** it.

GENERAL

- Simon Shane voiced vote of thanks to the Chair for all the hard work and the Chair extended it to the Executive Committee.
- Members reiterated the need for speedy communication with members of the decision taken and their membership status.
- A suggestion was made for lower fees in the first year. Consideration will be given to this.
- Many reinforced the need for SIOPSA to embark on a strong drive for membership and be committed to transformation.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 19:25

READ AND CONFIRMED THIS DAY OF 2006

SECRETARY

CHAIR