

Minutes of Africa Speaks Continuation Committee (ASCC) held via Skype on 9th Dec. 2019

Present:

Ed Elliott (Chair), Modupe Ehirim, John Gathuku (later), Jules Ouoba, Liz Patten, Tim Welch.

1. Prayer

The meeting opened in prayer.

2. Devotional Thought

Scriptures for our devotional thought are in Handel's Messiah 20 (Air for Alto). The scriptures quoted were "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing" (Isaiah 35:5-6). and from 40v11: "He shall feed His flock like a Shepherd; and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young."

3. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Previous Meeting were approved.

4. Update on Setting up a Legal Organisation

Tyndale House Foundation has paid the invoice to Anne Babu, our lawyer in Nairobi who will help with this matter of set-up. At this point we need to decide who from the ASCC will be a registered trustee, we need at least three people. It was suggested that initially, it may be good if all six of the ASCC will be trustees, albeit knowing that some will not continue for the longer term. It may only be possible to change three trustees at a time. We will ask our attorney for confirmation about this. She will also be helping with draft policy documents over the coming months.

5. Website Development

Prior to the meeting, a summary of our questions to OneSheep and their responses had been circulated. As a result, members had been able to take a look at websites which had been created / worked on by the company. A member was not too impressed with the one_website because of wrong information in wrong places, also another member had seen that there was text imposed over text in a couple of places. Since this is a problem we already have on our current Wix site, it leaves us wondering if perhaps OneSheep is also working with Wix.

Another website on the other hand, appears impressive. Someone recommended that we keep looking for other options, while not closing the door with OneSheep. Another member agreed, but said that we should have a self-imposed deadline on a final decision because of the feedback we will need to give to the Tyndale House Foundation. We wondered if the Foundation might have any suggestions as to website providers.

Perhaps we could benefit from asking OneSheep if their slow response times are due to having some major project on the go. Overall, our impression is that they probably have too much work for the number of their employees and that this is a situation which could well be ongoing. A member volunteered to check with three or four individuals who may be able to recommend other possible website developers. If possible, we would also like to find a company that will charge less - as we have reason to believe that we can have the work done for about USD \$7000. A single overall quotation could be better for us than an hourly charge, since it is difficult to estimate how many

hours may be involved. It was agreed to give OneSheep opportunity to answer our remaining questions while at the same time we will be looking around for a different possibility.

6. Recruitment of Staff Member

An updated draft Job Description version was circulated before the meeting. It was agreed to make a few amendments as follows:

- that Point (3) should read “competence in Word, Excel etc. and / or other equivalent programmes”
- that Point (10) under Recommended Profile should be changed to read “fluency in English and French is essential” (rather than preferable).

It was generally agreed that the person would be working from home, that they would be part-time and that they should have at least a first degree level of university education. The question was asked, whether we should have someone working for us even prior to completion of our legal set-up? Also, should we have an initial conversation with the person in the Cameroon who had been suggested as a possible candidate? This was someone who assisted with planning the recent MTI meetings that were held in Abidjan. It was agreed to follow up on this.

Apart from the administrative position, what about the “ambassador” position? Could we increase our salary budget if (for example) someone such as Daniel Bourdagné would be available for this? A member had spoken with Daniel some two weeks previously and it appears from their (private) conversation that Daniel is open to talking about ***Africa Speaks***. Two members were requested to contact him officially. A member intimated that in order to secure someone of Daniel’s calibre and experience, we need to stay very focussed on the vision of ***Africa Speaks***.

7. Concept Development of Proposed Discipleship Program

A member had given some thought to this topic, along the lines of *What are the problems that we would like this Program to provide answers for?* She mentioned that Georges Laté could be a good resource person. It was confirmed that Vincent Lele is still waiting and ready for a Skype conference with us. We asked if we saw this as a potential contract relationship or a volunteer relationship. We had not entered into any specifics with Vincent at this level, but for sure Vincent has the relevant experience. There is a new director of Editions Clé who would be very happy for Vincent to be involved. We still don’t know about David Waweru. Neither Vincent nor David was present at Bannockburn, so perhaps in our discussions with them we may need to be ready to offer some financial remuneration for their services, especially since (a) the work is likely to require a number of hours and (b) we hope for a serious, well-thought-through Program. On this basis, we agreed to move forward with Vincent, asking him to be the senior person in this project. Barine Kirimi was also mentioned, since he runs a Publishing Institute in Kenya, with a website where we were encouraged to take a look at the stated goals.

<https://publishing-institute.org>

Another name is that of Luka Vandí, who works with Africa Christian Textbooks and who would also be willing to come alongside ***Africa Speaks***. They are publishing at least 100 titles per year. A committee member knows him. It seems that ASCC should perhaps start with having Vincent (who is bi-lingual in French & English), David and Barine speaking with each other and then connecting with the ASCC, since the rules of publishing in francophone and anglophone Africa are somewhat different. It had been indicated via email that David Waweru was still interested and was going to look at Terms of Engagement with him.

The ASCC tried to consider how many days Vincent would need for this work. It was thought that if we can communicate what we want to achieve, then Vincent himself would be able to estimate how long it would take him to do it. To start with, we could ask for a Program Outline. Given that

December is a busy month for most people, we could start discussions now but allow extra time for accomplishment.

We know what we want, but we just don't have the time to do it ourselves. It was suggested that we should have a Skype call with Vincent, to minimise back and forth with emails. A member offered to make a draft proposal and send it to Vincent, as a preparation for the Skype call. This proposal should include the remuneration in accordance with our budget. Perhaps at the next ASCC meeting, Vincent could be invited to join our call for some 30 minutes or so. A member was asked to send an initial email to Vincent, which he agreed to do.

8. Other Business

(a) Updated email schedule to Africa Speaks members

It was underlined that we need to re-commit ourselves to keeping to the schedule as agreed initially, since we had slipped with this lately. The next ones are:

- *Dec 15th - Jules*
- *Dec 30th - Tim*
- *Jan 15th - Liz*
- *Jan 30th - Ed*

9. Any New Business

(a) MAI - We will write a draft mail on behalf of ASCC to **MAI Africa** trustees as a follow up on the brief meeting some ASCC members had with them recently at LittAfrica in Accra. It was agreed to say that we would value getting together (perhaps annually) to discuss our work. We could also draw their attention to our Minutes on the **Africa Speaks** website, to give them a transparent view of our deliberations.

(b) Vlogs - An appropriate step would be to follow up with those already contacted who have agreed to do vlogs for the **Africa Speaks** website and to let them know that even though our website plans are not moving forward as quickly as hoped, we would like them to still please go ahead and prepare the content and send it to us.

10. Date for Next Meeting

Tuesday 14th January at the usual times.

11. Prayer

As this was the final meeting for this year, special appreciation was expressed for one another and the way the ASCC has worked in harmony over the year, with everyone "pulling their weight". We closed the meeting in prayer before we wished each other a very Happy Christmas prior to ending the call.