



**MINUTES OF THE ROMANCE WRITERS OF SOUTH AFRICA (ROSA) AGM  
HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 17H30**

**In Attendance:** Romy Sommer (Chairperson), Clare Loffler, Mandy Verbaan, Suzanne Jefferies, Elaine Dodge, Alissa Cantrell, Marianne Lomborg, Peter Barker, Jayne Bauling, Sumi Singh, Natasha Anders, Rae Rivers

**1. ROLL CALL AND CONFIRMATION OF THE QUORUM**

**Noted:**

- That proxies were received from Elsabe Welman, Marie Dry, Anthony Ehlers, Lorna Senior, Kay Montgomery, Meg Chronis, and therefore the meeting was quorate.

**2. READING OF THE ROSA VISION STATEMENT**

**Noted:**

- That Ms Sommer read through the ROSA vision statement.

**3. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

**Noted:**

- That Ms Sommer advised the attendees had received the report and those who had not yet read the report could do so at their leisure after the meeting.

**4. TREASURER'S REPORT**

**Noted:**

- That Ms Sommer advised the attendees had received the report and those who had not yet read the report could do so at their leisure after the meeting.

## **5. CHAPTER REPORTS**

### **Noted:**

- That Ms Sommer advised the attendees had received the reports and those who had not yet read the reports could do so at their leisure after the meeting.

## **6. MEMBERSHIP FEES & RENEWALS FOR 2018-19**

### **Noted:**

- That there were 62 paid-up members of ROSA in total, a 25% increase from the previous year. Ms Loffler pointed out that some of our members had moved overseas and had therefore chosen not to renew their membership.
- That there are still a number of people on the mailing lists who have not joined as paid members. The main reason given for non-membership was the cost of joining. It was pointed out that by having regular events at reduced pricing throughout the year this might drive the non-members to sign up as they would benefit from the reduced member pricing.
- That there would be no fee increase for 2019. It was noted ROSA had not increased prices in 2018 and mentioned that this would be a once-off occurrence. However, due to the economy officially being in a recession the decision was unanimous not to increase prices.

## **7. REVIEW OF 2018 IMBALI & STRELITZIA CONTESTS**

### **Noted:**

- That the following number of entries received for the Imbali award were:
  - English: 12
  - Afrikaans: 10This is an increase in entries from the previous year.
- One Imbali judge pulled out at the last minute and had to be replaced. This presented a slight hiccup.
- That the number of entries received for the Strelitzia award were: 10
- It was noted that the quality of the Strelitzia entries was higher than in the previous year.
- The committee agreed that the entries for the Strelitzia award would be restricted to paid up ROSA members due to the fact that a mentorship programme is offered as part of the award.
- The Imbali award does not require entrants to be paid up ROSA members.
- The committee agreed the entry policy for the Imbali award would be changed in order to accommodate a higher word count for entries. Changes would be applicable by creating two entry categories as follows:
  - Category romance – maximum 80,000 words
  - Longer length romance – maximum 110,000 wordsIt was noted that there would only be a single winner across both categories, not one per category.

- The committee agreed that the Strelitzia award would implement the following additional policy in order to keep the content fresh:
  - The same manuscript may only be entered twice. Thereafter a new work must be submitted.
  - Priority would be given to the first ten entries of new manuscripts.
  - A longer time period would be extended for the second round of the award once the top three had been named.
  - A synopsis would be requested as part of the entry application in order to ensure entrants had a clear vision of the manuscript they would be submitting.

## **8. REVIEW OF ROSACon 2018**

### **Noted:**

- That 40 delegates booked to attend ROSACon 2018 (including scholarship applicants).
- Two delegates pulled out due to financial restraints, reducing this number to 38.
- The committee was thrilled with the growth of the conference and looking forward to the weekend.

## **9. NEW MOTIONS DISCUSSED**

### **i. Venue for ROSACon 2019**

### **Noted:**

- That Melrose Place was at maximum capacity for the ROSACon events with 38 delegates booked this year.
- The conference committee for ROSACon 2019 will need to scout for a new venue with the year on year growth in numbers.
- That Cape Town would like to host a ROSACon again and is looking forward to a time when we can alternate between hosting them in Johannesburg and Cape Town in alternate years.
- That 2020 would be a good year to host another Cape Town ROSACon.
- That perhaps the Public Holiday weekend should be avoided for Cape Town ROSACon as this might drive the cost of flights and accommodation up.
- The Cape Town ROSACon will be represented by Rae and Natasha who will scout for venues which are affordable for Gauteng attendees, who still form the bulk of delegates attending the conference.

