

# General Assembly NFOG 2016 Minutes

**Time:** June 14th, 2016, 15.30-17.30

**Place:** Finlandia Hall, Helsinki

**Present:**

**Board of NFOG:**

Knut Hordnes (President of NFOG), Thea Lousen (Treasurer), Tone Skeie-Jensen (Secretary General), Seija Grénman (SGY), Lotti Helström (SFOG), Thomas Larsen (DSOG), Marit Lieng (NGF), Alexander Smáráson (FÍFK), Ganesh Acharya (Chief Editor AOGS), Ulrik Schiøler Kesmodel (Scientific Committee chairman), Katrin Kristjánsdóttir (new Educational Committee chairman), Niels Ulbjerg (Guidelines Committee chairman), Lars Ladfors (new Webmaster)

**Delegates:**

Denmark (5 votes): Hanne Brix Westergaard, Julie Tharin, Søren Lunde, Vibeke Lysdal, Charlotte Floridon

Sweden (5 votes): Marie Bixo, Gunilla Ajne, Annika Strandell, Michaela Granfors, Kristina Petterson

Finland (5 votes): Maria Rajacki, Linda Linke (2 votes), Ritva Keravou (2 votes)

Norway (5 votes): Arild Kloster-Jensen, Stine Andreasen, Ingrid Volløyhaug, Anny Spydslaug, Malin Dögl

Iceland (1 vote): Ragnheiður Baldursdóttir

**Auditors:**

Johanna Mäenpää, Internal Auditor (Finland)

The General Assembly (GA) is open to all members of NFOG. There were a total of 46 members (including the Board) present at the meeting.

## 1. Opening of the meeting

Knut Hordnes (KH) opened the meeting.

## 2. Roll call of delegates

Tone Skeie-Jensen (TSJ) carried out the roll call of the delegates.

## 3. Election of chairman and delegates for checking of the minutes

Jone Trovik was proposed, and was elected, as chairman of the GA. Ragnheiður L. Bjarnadóttir (Iceland) and Annika Strandell (Sweden) were proposed, and were elected, for the task of checking the minutes from the GA.

## 4. Report by the Board for 2014 and 2015

TSJ presented a summary of the NFOG Board activities as well as the members of the Board for the past two years. An overview of the activity of the Board is made available to the members of NFOG through the minutes from each meeting, found posted on the website. TSJ reminded the GA of the decision made at the GA in 2014 to move the NFOG Congress to odd years from 2021. The reason being that both the NFOG and EBCOG Congresses are held biannually in the springtime of even years, and that the two congresses end up competing for the same participants. According to the articles of NFOG a GA meeting must be held at least once every other year, preferably in connection

with the Nordic Congress. There will be a congress held in 2018 and again in 2021, and educational courses will be held in both 2019 and 2020. The NFOG Board has decided to hold a GA in connection with the educational course in 2020, and again in 2021 at the NFOG Congress.

The activities of NFOG are defined by its statutes, and the means by which the Board aim to meet the requirements of the statutes were presented. Much of the activity of NFOG is done through its committees, and that is presented by the committee leaders.

With regards to international collaboration it was mentioned that the Nordic representation in FIGO is impressive. At the FIGO GA in 2015 Seija Grénman was appointed Vice President, and in the Executive Board the Nordic countries are represented by Anette Tønnes Pedersen and Margit Steinholt.

## **5. Report from the Scientific Committee**

Ulrik Schiøler Kesmodel (USK) gave an overview of the work done by the Scientific committee (SC). Much work is put into the biannual assessment of the applications to the NFOG Fund. Still many of the application forms are not correctly filled in, resulting in a rejection of the application. To improve the quality of the applications the SC plan to post a model application on the website after amendments have been made to the current form. The SC will also go through the criteria for receiving grants to see if there is a need for adjustment. A possible revised version of the amendments will be presented at the next GA.

