

New Year Town Meeting – 5 January 2014

In attendance: Their Excellencies, Joan and Crispin, Seymon (Seneschal), members of the populace

Facilitated by Anne de Tournai

Meeting opened at 1.30pm

Welcome and Calendar

Crispin welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance. He shared that he and Joan were looking forward to a calendar of diverse events, varying in size and type. Crispin asked that people in attendance take advantage of the opportunity to give their input as the game is made by all of those who play it. The ideas, projects and events that make Politar chopolis great are the result of all of us.

Seymon seconded Crispin's sentiments and advised he would excuse himself from general discussion later in the meeting to avoid biasing discussion.

The meeting then moved to the 2014 calendar of events. On a month by month basis the meeting discussed planned and proposed events. It was noted that the College of St Andronicus is likely to add an event once they look at the availability for time frames. (An updated list of events following this discussion is now available on the Baronial calendar and website).

Table Discussions

Anne explained that following discussions with the Baron, Baroness and Seneschal, 3 topics for discussion had been chosen. The fourth topic would allow members of the populace to raise issues and opportunities for the Barony to progress in 2014. The meeting would split into 4 groups discussing each topic and then rotate 3 times, allowing all members to provide input on each topic. A scribe for each group would record discussion and allow subsequent groups to build on it.

Discussion notes are transcribed below. (Where themes in the discussion have emerged, these have been grouped together for clarity.)

TOPIC 1: Proposed 2014 Hall Fees

Situation: At the December 2013 Officers Meeting, the Seneschal advised that the money collected to cover hall costs did not do so. As a result, it was proposed that hall fees would rise in 2014 to:

- \$100 per annum or \$30 per quarter
- Children under 12 Free
- Families charged for a maximum of 2 children
- First 2 visits for Newcomers/Wayfarers free (additional visits at the Seneschal's discretion)
- Concessions/Financial Hardship \$50 per annum or \$15 per quarter
- Financial Hardship applications approved by Seneschal

Discussion Notes:

- An info sheet to explain/highlight benefits i.e. \$100 pa roughly equivalent to \$2 per week (Reeve to do)
- Approximately 40 people paid \$60 for annual halls fees in 2013 (\$2,400). Hall cost is \$7,000 per annum
- Enforcement:
 - List of contributors on the website (patrons) or member numbers for privacy
 - Cards or stickers on people's cards for people who have paid
 - Complexity issues in administering
- Consumers' vs Contributors?
- Should feast costings also cover Baronial expenses? (including hall). – ENDORSED BY MULTIPLE GROUPS
- Equitable Access
 - Is it fair to have one "fee" when there are multiple usage levels?
- 2013 Events did make up the shortfall in hall fees. \$5,000 was used to cover hall hire.
- (If it continues) One outcome is we can't do as much as we'd like to with what we make. Therefore can we afford current use?
- Seek benefactors? ACT Grants? Other Grants?
- Difficulty finding a person to take the money (need clear processes and people running them)
 - Investigate Internet banking
- Monthly fee for those with calendar congestion
- Amend sign in sheet to include payment status
- Freeman – includes hall fees. (Note, this lasts for a period of one year).
- Need to pay for hall usage rather than levy on events
- Fundraising
 - Ad hoc fundraising – raffling of services volunteered by members of the Barony
 - Create a book of stories for sale
 - Beginning of the year kickstarter drive – people choose at the beginning of the year how much they want to contribute
 - Target fundraising outside the group (otherwise the same people are still paying) i.e. Trivia at the Pub etc
- The Hall should be funded through a range of solutions not just one, adding up to the total hall cost.

TOPIC 2: Hall Usage

Situation: The 2014 proposal under discussion

Wednesday Nights: 6.30-8 Combat
8-9.30 Arts & Sciences

Note: Original proposal discussed by officers was based around 6-9. On 5 January 2014, Seneschal informed group of possibility of Scouts requiring use of hall until 6.30

Friday Nights (6-9): Combat/Fitness (1st week)
Courtly Graces e.g. dance, singing, entertainment etc (2nd week)
Combat/Fitness (3rd week)
Open for booking (4th week)

Sundays: Baronial Meetings (1-2 once a month)
Arts & Sciences (12-6)
Rapier (2-6)
Combat (3-6)

Discussion Notes:

- Fridays – interferes with event prep/travel/private life. People are tired.
- Combat/Fitness (fighters) – fortnightly. Friday group is self funding (\$25 for hall usage on a Friday in total)
- Could Courtly Graces run on a Wednesday instead?
- Need two spaces – indoor fighting and a&s mutually exclusive in current hall
- Free Friday night could be used for:
 - Social?
 - Leadership/Peerage Lessons
 - Pots/Lots (Officer training)
 - Singing
- A&S on Wednesdays needs designated 7.30 start each week.
- Need consistent booking periods for each activity (on an annual basis)
- Put bookings & class titles on calendar (by A&S mistress?) - ENDORSED BY MULTIPLE GROUPS
- Sundays work well
- Equity of use: Is each group getting what they pay for? Does each group get what they need? (i.e toilet/storage/cover from weather)
- Need efficient & effective process for people booking space for activities
- Should open spaces on website calendar for people to book for classes
 - Per term
 - Need approval from moderators (maybe relevant officers?)
- Need to monitor attendance – who is using when?
- Use survey monkey to poll current/proposed usage
- Please allow for poor collegians
- Access to storage for rapier
- Regular maintenance/cleaning of storage
- College storage? Newcomer storage? Help in case of transport issues

TOPIC 3: Marketing and Recruitment

Situation: How do we promote ourselves in 2014? What markets do we think we should appeal to?

