



Minutes of 67th Annual Meeting

In Person Meeting at the Edgebrook Lutheran Church

Saturday, January 27th, 2024

In Attendance:

Officers – Executive Board

Horst Zemp, President

Elke Sujdak, Vice President

Milan Urban, Jr., Treasurer

Sacha Urban, Secretary (*Excused Not Present*)

Extended Board

Lolita Buryak, Membership Director

Therese Peskowits Director of Sponsorship

Entertainment

Monique Austin

Ruedi Bucher

Celeste Gallati

Patrick Seitz

Tammi Zemp

Peter Keller

Rafael Ueltschi

Kevin Sujdak

Auditor

Beatrice Weiss

Members: 13 members in good standing are present plus 3 members of the executive board.

1. Opening of the Meeting

President, Horst Zemp calls the meeting 67th Annual meeting to Order. Time: 4:07pm CST.

Welcoming the members and no members in Attendance.

Offering for Members that are not in good standing to transfer membership dues by Zelle to be in good standings. the President welcomed and thanked everyone in attendance.

Ask Vice President Elke to fill in for the not present Secretary to keep notes.

2. Approval of Minutes of 66rd Annual Meeting

They are available online at the website under 2023 Annual Meeting.

Motion to Accept? Milan Urban approved the minutes as posted on the website.

Motion to second? Yes, by Monique Austin

Vote: Unanimously accepted.

3. President's Report 2023

The annual meeting was held on January 28, 2023 as a zoom meeting. We had ~ 40 people in attendance and were able to conduct all the business as planned. Fondue was moved to April as most Chicago legations still had Covid protocols in place.

In February, the ski weekend was held in New-Glarus and Tyrol Basin with a great participation Thanks to Ruedi Buecher for organizing the weekend.

The first Stammtisch was held at Gideon Wells Craft Beer Bar & Kitchen Organized by Celeste Gallati. Thank you.

The Annual Fondue and Fundraiser was held on April 15. It was a tad hot in the basement of the church, but we had a great turn out with stellar raffle items. It was a fantastic event with great participation and much fun. Special thanks to Johann Lustenberger who melts the Liquid gold for use every year.

We held the April Stammtisch at the Schnitzel Platz in Glendale Heights. It wasn't a great turn out but the small group that met had a blast and enjoyed the German-Swiss Cuisine.

The Sunday Brunch at the Lake, traditionally held at Father's Day on Sunday June 18th was another wonderful event with much Swiss Style. The weather was in our favor and with over 70 people the home-made breads and the lavish breakfast buffet was indulged and appreciated by everyone. It was a very nice and relaxing event that brought many families out to the lake front.

On June 23rd we held our Stammtisch at the Forest Park German Fest. Not many attended the event. We are looking for recommendations to increase the Swiss Club attendance for this event of our German friends.

The Swiss National Day celebration on Jul 29th on the Lawn of the American Legion in Morton Grove was again a fantastic event. The storms past through the night before and we could enjoy perfect weather. With over 97 Paying members, an almost complete board and dignitaries from the Consulat of Chicago, we had well over 120 attendees. Our grill team Kevin, Ruedi and Alex put out great tasting sausages while Monique, Tammi and Tina made sure that the salads were up to the Swiss likings while the rest of the extended board and helpers decorated and supported to present and celebrate our Swissness. The Zuger Kirsch Torte from Gerhards was liked by everyone and the closing lampion parade led by ringing cowbells brought some tears in many

older Swiss.

I like to remind all members of the club, that this event is only possible with a big staff of helpers, the financial support of the Annual Fundraiser and many sponsors. A big thank YOU to everyone that participated, helped and sponsored.

On August 25th a group of 30 meet at the Sweet Minihaha campground near Albany WI for the Annual Canoe weekend. A favorite event for many members that lasts from Friday afternoon until Sunday lunch. Singing and yodeling at the campfire, wine tasting and a Fondue under the stars are the highlights surrounding the relaxing tranquil canoeing down the Sugar River. We were blessed with great weather, and everyone returned home with great memories.

The September Stammtisch was the last one of the year and was held at the Gideon Wells Craft Beer Bar & Kitchen Organized by Celeste Gallati. We are looking for input and ideas to have greater attendance on these monthly gatherings.

On November 11th we held the Raclette at the Edgebrook Lutheran Church. With 78 participants it is a continuously growing event. With three ovens built by Fritz Rechsteiner, one of our honorary members of the club we melted over four raclette wheels sponsored by Emmi Roth USA. The Tiramisu Desert was much appreciated and complimented by many. Prior to the raclette a group of 12 board members decorate the Tree at the Museum of Science for the Annual Christmas around the world exhibition.

Samichlaus and Guezlibache was held at the Edgebrook Lutheran Church on December 9. Under the Supervision of the ex-president Martin Lagler, we baked delicious Guezli. Kids of all ages welcomed Samichlaus and Schmutzli. As an additional very welcome surprise our Consul General Pascal Bornozy visited us and brought a box of Biberli. The kids, Samichlaus and everyone enjoyed this great treat from Switzerland. It was a Hit!

I like to conclude the presidents report with a great DANKE SCHOEN to all the volunteers that make all of these events possible.

I would like to thank the executive board Elke Sujdak, Milan Urban and Sacha Urban for standing on my side.

I thank the extended board with Peter Keller and Ingo Eckstein - Storage Managers; Lolita Buryak - Membership Director; Therese Peskowits - Sponsorship Director, and the Entertainment Committee with Monique Austin, Patrick Seitz, Tammi Zemp, Ruedi Bucher, Celeste Gallati, Amy Eckstein, Kevin Sujdak and Raffael Ueltschi.

thank you for your hard work and countless hours prior, during and after the events to make it possible for the Swiss Club of Chicago to exist.