The other main function of the SC is connected to the scientific work within NFOG. The SC handles, evaluates, and scores the abstracts for the NFOG Congress. Further, it evaluates the presentations and awards prizes for oral and poster presentations. The criteria by which the SC make their evaluations will be written down, for the use of future committees. USK emphasized the importance of transparency in all the work done within the SC and NFOG.

USK suggested that the Presidential session at the congresses should be used to promote collaborative scientific work between the Nordic countries. To improve the attendance of this important session he suggested that there should not be held parallel sessions at the same time.

## **6. Report from the Educational Committee**

Katrin Kristjánsdóttir has succeeded Tomi Mikkola as the chairman of the Educational committee (EC), and she presented the members of the EC and its activities to the GA. In 2015 the EC visited RCOG to take a closer look at its high quality educational and training programs. The visit is considered useful for the EC in its preparation for future educational courses and other activities within the committee.

The EC held its last course in May of 2015 in Copenhagen, with focus on ObGyn training. Its title was "Nordic ObGyn training – are we good enough?". The next EC course will be held on April 27th-28th, 2017. It will be a course that focuses on the perimenopause, fertility, and hormonal therapy in various settings.

## **7. Report from the Guidelines Committee**

Niels Uldbjerg (NU) presented the members of the Guidelines Committee (GC). The GC has started out translating the National guidelines into English, posting them on the NFOG website. So far 33 obstetrical and 9 gynecological guidelines have been translated. As a next step the GC wishes to develop evidence based common Nordic guidelines. If the GA agrees on financing this work the GC will meet with delegates from each of the

Nordic countries for discussion and assignment of the different tasks that need to be done in order to write the guideline. It is assessed that the representatives in the group will need a 6-month period to finish their work. The group will then summarize the suggested guideline and a hearing will be conducted in each of the Nordic countries. The work may start this fall with the aim of finishing in the fall of 2017.

The translated Nordic guidelines have the possibility of being published in EJOG without a peer review. The GC will select which guidelines to submit to EJOG. Ganesh Acharya informed the GA that guidelines may be published also in AOGS, but only after a peer review.

### **8. Report from the NFOG website**

Peter Secher (PS), the Webmaster for the last 10 years, presented the website that has been active since 2001. Since the last GA a new item on the website are the National Guidelines translated into English. PS further pointed to the overview of reports and grants given by the NFOG Fund since its start in 2010. The reports are there for transparency, and to put a focus on the Fund in order to encourage others to apply. PS is stepping down as Webmaster and is succeeded by Lars Ladfors from Sweden.

### **9. Report from NFOG**

In the absence of Anne Cathrine Hoffgaard Munk, Linda Linke (LL) presented the activity and the national members of NFOG. The NFOG have 2-3 meetings annually, and the president participates at the meetings of the NFOG Board as well as at the meetings of the Educational committee (EC). LL emphasised the close collaboration that has evolved between NFOG and the EC when it comes to arranging the biannual educational courses. Further, she spoke of the activity of NFOG in relation to the NFOG Congress. Of other activities, NFOG is involved in comparing the surgical training of the trainees in the Nordic countries both in order to learn from each other and to improve the training. They further work to develop common educational campaigns and evaluation tools for the trainees.

The secretary general of EBCOG was present at the GA, and he encouraged the collaboration with ENTOG.

### **10. Report from AOGS (Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavia)**

Ganesh Acharya (GA) took over as Chief Editor of AOGS from Reynir T. Geirsson on Jan. 1st, 2015. Since he took over some changes have been made. Most notably the front page of the journal with the northern light, a common phenomenon in the Nordic countries. The main change has been made within the International Editorial Board (IEB). The IEB will have no more than 20 editors, and all continents are represented. The members of the IEB are under the obligation to review at least 10 manuscripts annually. Some of the Associate Editors have also been changed, after appointment by their National societies. The success of AOGS depends on the editors and reviewers with a constant focus on quality. The members of NFOG are encouraged to promote the journal and to submit good articles.

