

Kamra tal-Periti Annual General Meeting 2017

Thursday 14th December 2017

Mount St. Joseph, Targa Gap, Mosta

Agenda

1. Reading and Approval of Minutes of the KTP AGM held on the 15th December 2016
2. Address by President
3. Matters Arising
4. Presentation and Approval of Financial Statements
5. Presentation and Approval of Motions
6. Elections
7. Concluding Remarks

Approval of AGM Minutes

The meeting commenced at 18.15hrs. Profs. Alex Torpiano (AT) opened the meeting, welcoming the members present, and emphasising the importance of membership fee payment and support.

In order to leave more time for other matters, he asked whether the minutes of the previous AGM, together with the annual reports of the delegates and representatives of the Kamra on the various Boards and Committees, which had been circulated via the KTP website, could be taken as read. Since there was no objection, he proposed a motion, seconded by Perit Simone Vella Lenicker (SVL), that the minutes of the previous AGM, held on the 15th December 2016, be taken as read and approved. The motion was unanimously approved by show of hands.

Address by the President

AT presented his report in which he gave an account of the work of the Council over the past year, as well as the priorities for the coming year. He thanked the members of the Council for their efforts throughout the year, as well as other members of the Kamra who had worked on specific initiatives and in various working groups.

Among other things, the Council was extensively engaged in the consultation process for the drafting of the Periti Act, as well as various negotiations with the PA, on behalf of members. Through the involvement of several members, the Kamra contributed to several Public Consultations, such as that on the Paceville Master Plan, which contribution resulted in a change in direction.

AT noted that several Professional Conduct cases had been heard and closed over the past year. The new Website was launched with added functionality.

Among the priorities for the coming year, AT mentioned the Building Regulations. He also announced the Emanuele Luigi Galizia Awards, which would enable the Profession to recognise work of quality.

The full text of AT's presentation is annexed to these minutes.

Matters Arising

Following the address by the President, the floor was opened for discussion:

Perit Franco Montesin (FM) asked whether through the ELG Awards, the Kamra would be able to recognise the work of the older generation of periti, and mentioned, as an example, Perit Joe Spiteri who had recently passed away. Profs. Torpiano replied that, within the framework of the Awards, such recognition would be possible through the Lifetime Achievement Award.

FM questioned whether foreign practitioners working in Malta as periti are bound by the same the same period of liability as Maltese periti. AT replied that there are different opinions dependent on whether the service is being offered by someone from abroad or someone who has set up a practice in Malta. If the practitioner is based abroad, it is likely that the conditions of that country would apply.

Lastly, FM commented on the need for the Kamra and its members to move closer towards being self-regulating. AT noted that our law, established in 1919, defines us as self-regulating, but that the government, through the minister, has authority over the warrant and this has not been successfully changed through the draft Periti Act.

Perit Daniel Scerri (DS) again raised the issue of the use of the title 'Periti'. He does not agree that it should be reserved for partnerships of periti who are jointly and severally liable, since there are other ways for periti to work together. AT agreed that other types of agreements between periti are possible. The difficulty is that this title currently refers to a particular juridical entity. Perit Anthony Fenech Vella (AFV) remarked on the possibility of a private agreement between the periti to outline and allocate liability and responsibility, noting the importance of this being transparent such that it is clear to the client. Perit Ian Critien (IC) agreed, and Perit Glynn Drago noted the importance of protecting the title 'periti'.

Perit Andre Pizzuto (AP) asked whether Professional Conduct would remain the remit of the Kamra, as we had voted in the EGM. AT replied that in the current draft of the Periti Act, the Council would retain jurisdiction over Professional Conduct, however it would now be up to the politicians to decide when the Act is discussed in Parliament.

