

The British Computer Society

Swiss Branch - Annual General Meeting

Thursday 14th May 2009
18.00 – 19.15

Bluewin Tower (Swisscom AG)
Hardturmstrasse 3
8005, Zürich
Switzerland

Minutes

Attendees: Michael Bellhouse (Chairman), Michael Lewis (Webmaster / E-mail coordinator), Peter Hurst (Treasurer), Adrian Harper (Committee), Jeff Hunter, Mark Nadolny, Gerard Lambert, Andre Kudelski, Pete Jones.

1. Apologies were received from: Paul Hicks (Membership Secretary), Ahmad El-Ata (Committee), Paul Kennerly (Secretary), Helen Gillingham, Vicky Kaelin-Bevan.
2. The 2008 AGM minutes were briefly reviewed and approved.
3. Matters arising.
 - 3.1. At previous meetings a joint event combining the Zürich and Western Switzerland membership using video conference was discussed. Unfortunately this did not succeed due to the inability to get all parties together along with the relevant technology provider. Jeff Hunter asked for clarification as to how many members we have in the West, approximately 30 to 35 discounting the UN membership, most of whom are outside of Switzerland.
4. Reports by Committee Members.
 - 4.1. Michael Bellhouse presented the section's annual report covering the members of the committee and events held over the past twelve months.

Jeff Hunter responded to Michael's comments on the new website, informing the committee that the website does not seem to be well known and not advertised enough. Mike Lewis responded that the site is online and each email sent from the section contains a link to the site. Michael agreed that should he be re-elected to the committee he will put together a letter to the members detailing the branch, website and events. It was suggested that this letter be sent by post rather than email. Michael Bellhouse will investigate with Paul Hicks how we can print address labels for all members.

In response to Michael's overview of events, Jeff Hunter offered to provide event locations in Bern if needed. The general consensus was that no matter the location used for events the maximum turnout tends to be 10 to 15 people, the majority from the Zürich region, therefore it makes sense to retain events in the Zürich area rather than Bern.

4.2. Peter Hurst presented the financial report and annual budget. The section has again under spent in the previous 12 months, mainly due to event locations kindly being provided by section members at no cost.

4.2.1. Peter outlined the newly announced change in financial year for the BCS. The next closing of the accounts will be in September 2010. This change will also require future AGM dates to be changed also to coincide with the financial year ending on August 31st.

4.2.2. Due to the balance of the accounts in 2008 no contribution was received from BCS Head Office. In the last period CHF 1949.95 was spent and CHF 3310.19 carried forward.

4.2.3. Peter recommended that a formal request be made to BCS Head office for additional funds this year due to the extended financial year.

4.2.4. The following items were put to vote and passed unanimously:

- Rescheduling the financial year to end on August 31st.
- Forwarding CHF 3310.19 to the budget period of 2009/2010.
- Discharging the committee of all financial responsibility for the previous year.

4.2.5. The budget for the coming year will be presented at the next committee meeting.

4.3. No report was provided from the Membership secretary.

4.3.1. Peter Hurst noted that the members in the west of Switzerland had been offered finance to arrange their own events but that none had been organised. This was unfortunate but understandable as the member who had offered to drive these forward had business commitments taking her out of the country.

4.4. Michael Lewis reported in the state of the section's website, the site has been re-written and simplified after the last AGM making it much easier to manage and update.

4.4.1. Mike asked all members to feel free to submit content to the site should they wish. Submissions should be sent via email directly to Mike.

4.4.2. Mike also reported that the reaction to member mailing is sparse and questions how many of the section's mails are stopped in spam or junk filters.

5. All committee seats were open to election and their duties described by Michael Bellhouse, all previous members of the committee stood for re-election. The following committee members were elected unopposed:

- Chairman: Michael Bellhouse
- Secretary: Paul Kennerly
- Treasurer: Peter Hurst
- Webmaster / Email Coordinator: Michael Lewis
- Membership Secretary: Paul Hicks
- Committee Member: Ahmad Abu El-Ata
- Committee Member: Adrian Harper

6. Any other business:

6.1. Michael Bellhouse informed the meeting that Ahmad will be attending the BCS Members Group Convention in the UK on the 19th and 20th of May.

6.2. Adrian Harper enquired if the dates for the committee meetings of the next year will be fixed to Thursdays as this seemed to be an issue for some of the committee. It was agreed that future committee meetings will be scheduled via Doodle.ch to allow as many committee members to attend as possible. Michael will arrange the next meeting within the coming month.

6.3. Pete Jones suggested a future BCS event, he is currently preparing a talk for the September IEEE meeting in Atlanta, he is willing to repeat the talk for the BCS in the Zürich area.

6.4. Pete also noted that the IEEE are holding a visit to CERN on the 22nd of July and there may be availability for members of the BCS to join. Mike Lewis offered to investigate and inform the members if possible. Adrian Harper suggested that the BCS could assist members by providing a coach or subsidised train travel for the event.

6.5. Mike Lewis raised the question of how to generate future event ideas. Peter Hurst suggested that the committee contact BCS central to find speakers.

6.6. Jeff Hunter suggested a possible event to visit the DRS studio and view their technology. Adrian Harper has a contact at DRS and will investigate if this would be possible.

6.7. Adrian Harper suggested that an event could look at the Swisscom plans to provide fibre connectivity to all buildings within Zürich and

how this massive project will be accomplished. Jeff Hunter agreed to make some enquiries on behalf of the committee.

- 6.8. Pete Jones noted that this is the 100 year anniversary of one of the steam engines on the Zürich lake. While not computer related it was noted that many members are interested in such engineering and that a BCS social event may be organised around the idea.
 - 6.9. The idea of the BCS contributing back to the community was raised. In Basel there is a scheme for young people to try and get them interested in informatics or place them within informatic positions. Mike Lewis pointed out that the BCS in the UK do much of this type of work and that the committee would need to investigate if there was an equivalent scheme in the Zürich region.
 - 6.10. Jeff Hunter suggested a BCS social event with a family visit investigate Technorama.
 - 6.11. Mike Lewis requested that a feedback form be created on the website to allow either Mike or the committee to be contact directly. Adrian Harper will investigate.
7. The next committee meeting will be scheduled within the month.
 8. The next AGM will be held in September 2010 though an exact date was not decided.

