

SOCIAL WORKERS REGISTRATION BOARD
Notes of the 136th Meeting of the Committee on Administration

Date: 5 December 2017
Time: 7:15 p.m.
Venue: Conference Room, 26/F Eastern Commercial Centre, 83 Nam On Street, Shau Kei Wan, Hong Kong.
Present: Dr. LEUNG Chuen-suen (Convenor)
Mr. CHUNG Wai-lung, Rivalino
Mr. HUI Chung-shing, Herman
Mr. KWAN Wing-shing, Vincent
Mr. LO Wa-kei, Roy
Mr. SHIU Ka-chun
Mr. TAN Tick-yee
Mr. WONG Ka-ming
Secretary: Mr. LEE Wing-po, Eric, Registrar and
Ms. FAN Lai-yee, Veronica, Assistant Registrar

Dr. LEUNG, Convenor of the Committee, presided the meeting.

1. The Committee agreed to revise the agenda and to move item 4 before item 3.

Confirmation of the notes of the 135th meeting

2. The notes of the last meeting were confirmed without amendment.

Matters arising from the 135th meeting

Review on the Rules in respect of Confidentiality

3. The Secretary revised the Rules in accordance with the comments of members. He invited members to discuss the consequence of refusal to sign the undertaking.

(Mr. Kwan arrived at this juncture.)

4. Members shared their views as follows:
 - (a) The Committee noted that the undertaking should cover all Board Members, members and co-opted members of Committees, Assessment Team as well as staff members. Other than the Board Members, members would be appointed if they had signed the undertaking which would be contractually binding. If anyone is in breach of the undertaking, the Board could take legal action.
 - (b) However, Board Members are elected or appointed per the SWRO. For those who refuse to sign the undertaking, their appointment would not be so affected. If any Board

Members do any harm to the Board's interests, the Board is with the right to take legal action disregard of the undertaking being signed or not. In this regard, some members had doubt on the purpose of signing the undertaking.

- (c) It is one of the statutory duties of the Board to make rules in respect of the conduct of meeting for the better performance of its function. In section 9(1) of Ordinance, it states that "the Board may make such rules, not inconsistent with this Ordinance, as are necessary for, or incidental or conducive to, the better performance of its functions or exercise of its powers and in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, may make rules in respect of (a) the conduct of meetings of the Board or of any committee (including a disciplinary committee)".
 - (d) At present, majority of the Board's documents were classified as confidential which are not accessible by the public on website. One member suggested a review on the classification of documents and included it as a discussion item at the next meeting.
5. The Committee had different views on keeping or shredding the undertaking and no conclusion could be made after lengthy discussion. The Chairperson suggested and the meeting agreed to adjourn the discussion at this juncture and to resume it towards the end the meeting.

Finance

Budget for the financial year ended 31 March 2019

- 6. The Secretary highlighted the revisions made to the budgeting process. One of the important revisions was that the budget for next financial year i.e. 2018/19 was based on the actual expenditure in first half-year and estimated expenditure in latter part of 2017/18 while the estimated income was based on the trends since year 2008.
- 7. For the budget in 2018/19, there would be a substantial increase in expenditure up to 26% taking into consideration of the provision of election for Board Members to be held in late 2018, legal fees for potential judicial reviews, cost for revamping the database management system, inflation and etc. For the income side, there would be a mild increase at less than 3%. In sum, there would be an operating surplus at \$376,600 versus an estimated depreciation of \$559,100, hence resulting in a budget with deficit at \$123,500.
- 8. The Honorary Treasurer noted that the revised approach of working out the budget was a common practice and it was prudent to adopt the budget. The Committee agreed also to keep the contingency ratio at 5% subject to review in next financial year. The budget was endorsed for submission to the Board.

Application for daily electronic bank statements for (anonymised) account

- 9. The Committee endorsed the application for daily electronic bank statements for (anonymized) account for the purpose of recording the cashed cheques for refunding part of

the registration fee. The same would be submitted to the Board for resolution.

(Mr. Lo retired from the meeting at this juncture.)

