

**MINUTES OF THE SEGH BOARD MEETING HELD ON 28TH FEBRUARY 2023 AT
1pm (WAT) ON ZOOM**

Agenda:

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the last meeting
3. Matters arising from the last Minutes
4. Welcome of New Board Members
5. Updates on Greece 2023 Conference
6. Updates on Membership and Finance
7. Website updates
8. Updates on Fellows' Matters
9. Updates on EGAH
10. Update on ECR Group
11. Other Business
 - i) Discussion on Bids for 2024 SEGH Conference
 - ii) Need to Institute SEGH Awards for various categories
 - iii) Dates of subsequent Board meetings for 2023
12. Adjournment and Closing

Attendance:

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| 1. A Olatunji | 11. T Laniyan |
| 2. B Kaninga | 12. F Ajayi |
| 3. O Osano | 13. F Onyangore |
| 4. O Morton-Bermea | 14. M Gabersek |
| 5. A Brown | 15. Gillian Gibson |
| 6. O Humphrey | 16. A Hursthouse |
| 7. M Hashimi | 17. J Olajide-Kayode |
| 8. A Argyraki | |
| 9. M Watts | |
| 10. K Torrance | |

AO welcomed all to the first meeting of 2023, and expressed his gratitude about the level of participation by members in the election of Board Members. He then proceeded to ask members to introduce themselves for the benefit of those attending the Board Meeting for the first time. He appreciated the diversity in the new Board in terms of gender and geographical spread.

1. Apologies were received from:

1. Sanja Potgieter
2. Clay Prater

MW stated that his name was wrongly written under Apologies; he didn't attend the meeting as it read cancelled on his calendar. The Secretary was asked to correct this error in the minutes of the last meeting.

2. The minutes of the last meeting was summarised by AO and it was adopted as the correct record of proceedings at the last meeting with a motion moved by KT.

3. AA reported that she had established contact with Agilent. She also reported that MDPI contacted the Greece 2023 LOC, offering sponsorship for the Conference. AA sought the opinion of the Board on this. AO and MW suggested that despite being a rival publishing outlet, the MDPI's proposed sponsorship of the Conference should be accepted. AA added that MDPI also expressed interest in setting up a booth in Greece but had not yet made any financial commitments. In addition, AA stated that sponsorship of EURO 5,000 had been secured. Two mining companies in Greece had taken up Gold and Silver sponsorship slots, while the University of Athens had also indicated interest in sponsoring the Conference. Six (6) Abstracts had been received and more were expected in the coming weeks. As at the time of the meeting, no one had registered for the Conference yet. MW suggested that AA should talk to the Agilent contact, and invite them to give a talk as a Sponsor as this may possibly encourage support from the organisation. He also suggested contacting LECCO and WAGTECH Projects, and added that he would send the sponsorship contact list again to AA. MW suggested the need to maintain a relationship with Sponsors, and to ensure they are "carried over" through the Conferences. GG suggested that a focal person should be tasked with coordinating the sponsorship drive. AO opined that someone from UK should handle the Sponsorship Database.

AA requested for the membership list, so as to be able to sort out Registration and Abstract submissions. AB stated that the names of those who register for the Conference can be sent to the Secretariat for confirmation. It was agreed that AB would continue sending reminders to members on the 2023 Conference dates and deadlines. MW raised the issue of online access for the Conference, stating that this will facilitate a greater impact and ensure a wider audience. His suggestion was that some of the sessions (e.g. Talks, Panel Discussions) should be streamed; where people can listen in, and not necessarily that paper presentations will be given online. He maintained that streaming will also help keep the members who are not attending the Conference within the SEGH family, given them an opportunity to be part of the Conference remotely. He suggested that a charging mechanism should be worked out, so that people don't listen in for free. GG agrees that being able to watch/listen to the Conference remotely gives those who are unavoidably absent an opportunity to be part of the event.

Action:

(i) MW to send sponsorship contact list to AA.

(ii) The Board to decide on a member to maintain the Sponsorship Database.

(iii) AA to come up with a mechanism on how the Conference can be streamed live, and report later.

4. MG, TL, FA and FO who were the new Board members in attendance had been acknowledged and had introduced themselves at the beginning of the meeting.

5. The updates on the 2023 Conference had been given under Agenda item 3 (Matters arising from the last minutes).

6. AB reported that the Society has 133 members on record, and GBP 6,741 in the account after paying GBP 2,000 to Springer for journal access. She however added that some payments for the Kenya Conference were still outstanding. She stated that Barclays Bank was giving slight issues with documentation but said she was on top of the situation. KT commented that the Stripe system was very good, as it made sending receipts of payments easy.

AO added that the main task of Regional representatives on the Board is to bring in new members. He projected that the membership of the Society should hit 150 by the next Board meeting, and to hit 200 members by the time the Conference in Athens starts. AO stated that there would be a push for membership from the Nigerian sector during the Nigerian Mining and Geosciences Society (NMGS) Annual International Conference and Exhibitions at the end of March, 2023.

7. OH reported that there is evidence of good engagement with the website (average of 2.5 minutes' session duration), by the different regions (with UK, Nigeria, Greece, Portugal and Kenya topping the list). The visited links/sections were: Greece 2023 Conference, Payment/Membership Renewal, Board Members, Upcoming Events, EGAH, SEGh Fellows, and Blogs. However, OH advocated for better advertisement of the Fellows' Programs and reminded all Board members to submit a blog a year.