Perit Rueben Abela (RA) stated that, as a matter of public relations, it should be made public that the Kamra had presented a list of heritage buildings to be protected, and that this list was not considered by the Planning Authority (PA). The Heritage Planning Unit now consists of only 4 persons, none of whom are periti, and the work that they are doing consists only of monitoring. Since they are not periti, they cannot evaluate claims that a structure is in a dangerous condition. Furthermore, the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage (SCH) is not using its powers to veto development which threatens heritage buildings. RA encouraged the Kamra to be more proactive. AT proposed the idea of a Heritage Alliance which would co-ordinate the efforts of NGO's in this area. He also noted that the KTP have asked the minister to give SCH more authority and resources, but that this request has not been acknowledged to date.

Referring to the cases related to the demolition of the Sea Malta Building and Villa Ignatius, AFV stated that it was unacceptable that the Kamra was treated in this manner. and proposed a motion in support of the Council. AT thanked AFV for his support. He pointed out another case where the Council had been ignored by the PA, and this was in the public consultation on the amendment in the DNO Legislation to include development related to the Police, the Armed Forces and Prisons. Here it was clear that the decision had been taken without considering the feedback from the Council and before the report on the Public Consultation had been compiled.

At the end of the discussion, SVL thanked AT for his tireless work and very strong contribution to the work of the Council throughout the year.

Presentation and Approval of Financial Statements

Mr. Antonio Grech presented the Auditor's Report, Income and Expenditure Report and the Balance Sheet for the financial year ending 30th September 2017.

In the discussion which followed, Perit Philip Grech (PG) asked whether some of the funds in the account could be invested, instead of remaining idle. AT replied that the idea was a good one, and could be explored, although investment is not one of the functions of the Kamra. AP asked about the fixed assets of the Kamra, and in particular about the ownership of the KTP offices. It was clarified that the Kamra does not have ownership but has the right to use the building as long as it needs to. AP also referred to the KTP website and how it can be used to facilitate the collection of membership fees. AT remarked that if more periti paid their membership fees, the Kamra would be in a stronger position.

Perit Mark Muscat (MM) suggested that, since the Kamra is considering opening an online bookstore, it should consider publishing specialised books. This could be a source of revenue, but also a means of raising awareness of the issues we are facing in the Profession.

At the end of the discussion, AT proposed a motion, seconded by Perit Amber Wismayer (AW), to approve the financial statements. The motion was unanimously approved by show of hands. AT proposed a motion, seconded by SVL, to reappoint Mr. Silvio Muscat as Auditor for the Kamra. The motion was unanimously approved by show of hands.

Presentation and Approval of Motions

Motion regarding membership fee and payment, presented by AT and seconded by members of the Council:

- A Euro20 administration fee will be added to the annual membership fee, unless payment is submitted online or by standing order before the end of January of each year; and
- Students and Non-Warranted Graduates, the latter for a period of two years following graduation, shall be exempt from payment of the annual membership fee and automatically considered fully paid-up members of the KTP. Furthermore, members of SACES would automatically become student members of the Kamra.

The motion was unanimously approved by show of hands.

Motion proposed by AFV, seconded by Perit David Pace (DP):

The General Meeting of the Kamra tal-Periti, after noting the public statements and the manner by which the Planning Authority has replied to the representation by the Kamra tal-Periti on cases of unauthorised and abusive destruction of examples of Malta's built heritage, fully supports the Council's stand in favour of built heritage, and strongly condemns the Planning Authority's attitude in ignoring such representations, and restoring to insinuations and accusations of malpractice by the KTP members, in an effort to deflect the public's attention from its evident dereliction of duty in protecting this cultural heritage.

Council Elections

No elections were held since there were five nominations for the five vacant positions.

Perit Amber Wismayer was re-elected as Secretary, while Perit Sandro Cini and Perit Lara Mifsud were re-elected as members of the Council.

Two new members were elected: Perit Damian Vella Lenicker and Perit Ivynne Grixti.

AT thanked the members who have come forward. AFV noted that this outcome was evidence of the Kamra's vote of confidence in the present Council, however it would be positive if more members came forward and made themselves available for election.

Concluding Remarks

The meeting closed at 20.40hrs.