I would also like to extend a special thank you to the Edgebrook Church for allowing us to hold our events at their facility.

This concludes the President's Report for 2023.

4. Treasurer's Report 2022

Milan Urban to report the Finances:

On behalf of President Horst Zemp, we thank our Auditors, Beatrice Weiss and Chris Kaiser for your hard work. They found the financial report in good standing.

We lost a little under \$3,000 in 2023.

The loss is caused by increased cost for Insurance, Storage rent, Event cost, a reduction in Alcohol consumption, Fundraiser yield and Minimal membership income.

Per 12.31.2023 our bank statement shows ~ \$18000 down from ~ \$21,000 on 12.31.2022.

- Our fundraiser Fondue yielded a smaller profit over other years. Mainly due to lower alcohol consumption and less income from the Raffle event. Without the donation of the Fondue cheese by Emmi Roth USA the profit on this event would be minimal.
- Father's day resulted in a small profit.
- August 1st is historically a very costly event financed by our fundraiser to keep the event cost for our members at an affordable level. Even though we were able to share the cost of the tent with the Luxembourger club and had a doner for the cake, we ended up with a large loss.
- The canoe weekend yields a small loss. Lunch is sponsored by the club.
- Raclette yielded small loss as well. Without the cheese donation from Emmi which accounts for ~ \$1000 the loss would be higher.
- Samichlaus and Guezli bache is also a club sponsored event and with that yields a small loss.
- 1. August event, is our most expensive event. Even though we were able to share the cost of the tent with the Luxembourger club we still ended up with a large loss.

President is pointing out that we keep very detailed reports on all event finances to ensure that we can adjust event cost and fundraising to ensure that we can balance the finances in the future. He thanks the treasurer for his excellent work.

The minimal membership income must be overcome by actively approaching members and collecting outstanding membership. President mentions that due to forfeiting of the membership in the covid years might have caused an issue.

Auditor's Report 2022

Beatrice Weiss to Report.:

We (Auditor Beatrice and Chris) looked at the last 3 years to see if things are consistent. They are consistent and the books are in great shape. The books are in good standing, very detailed and balanced.

Are there any questions regarding the finances? No.

6. Membership

Lolita Buryak to provide the membership report:

We currently have 23 active memberships in good standing. 16 of those are Family and 7 are Individual memberships. We have 196 expired memberships. We have 8 new members in 2023.

We started 2023 with 71 memberships in good standings.

We will follow-up with expired memberships.

President states that there are more people in this room than we have active membership!!

He further states that without active membership we don't need a club.

Every event increases in participation which suggests that the Swiss Club is gaining in popularity. The executive board will address the issue and actively work on reducing the inactive memberships and convert them into active membership with direct mailings and follow up by phone. It was mentioned in the room that e-mail is not a good communicator for membership collections.

It is a wish to have a Membership directory. The board committed to look into a posting on the website, sending out directories and reports as a booklet is too high of an expense.

President states that our new Consulat General is also supporting the club in reaching out to gain members however the consulate also reports that Swiss moving into the area are often not following their duty to reporting their whereabouts.

Martin L. recommends that the club implements simple ways to make cash donations. He also recommended that the club is reaching out to the Swiss Benevolent for donations.

Other ideas are implementing a subscription with automatic renewal payment.

7. **Membership dues**

Due to the increased cost of everything, President recommends to increasing the membership dues from \$ 30 to \$ 35 for Individuals and from \$ 35 to \$ 45 for families.

Motion made by Milan and second: to increase Single to \$40 & family to \$50 membership fee raise:
Vote: 5 yea 11 nay

Debate:

We do like to attract Families. A single household has a little bit more money to play with versus a Family, in most cases. However, raising it too high might drive people away from becoming members.

New motion: increase Individual \$35 and \$45 for Family. (\$5 increase)

Second by: _Milan Urban

The majority are in favor of this membership fees.

Vote: Unanimously Accepted.

Question was raised how Honorary members could financially contribute to the club.

Suggestion was made to add the possibility to make donations.

It was mentioned that donations to the Club are not Tax deductible.

President motion to increase the cost of the events as follows:

- Members: from \$30 to \$ 35 per person.
- None-Members and Guest from \$ 35 to \$ 45 per person

The room agreed that there should be a larger gap between the cost of members and Guest. However, it shouldn't be voted on at the meeting and decided by the executive board for each event.

8. Honorary members

Do we have any Nominations?
We don't have any nominees.

9. Election of new Officers and Auditors

Martin Lagler, Chair of the Election Committee, is taking over the Election Process of the Executive Board.

The extended Board is not Voted on.

Nominations:

Executive members:

President: Horst Zemp

Vice President: Raffael Ueltschi

Treasurer: Milan Urban

Secretary: Sacha Urban

Chair of Board Communication: Elke Sujdak

Peter Herdeg, Makes the motion to close the nominations.

Second by: Linette Matzig

All those in favor as the board as presented say yea: All said Yea. - Motion passes!

All in favor for the auditors, Beatrice Weiss and Chris Kaiser say yea: All said Yea. - Motion passes!

Chair: - May I present the new Executive Board:

Horst Zemp, Raffael Ueltschi, Milan Urban, Sacha Urban, Elke Sujdak.

10. Other Business

- We need everyone's help to increase the number of registered and paying Members of the Swiss Club.
Event participation is up but the club does not have enough active members in good standings.
- We need more/new volunteers to rejuvenate the extended Board.
Without a healthy entertainment group we must reduce the number of events.

- Does anyone else have business to discuss? None

11. Adjournment

I (Horst Zemp) make the motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:58PM.

Second by: Milan Urban.