Since he took over, both the submission- and the rejection rate has increased, and the handling time has gone down. In actual numbers most articles are submitted from Sweden>Denmark>Norway>Netherlands>Finland>Australia>UK. The number of downloads has steadily increased from 2010, as well as international sales. AOGS is the 4th highest impact journal in general obstetrics and gynecology, and the impact factor in

2014 rose to 2.426. One cannot expect a continual rise in impact factor, and GA was not surprised by the news that the impact factor for 2015 is 2.191.

GA ended his presentation by emphasizing that the success of NFOG is based on teamwork.

## **11. Financial report**

The treasurer Thea Lousen (TL) presented for the GA the financial results of 2014 and 2015. The economy of NFOG is sound, and the results are in balance with the budgets. The result for 2014 was DKK 433.584, and for 2015 DKK 556.887. TL went through the different posts in the budget and in the result, and the deviations that were found between the two were given an explanation. For the year 2014 the income of AOGS was well above the budget, the reason being that AOGS went from paper to online distribution. The deal with the publisher Wiley gives NFOG a fixed annual sum for AOGS and a percentage of the earnings from the sale of AOGS. That same year the Congress had a deficit of about 1 million DKK due to the cost of the congress dinner. Despite that big deficit the result for 2014 was above what was budgeted for, in large due to the income from AOGS.

For the year 2015 the income from AOGS was well above the budget mainly due to the income from the published supplement on progesterone. The expenses related to AOGS were higher that year due to the change of chief editor of AOGS. An assistant Chief Editor had been appointed in Jens Langhoff-Roos, and Reynir Geirsson stayed on for half a year aiding the new Chief Editor. For the first time the net financial expenses from the fortune held a negative balance of DKK -58.815 in 2015. The fortune is mainly placed in lowrisk bonds, and the yield was exceptionally low for the first time ever that year.

From the surplus 66% is transferred to the Fund. TL asked that DKK 200.000 of the surplus be used for an upgrading of the NFOG website, and that DKK 100.000 should be set aside for FIGO activity. The latter post is kept in the budget, and in relation to the FIGO Congress year the sum in the budget is set at DKK 100.000 to cover expenses for a possible Nordic initiative during the Congress. Such a Nordic Initiative might be a seminar, workshop, or similar developed in collaboration with the NFOG Board.

### **This was accepted by the GA.**

The complete budget and result is found on the website with the minutes from the GA.

## **12. Auditors report**

TL had received reports for the years 2014 and 2015 from the external auditor Bo Hendriksen, stating that the external auditor complied with the independence requirements stated within the law, and that they had received all of the information requested. Johanna Mäenpää (JM) gave the report on behalf of the Internal auditors. She was unhappy with the short time given to the internal editors to go through the external report, and received an apology from TL. This was due to a misunderstanding between the external editor and TL. JM read out the conclusion of the external auditors report, and informed that the internal auditors support this conclusion.

There was one comment on the use of money on AOGS, which went above budget, but this was not considered as a problem as AOGS also had made considerable earnings. JM asked that more money should be granted to clinical research via the NFOG Fund. Further that a positive balance of the budget should be used on its members and not result in an increase in the fortune.

The chairman asked the GA to grant the Board discharge of liability. **Discharge of liability was granted by the GA.**

### **13. Budget proposals for 2017-2018**

TL went through the posts in the budget for 2017 and 2018. For AOGS the expenses related to Chief Editor are increased due to an expected increase in the salary of the Chief Editor. In addition a sum of DKK 225.000 is added to the budget to cover the cost of a 20% position as Assistant Chief Editor. Further, there are increases in the budget relating to Associate Editors and to the salary of the Editorial Assistant. **This was accepted by the GA.** As for the committees, the Guidelines Committee will have a budget of DKK 150.000 which enables the committee to start working on evidence based common Nordic Guidelines. The Educational Committee has a budget of DKK 150.000 in the years that the educational courses are arranged. The post in the budget for FIGO activity has so far been used to cover the travelling expenses of Seja Grenman. As she is now the Vice President, her expenses are covered by FIGO. The post is kept in the budget, and in relation to the FIGO Congress year the sum in the budget is set at DKK 100.000 to cover expenses for a possible Nordic initiative during the Congress. Such a Nordic Initiative might be a seminar, workshop, or similar developed in collaboration with the NFOG Board. **This was accepted by the GA.** In 2017 the website (additional costs) is given a budget of DKK 200.000 to renew the website. The work may start already in 2016. **This was accepted by the GA.**

The proposed budgets for 2017 and 2018 will result in a small deficit. **This was accepted by the GA.**

The membership fee will not be changed for the next period.

