



SLALEY HALL
LODGES

Meeting Name:	Slaley Hall Owners Club 22nd Annual Committee Meeting		
Date of Meeting	4 October 2019	Time:	9am
Minutes Prepared By:	Jen Atkinson	Location:	Slaley Hall
	The Chairman, Chris Harder, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance and introduced the Committee members:		
Attendees:	CH: Chris Harder, Committee Chairman, Owners Representative BC: Barry Cobley, Owners Representative MY; Maureen Young, Owners Representative SK: Sharon Kinsella, Founder Member Representative RG: Ross Grieve, Slaley Hall Lodges Ltd Management Company Representative DC: David Clark, Founder Member Representative		
	<p>Chairman explained that yesterday 3rd October 2019 it was brought to the Committee's attention that Bill Johnston was not a named holder of a holiday certificate (was held in Mrs Johnston's name) and therefore he was removed from the position of Chairman.</p> <p>Chairman read a statement from Seasons Holidays giving clarification to the membership update in particular that three elected members had not benefitted from alcohol at the company's expense. An apology for any offence and inaccuracy was offered.</p> <p>Chairman talked of the outstanding contribution made by Bill Johnston in recent years. When he took over there was no sinking fund and the place was becoming rather dilapidated. In addition to the work done at Slaley, Bill had represented us at TATOC & other groups. He asked that the meeting expressed their appreciation of Bill's work and the meeting gave a round of applause.</p>		
Agenda, Notes, Discussions, Issues, Actions			Actions
Approval of the Minutes of the 21 st Annual General Meeting	In the absence of any questions Andrew Ferguson (Lodge 26) proposed acceptance. This was seconded by Martin Dean (Villa 15). The Minutes were passed.		

<p>Approval of the Club Accounts</p>	<p>With no questions regarding the Accounts the Chairman asked for acceptance. Proposed Carol Dean (Villa 15) and seconded by Bill Grosvenor (Lodge 8)</p> <p>In a vote of acceptance there were a few abstentions but no objections.</p>	
	<p><u>Questions arising from Accounts</u></p> <p>Bill Grosvenor (Lodge 8) raised a question on the relationship between Seasons & the elected members. Chairman replied that there was an impasse and clarification on working together and this will be discussed at an early stage. Bill Grosvenor responded that after 25 years of involvement on various Committee's people should be working together and not against each other.</p> <p>Chairman added that Seasons have taken over all unsold weeks and contribute to fees as all members do. It is apparent that the constitution and management company contract needs updating.</p>	
	<p>From the comments to date from the new owners it is clear that the previous management company did not serve the owners well. In delegating the task there is a lot of built-in trust. It is the view of the new management company that Slaley has not been served well and several staff changes have resulted. Chairman was encouraged by the fact that the management company will not increase the fees over the next 3 years and are confident of improving standards.</p>	
	<p><u>Refurbishments</u> – Lodges listed in Committee report in addition to other work that has been done.</p> <p>Roger Rippon (Villa 8) asked if competitive tendering was used for substantial refurbishments. Chairman replied due to difficulties of employing local contractors and getting work done on time the work had been undertaken by a firm from Glasgow that also worked for Cameron House & Belton Woods. This ensured work was always completed on time. In answer to the question the chairman confirmed there is not competitive tendering.</p> <p>Jennifer Wilson (Lodge 7 & Lodge 9) questioned the experience of people refurbishing the lodge due to loss of storage area and loss of coat hanging facilities for wet clothes and space for golf equipment.</p> <p>Mike Ford (Lodge 7) expressed appreciation of the work done as did Mr Maddison (Lodge 6) & Georgia Ternent (Lodge 7). The latter because it supports people with disabilities.</p> <p>Jeff Solomons (Villa 14) suggested an owner's survey before refurbishment.</p>	

	<p>Mr Davies (Lodge 2) raised the question of removal of Saunas, several people commented on the Sauna option. It was suggested that those with a preference for a sauna to liaise with reception to see if one was available. Saunas had been removed due to injuries and a major fire at Cameron House.</p> <p>Ross Grieve indicated that he had made a note of the issues raised and these would be addressed in the refurbishment of lodges.</p>	
	<p><u>Debtors</u> – The club debt and provision as of 30th April 2018 was £140k which rose to £212k in 2019. In effect members are paying a levy for the defaulters. Taking people to court has been successful but inevitably brings hardship to some. Currently there is a gap of about £130k.</p> <p>Ross Grieve felt that much money had been spent on chasing debt to limited effect and added in 27 years of business they have never taken owners to court.</p>	
	<p><u>Exit Strategy</u> - to date there have been 79 formal requests, 49 relinquishments agreed. The exit strategy is under review.</p>	
	<p><u>Management company</u> - Ross Grieve gave a detailed introduction of himself, his background experience and the purchase of Slaley. They had obtained an overview of the strength/weakness of the resorts. Seasons have purchased South Lodge in order to improve communication and cut down on waste. He added that the Leeds office had closed and work undertaken by the central Seasons office.</p> <p>He asked that all email addresses were checked to ensure effectiveness of communications. He went on to say that they wanted to improve control of expenditure and efficiency of housekeeping and health & safety. Some areas had been sadly lacking, and efficiency needed to be improved. Suppliers have been changed and the most significant development is that cleaners now work in pairs and are closely monitored. He felt that the grounds should benefit from a higher level of maintenance. He indicated that competitive tendering would be introduced and gave the commitment that management fees for the next 3 years would be frozen and a desire to reduce these after a full review of the club.</p> <p>Question of an outstanding bill for legal advice was raised and this concerned the legality of the way the management was taken over and was done at the instigation of the 4 elected members. After discussion David Clark drew attention that the legal advice indicated no material breach by the management company against the committee or any other format. The contract will run for a couple of years. The Committee were unanimous in wanting to</p>	