### **ii. Costs & Sponsorships for ROSACon 2019**

### **Noted:**

- That printing of the ROSACon booklet is a substantial cost each year. As such we will be looking for an alternative printer as well as investigating potential advertising/ sponsorship options in the booklet to cover costs. Also sponsorship of goodie bags and items for the goodie bags to reduce those costs as well.

- Guest Speaker policies during the conferences need to be addressed. It was agreed by the committee that ROSA members give of their time for free and will continue to pay to attend the conference. This is done in the spirit of paying-forward. Should the conference reach the point where it is able to afford subsidies, this will be readdressed. Out of country/town celebrity guest speakers will have their conference accommodation paid for by ROSA as they provide higher profiling opportunities for ROSACon which in turn drives up attendance to the conference, however at this time ROSA cannot yet afford to contribute to flights or any other travel or accommodation costs.

### **iii. Promotion & Marketing of ROSA**

#### **Noted:**

- That in order to grow attendance at ROSACon and increase the number of members joining up we will need to embark on an awareness drive.
- We will appoint a committee member to help drive awareness through our existing platforms and to advise on how to grow the organization's profile and membership.

### **iv. ROSA Outreach Programmes**

#### **Noted:**

- That ROSA should consider working together with LAPA Uitgewers to promote reading and writing of romance novels to Afrikaans, coloured, urban women as this market is going through the largest growth in South Africa.
- That ROSA should consider similar promotion of reading and writing of romance novels to English speaking previously-disadvantaged communities.
- Library events should be promoted through the ROSA chapters. It was suggested that we try to host 1 – 2 events per in year in a local library, where our published author members meet or teach non-published romance writers for 1-2 hours.
- That ROSA investigate potentially creating a book fair event. Ms Sommer will discuss this further with book blogger Monique Bernic and provide feedback to the committee.

### **v. Google Docs**

#### **Noted:**

- That ROSA sets up Google Docs for ease of use. Google Docs is an online document sharing facility provided by Google where Word and Excel type documentation can be generated and updated online. This will allow all those who are provided with access to these documents to edit online, leaving us with a single up to date document available online. It was noted that a Google email address will be required for access to this service.
- It was suggested the ROSA Chapters use Google Docs to keep their membership records, generate member notifications, etc
- A ROSA Events Calendar can also be created using the Google Calendar facility. This can be used for chapter events, retreats and ROSACon.
- Ms Sommer will ask Ashleigh Giannoccaro if she would be willing to assist in setting this up.

## **10. ELECTION OF 2018-19 COMMITTEES**

### **Noted:**

- That the following Executive Committee had been elected:
  - Romy Sommer (Chairperson, blog & website admin)
  - Rae Rivers (Deputy Chairperson)
  - Peter Barker (Treasurer)
  - Clare Loffler (Membership Admin)
  - Suzanne Jefferies (PR / Media Liaison & Marketing)
  - Mandy Verbaan (Secretary)
- That the following additional non-executive roles had been elected:
  - Marie Dry (General Marketing)
  - Jo Watson (Assist PR/Media Liaison & Marketing)
  - Cliffordene Norton (Twitter)
  - Marianne Lomborg (Facebook)
- That the following Conference Committee had been elected:
  - Romy Sommer
  - Suzanne Jefferies
  - Clare Loffler
  - Rae Rivers (CT)
  - Natasha Anders (CT)
  - Mandy Verbaan (Conference Sponsorships)
- Chapter Leaders were to remain as is:
  - Johannesburg – Mandy Verbaan
  - Pretoria – Marie Dry
  - Durban – Kathy Bosman
  - Western Cape – Dorothy Ewels
- Imbali Awards 2019 Committee had been elected:
  - Mandy Verbaan
  - Annemarie Gaertner (nominated – Ms Sommer to verify)
- Strelitzia Awards 2019 Committee had been elected:
  - Romy Sommer
  - Suzanne Jefferies

## **13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

## **14. MEETING CLOSED AT 18H40.**