Administration

Proposed revised Rules for Election of Board Members

10. The Secretary walked through the revised Rules for Election of Board Members and one of the significant changes was the delegation of power by the Board to the Election Committee (“EC”).
11. After discussion, the Committee had the following comments:
 - (a) In paragraph 2.1, instead of specifying a fixed number of members, the membership of EC should be revised as “Election Committee (“EC”) with membership of such a number the Board may think fit”.
 - (b) In paragraph 2.2, there should be at least one Board Member in the EC on condition that the Board Member declared not to run for the Election or by-election.
 - (c) In paragraph 2.4, the tenure of an EC shall expire upon the Board Members-elected from that election or by-election taking the office.
 - (d) In paragraph 3.2 and 3.3, a by-election shall be conducted within six months when an office elected Board Member is vacant.
 - (e) In paragraph 4.1, RSWs whose names are on the Register as on the date of one month prior to the date of vote counting are eligible to vote.
 - (f) EC shall publish to the voters the publicity materials of candidates and the format is prescribed by the EC.
 - (g) The EC shall hold at least one election forum.
12. The Secretary would revise the Rules accordingly. *(Post meeting note: the revised Rules were circulated to the Committee on 6 December 2017.)*

Review on search engine of RSWs in the Board’s website

13. The Secretary briefed that an enquiry was received recently from a newspaper reporter and requested us to verify the identity of an RSW. In this case, we could not find the record in our Register as the reporter provided a name with different writing format. The Chairperson advised the Committee on Administration to review the search engine of RSWs in the Board’s website. After discussion, the Committee commented that the incident was rare and the cost for upgrading the search engine would be very high and it decided that no further action would be taken at the time being.

Report on the Owners’ Corporation concerning the office premises

14. The Committee took note of the report on the Owners’ Corporation concerning the office premises and endorsed the Registrar and his designates to attend the Owners’ Corporation

meeting on behalf of the Board and to handle matters in relation to the two premises owned by the Board.

Promotions

Progress report on promotion of the Board

15. Members noted the progress report on promotion of the Board

Report on the Social Work Day 2018

16. Dr. Zeno Leung reported of his attending the Organizing Committee meeting on behalf of the Board. The Social Work Day was on 20 March 2018 and the theme of this year was “Companion” (同行) and the activities included “Long Distance Run” on 28 January 2018, “Run in Joint Hand” (一拖一跑), media coverage about Social Work Day, flash dance in different districts in Hong Kong, a theme song of Social Work Day and its music video incorporating with sign language and dancing.

Review on the Rules in respect of Confidentiality

17. The meeting resumed the discussion, and the matter was put to voting. Four members namely (anonymised) voted for keeping the undertaking while (anonymised) voted against it. It was decided that the undertaking should be kept and all members should sign it. For those who had not signed, a record would be kept. The proposal would be put up to the Board for endorsement.

Any other business

A request for reduction in renewal fee

18. A RSW requested for reduction of renewal fee as he had chosen to receive correspondence by email. After discussion, the Committee decided that the request should not be accepted because the payment was for registration renewal fee but not for postage or else.

A request to disseminate the invitation letter to DC panel members and Board members

19. The Secretary reported that in September 2017, a request was received from a RSW for disseminating invitations to our Disciplinary Panel Members and Board Members to attend a seminar which was organized by a concern group. The request was sent to the Committee for directive via email and four members supported. Since no objection was received, the invitation was sent to the Members by email according to the Committee’s directive. However, some members indicated their objection to receive information not related to the disciplinary matters or the Board’s functions. The issue was brought up to the Committee for review.

20. Some members expressed that their personal information such as correspondence address were for the purpose of handling matters in relation to disciplinary issues or the Board's functions. After discussion, the Committee agreed that the Board should not assist any organization or individual to disseminate their information or activity which was not in relation to the disciplinary matters.

Date of next meeting

21. Members agreed that the next meeting would be scheduled when the next Board meeting date was fixed.
22. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 pm.

15 December 2017