8. GG stated that as hinted earlier under Matters Arising, there is a need to have a Fellows' Session at Greece 2023. It was agreed that the Fellows' Session should be a social event and that formal invitations should be sent to Fellows in advance of the meeting. She will continue to liaise with AA on this. GG also reported that the Fellows' Seminar Series had gained more traction, but Fellows' engagements needed to be scaled up notwithstanding. The program schedule made by AH would be followed but it would be good to have a Chair/Coordinator for each Fellows' Seminar, and possibly someone to deputise in case the Chair/Coordinator is unavailable for any reason. AO suggested that, as it is being done in Nigeria, the social media platforms of cognate Professional Bodies could be used to give publicity to the Fellows' Seminars and other SEGh activities/programs. He reported that quite a number of senior professionals attend the Fellows' Seminars from Nigeria.

On the request for details on the Past Presidents of the Society, GG asked if it was okay to put a request on the website for people to supply more information. To this the Board agreed, and it was also decided that the information obtained so far should be put on the website as it is.

Action: GG/OH to ensure the names of Past Presidents of the Society is to put on the website as it is. More details to be added later.

9. MW reported that a lot of problems are being encountered with SNAPP. Some of the papers were withdrawn without notice from the SNAPP system and the authors were worried about the status of their papers. He suggested that the Co E-i-C (Diane Purchase) should be invited to the next Board Meeting, and the Board agreed. MW met with about 20 Handling Editors the week before the Board meeting, and he submitted that they were not pulling their weight, and this was affecting the EGAH turnaround time, which had a reputation of being fast. He reported that the SNAPP system doesn't send reminders to Handling Editors automatically, the reminders have to be done manually. He also mentioned that the Reviewer Tool was organising/prioritising reviewers based on location of author, and not necessarily suitability or availability. This he said was a major drawback. SNAPP also doesn't allow the use of Author Recommended Reviewers. However, MW added that six more Handling Editors had been recruited to improve diversity and make the process better. He sought for more Handling Editors, with the criteria suggested by Ming Wong being that prospective candidates should have at least 10 papers in which they are First/Corresponding Authors. He added however, that other relevant qualifications would be considered. He stated that Springer accepted that the backlog of papers that had been accepted but not released should be cleared. There were 200 papers that had been accepted but were not yet released. Therefore, bigger journal issues would need to be released. The backlog of papers had been reduced and despite the problems encountered, he expressed hope that the system will eventually get better.

MW was displeased about the suggestion that EGAH was drifting away from the Society. He stated that if that were to happen, it will be sad but the journal needs to be better handled. GG responded that Springer had a lot to do on their end to ensure that papers submitted were reviewed and published. She cited the example of the work done by Maurizio Barbieri and Andrew Hursthouse on the papers that were submitted using a network of ECRs, members and Fellows, and which has not been published by Springer.

MW decried the lack of meeting of the Editorial Board for a long time, and that most of the Editorial Board members are not SEGH members. Hence, the drift. He canvassed for bringing back some of the Editorial Board members into the SEGH family and the need to encourage them to be members. He added that a Special Issue for the Greece 2023 Conference is fundamental. GG stated that the Special Issue will be one of the major discussions at the Fellows' Session at Greece 2023. MW also suggested that an Editorial should be written by the Board every year, to give an update on the state of affairs of the Society. The Editorial for the year 2023 is to be prepared by AO, and the draft will be presented before or by the next meeting. MW added that an Editorial will also be an avenue to reward the Board Members' contribution to the Society.

Actions:

- (i) **MW to provide JO with email address of Diane Purchase, so she can be invited to the next Board meeting (Status: Diane Purchase email sent to JO).**
- (ii) **AO to initiate the Editorial and present before or by next meeting.**

10. KT reported that nothing had been done since the Eldoret Conference in October 2022. He however stated that there were plans for the ECR Group for Greece 2023. MW reiterated the importance of keeping the ECRs in the loop of all SEGH activities. KT suggested that the Fellows' Seminars should be publicised to the ECRs. AO opined that a mail should be done to the ECRs about the Fellows' Programs and Regional ECR "hubs" should also be kept active. MW suggested that MG and FA should be tasked with rallying the ECRs, and KT opted to coordinate MG and FA on this. It was agreed that AO should send a mail to MG and FA on what needs to be done.

Action:

- (i) KT to coordinate MG and FA on rallying the ECRs.**
- (ii) AO to send a mail to MG and FA, detailing what is required of them in rallying the ECRs.**

11. (a) AO suggested that bids for hosting the 2024 Conference should start. He presented the suggestion for Africa (i.e. Nigeria) to host again. MW raised the challenge of security, and travel ban to Nigeria for certain groups/individuals by some countries. He suggested considering Europe, Americas or Asia. OM stated that the Americas hosting a 2024 event would be difficult. However, JO stated that a new Government will be announced in Nigeria in a few weeks, and the security situation would improve. It is also hoped that the travel ban/advisory to Nigeria would likely be reviewed after the election. MW however stated that the security ratings often fluctuate, and this is not good for a Conference which has fixed dates.

AO stated that the discussion on the 2024 Conference and the possible host locations need to be held, and more deliberations on this would be done at the next meeting.

(b) AO feels the need to re-institute the SEGH Awards for various categories. He suggested that the awards be named after members who have contributed immensely to the advancement of the Society. MW added that he can talk to Springer about instituting prizes for the awards.

Furthermore, AO stated the need to honour AB for her meritorious service to the Society. MW had also alluded to AB's immense contribution to SEGH during the introduction session. AO said a proposal will be put up and sent to all via email for their input. There would be an event to honour her at the Greece 2023 Conference.

Action:

- (i) MW to talk to Springer about sponsoring some awards.**
- (ii) AO to put up a proposal on honouring AB at Greece 2023, and send to all for input.**
- (c) The dates for the next meeting will be announced to members via email.**

12. The meeting was unanimously adjourned and ended at 2:50pm WAT.