### **14. Proposals from the Nominating Committee to positions of trust in NFOG**

On behalf of the Nominating Committee Marit Lieng presented the nominees to the positions of trust within NFOG. Knut Hordnes and Tone Skeie-Jensen did not seek re-election. Thea Lousen had served her full time as treasurer.

President: Karen Reinhold Wøjdemann (Denmark)

Secretary General: Sebastian Gidlöf (Sweden) and Maija Jakobsson (Finland)

Treasurer: Espen Berner (Norway). The treasurer is appointed from Jan. 1st, 2017.

Internal auditors: Johanna Mäenpää (Finland) and Charlotta Grunewald (Sweden)

Deputy auditor: Martin Andresen (Norway)

### **15. Election of the President of NFOG**

Karen Reinhold Wøjdeman presented herself to the GA and was elected as President.

### **16. Election of the Secretary General of NFOG**

Sebastian Gidlöf and Maija Jakobsson both presented themselves to the GA.

The delegates asked for a written election, and Maija Jakobsson was elected as the new Secretary General.

### **17. Election of the treasurer of NFOG**

Espen Berner presented himself to the GA and was elected as the new treasurer.

### **18. Election of the auditors of NFOG**

Johanna Mäenpää and Charlotta Grunewald were re-elected as internal auditors, and Martin Andresen was re-elected as deputy auditor.

### **19. NFOG 2018**

At the GA in 2014 Odense was chosen as the site for the next NFOG Congress, and Bjarne Rønne Kristensen (BRK) was selected as congress President. BRK gave a very nice audiovisual presentation of the city of Odense as the next venue for the Congress to be held in June of 2018. BRK and LOC will work closely with the Board of NFOG to prepare the scientific programme of the congress.

## **20. Location of the NFOG 2021 and naming of the Congress President**

Ragnheiður L. Bjarnadóttir (RB) has been suggested as Congress President. She presented the new Reykjavik concert hall Harpa as the venue for NFOG 2021. The congress will be held on the 13th-15th of June in 2021. **The location and proposed Congress President were accepted by the GA.**

## **21. Amendments to the NFOG bylaws**

KH presented the one change to the amendments the Board suggests for the GA to vote on.

Special enactment relating to "Acta Obstetrica and Gynecologica" states in issue 6.2: Associate Editors shall be appointed by the five national societies for a period of four years in each case. *Proposed addition: The position should be advertised within each society.*

**The proposed change to the amendment was accepted by the GA.**

## **22. Any other business**

KH presented for the GA a request from the Board to broaden the use of the sum of DKK 250.000 that the GA in 2012 accepted that the Board could be free to use for inter-Nordic collaboration (issue 12 of the minutes from the 2012 GA). KH suggested a new wording for the Board initiative: *The allocated sum of DKK 250.000 named The Board Initiative, decided on the GA in 2012, can be used for initiatives that the Board find worthy and that fall outside the bylaws of the Fund. The Board will be responsible to the General Assembly. The initiative may include Nordic and international projects.* **This was accepted by the GA.**

## **23. Closing of the meeting**

KH thanked the participant for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Oslo, June 23rd, 2016

In witness thereof

Tone Skeie-Jensen  
NFOG Secretary General

Jone Trovik  
Chairman of the General Assembly

Annika Strandell  
Checker of the minutes

Ragnheiður L. Bjarnadóttir  
Checker of the minutes