Discussion Notes:

- O Weeks – support colleges lot. Sports & cultural aspects, just not one or other
- Use business cards (Baron already ordered) & pamphlets to give to people who ask questions. Post cards. Magnet business cards so people don't lose them, go on fridge. Review effectiveness.
- Graduate networks, games shops, craft fairs, lincaft, hobbysew, spotlight, comics shops, arts centres, craft guilds, martial arts centres
- Postcards on a range of topics to include in café post card racks ENDORSED BY MULTIPLE GROUPS
 - Fighting
 - A&S i.e garb, brewing, etc
 - Rapier
 - Archery
- Beginners classes organised to run recently after public events and not overlap each other
- Beginners booklet covering society as a whole
- Posters for uni notice boards etc A4-A3 Size
- URL on everything pointing to Politarchopolis or at least Lochac website
- Shorten Politarchopolis in url to "polit" (easier to spell, explain) DONE – MASONRY WORKING ON REDIRECT ADDRESS
- Treat classes with a "professional" approach i.e on time, no late cancellations, good sign up process, handouts
- All events to announce when next event will run
- How to manage newcomers & their expectations? How do we contact/communicate with newcomers i.e. who to follow up with to learn, baronial contact list, hospit
- Issues for newcomers (particularly college) – transport, money, time
- Do we want to interact more with mainstream media and how would we manage this? For example, multicultural festival -ENDORSED BY MULTIPLE GROUPS
- Retention Strategy (follow up recruitment, stay in touch, invite people back)
 - How did we do? (informal)
 - Survey for first time attendees
- Hospit follow up/encouragement
- Media Strategy/public awareness/ what do we offer?/ Is it relevant?
- Media > Public > SCA > Signup
- School fetes as a demo opportunities
 - Bill these as "whole family activity"
 - Family friendly event following
- Introduce children's activities, maybe a box of children's games.
 - Children's officer? (Another office??)
- Recruit a friend campaign with targets & prizes
- "Holiday happenings" newsletter, info in this plus a school holiday event i.e picnic and boffers
- Hospitaller role with a plan and a team
- "Ask Me" roster (people willing to newcomers settle in)
- Event at Cancon
- Stick to three messages about what we do
- Create actual strategy

Topic 4: What are we not talking about that would help Polit in 2014?

Discussion Notes:

- OFFICERS
 - Officer “How to” Handbooks or easy access to existing handbooks
 - What are expectations?
 - Need clear understanding of what their remit/boundaries are so can make appropriate decisions on their own
 - More tangible gratitude for officers e.g. scrolls, massage vouchers etc.
 - Scrolls for multipurposes
 - Issues filling officers (is lack of thanks related or actual)
 - Cantons (could they fill offices if we can't at baronial level?)
 - Run training for officers (pots/lots to provide for officer recruitment)
 - Pass the “king's shilling” – ensure good rotation of officers in timely fashion to avoid burn out
 - How do we fill missing officer roles (currently 5)
 - Pay for training required for roles i.e. first aid for chirurgionate
 - Role of the hospitaller (see pot/lots officer training)
 - Greeting new people
 - Activities for new people to get involved in
- “the bad politics”
- New members how do we manage/foster i.e turning up to baronial activities
- More children's activities
- Inactive members – how do we get them out of the woodwork? (Hospit?Recent?)
- Balance of Investment – a&s vs fighting vs service
- Follow through on baronial projects - ENDORSED BY MULTIPLE GROUPS
- Improve how we run our meetings (allow time for both officers & populace to talk/exchange ideas)
 - Publishing actual meeting minutes
- Management of communication across different media
- Communication between colleges/barony i.e contacts, meetings
- Actively using the website especially the calendar
- Make sure people know/understand/follow grievance procedure (is it on our website?)
- Participation in the Kingdom as a barony
- Baronial assets – what do we need and what can go? (accrual accounting – is it an asset if we haven't 'asseted' it?)
- Getting people to try activities outside of their usual interests
- Baronial contact list – not just officers, households, specialties etc (need to consider privacy) – open to all
- Knowne World Domination! (from Mathilde)
- Markets/Resource Management
- Annual Chandlery Stocktake – recycling/sold/swapmeet. Baronial investment in hospit garb
- Formation of baronial units – war, calligraphy, defence, broidery, etc. – can undertake baronial projects

NEXT STEPS

The meeting ran through a summary of each discussion topic. Based on endorsement by a majority of the meeting, the following tasks/projects have been agreed:

1. Funding of Hall through multiple solutions (Working Group – Tim, Michelle, Alice)
2. Hall Usage for 2014 (Working Group – India, Rob, Brigid)
3. Recruitment & Retention Strategy (Working Group – Jaysen, Luke, Louise)
4. Officer Training/Support (Working Group – Simon, Zac, Lorcan)

All groups will present a solution for endorsement on 16 February 2014 Baronial Meeting for financial discussion and approval. Recruitment solution will be phased (some aspects approved earlier to allow for O-week/Multicultural Festival).

Baronial meetings will check back in to town meeting notes to progress topics following completion of initial 4 projects.

Meeting closed at 3.45pm