	<p>work together in the best interest of the club in order that people can come and enjoy their holidays.</p> <p>Ian Thompson (Villa 15) raised a question of business practice and his recent experience of documents with innuendos & insinuations. Ross Grieve reiterated many of the points raised earlier and said today is a new chapter and we look forward to it.</p> <p>Subsequent discussions involved timeshare presentations by Seasons, leisure agreement with the hotel & renewal of the golf buggy contract. Annoyance was expressed at holidays being interrupted by timeshare sales. A lady (unidentified) expressed concern at the tone of the unsigned membership update from seasons and that she had contacted Ms Kinsella regarding this. Unfortunately, some of the comments and the sales pitch had soured her holiday.</p> <p>Mr Quinn (Lodge 33) raised the questions of access for dogs which was contrary to local rules. This would be discussed at the next Committee meeting.</p> <p>Ross Grieve thanked people for their contributions and for listening to his presentation.</p> <p>Heather Pilling (Lodge 33) thought it was time to draw a line under what should or shouldn't have happened and hoped people would communicate and debate in moving forward.</p> <p>Mr Davis asked how many weeks Seasons have that they are paying for. Ross Grieve confirmed it was 453 from a total of 1850 weeks. He added that Seasons were not looking to reduce their weeks but wanted Slaley to benefit from expanding membership in order that members could experience different parts of the country.</p> <p>Mrs Wood (Villa 8) asked whether the present committee was effectively defunct in view of the founder member and management company. Ross Grieve replied that the committee would work together in the interest of members.</p> <p>Chairman thanked people for the frank exchanges.</p>	
<p>Election of the Committee Members</p>	<p>An electronic voting system had been introduced this year with those attending the AGM being able to vote manually. The 8 candidates identified themselves and were formally seconded.</p> <p>Since issuing the voting papers an extra vacancy had occurred on the committee. How this should be resolved created much discussion, such as 2 votes but this could not be included in the electronic voting. Proportional representation was also suggested as was starting the process again. Chairman decided for</p>	

	<p>clarification it was one vote per certificate and then adjourned for the count, while members had lunch.</p> <p>On resuming the meeting Chairman announced the results, with the first two candidates being elected. Fiona Garth 104, Barry Cobley 68, Karen Calendar 64, Heather Pilling 19, Steve Leyland 14, Georgina Ternent 11, Kath Leyland 11, Kay Sandham 7. It was therefore declared that Fiona Garth & Barry Cobley were duly elected.</p> <p>Chairman regretted the confusion and went on to say that the founder member had not used their votes (453).</p> <p>In reply to a question it was confirmed that founder member has always opted out of the vote.</p> <p>Unfortunately, Fiona had left the meeting and was unable to accept the congratulations but she would be contacted by the chairman who looked forward to her joining the committee.</p>	
	<p><u>Questions –</u></p> <p>Peter Jones asked questions on (a-) could the trees be managed and (b-) if the hotels facilities and decor could be improved. Food is moderate at best. Chairman stressed that the hotel business was independent but this point would be passed to them. Local maintenance would look at trees.</p> <p>Dennis and Mary Adamson asked regarding owners meeting and possible provision of Sky TV in lodges. In reply chairman said the reception for members had been cancelled due to lack of support and Sky was removed due to cost. He added that the quiz was often cancelled due to lack of support. The drinks reception had been provided by the hotel.</p> <p>Steven Eccles made some points regarding full or partial refurbishment in Lodge 4. In answering the question Ross Grieve said that refurbishment would be full and in addition they will be looking at energy efficient radiators. (Chairman subsequently asked RG to look into this and contact Mr Eccles). Ross confirmed he had taken all the points raised onboard.</p> <p>An unidentified lady commented that RG’s presentation was good, but was concerned that the image of Slaley might be changed. Ross assured the meeting of the competence of his interior designer and looked forward to refurbishments.</p> <p>Roger Heesterman had asked if Seasons would video and YouTube their presentation. Ross Grieve replied that this would not be so as it is a private club and doing so could contravene data protection.</p>	

	<p>Michael Scott expressed thoughts about the exit strategy and the inability to sell despite reducing the price. Ross Grieve added the exit strategy is under review.</p> <p>Brenda Hutchinson express annoyance that all correspondence was now addressed to her husband however the ownership is in joint names. The system is being reviewed.</p> <p>Carol Mauldon-Hamby asked if both parties have to be over 80 years when using the exit strategy, Ross Grieve commented the policy is under review.</p> <p>Tony Cooper expressed concern at the different aspects of a selling program. He gained from one but has clearly lost at Slaley. Such are market forces. Finally, Ross Grieve commented to contact membership services to let out a property and they will direct you accordingly.</p>	
	<p>Chairman thanked everybody for their wide-ranging input, their patience and looked forward to seeing them at next year AGM on 2nd October 2020.</p>	