

IYL AGM Meeting Minutes

Friday 6 June 5.30–8pm – in person only

Present: Zoltan Bozoky, Janette Browne, Diana Cesar, Jean-Marc Choblet, Daniel Ciarrocchi, Lavaniya Das, Rita Di Tano, Pam Golden, Nazmul Hasan, Prithi Israni, Gayatri Kamath, Francesca Latella, Carlo Milani, Cathy Meade, Lucy Morris (minutes), Sidharth Punshi, Charlotte Ruhe, Andrew Wainstein, Lucie Winter, Sachin Zodgekar.

1. Welcome to members and introductions:

- Manager: Lucy Morris
 - Trustees standing down after three-year terms: Giorgio Ambrosetti, Sidharth Punshi, Andrew Wainstein
 - Trustees standing for appointment: Diana Cesar, Daniel Ciarrocchi, Hermann Deres, Pamela Golden, Richard Landy (absent), Richard Ward (absent), Lucie Winter
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2. Apologies for absence / proxy votes in total

- Apologies: Marco Cannavo, Penny Chaplin, Hermann Deres, Richard Landy, Judy Lynn, Evelyne Takacs, Richard Ward.
 - Proxy votes nominating the chair unless noted otherwise: Mitsue Abe, Suman Bhuchar, Penelope Chaplin, Caroline Clark, Peter Collins, Hermann Deres, Pete Hahn, Gemma Jackson, Alba Lamberti, Stuart Miller, Keiki Onishi, Judy Smith, Linnet Szmukler, Richard Ward (nominated Lucy Morris), Rachel Webster.
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3. Minutes of the AGM held on Sunday 30 June 2024 (circulated)

- A vote to approve the minutes was carried unanimously.
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4. Reports of trustees and sub-committees:

- **Chair (Giorgio Ambrosetti)**
 - i. Positive to see such good attendance

- ii. 2024 has been one of transformation and resilience for IYL, marked by financial challenges, leadership transitions, inflationary pressures and declining membership
- iii. The organisation remains focused on sustaining a vibrant community
- iv. Highlights of the year included the 40th anniversary with a visit from Abhijata Iyengar
- v. Leadership changes saw Lucy Morris appointed as CEO, succeeding Alan Reynolds after 15 years of dedicated service
- vi. The Board welcomed new members and acknowledged the impactful contributions of departing trustees
- vii. Financial sustainability remains a key priority
- viii. Full planning permission was secured to expand the IYL centre
- ix. The strength and unity of the IYL community is vital

• **Manager (Lucy Morris)**

- i. Sales are up by over 23% compared to last year, mainly due to rebooting the workshop programme, but the money may be spent on much-needed repairs and maintenance
- ii. Membership fees will go up
- iii. We are also working hard on improving how we welcome and retain new members, with better communication and clearer pathways into regular practice
- iv. We're upgrading our facilities this year
- v. Getting more out of the MBO
- vi. Team roles shifting

Discussion points after these reports:

- i. Planning permission for extension
- ii. Postponement of plans while financial stability is not secured and funds unavailable
- iii. Discussion of funding options and ideas such as sponsorship, wealthy supporters
- iv. Praise for improved communications from IYL making workshop attendance more easily accessible
- v. Need for more general classes raised in the evenings; suggestions to make the evening provision more diverse
- vi. Note that 2023 early morning classes had not worked
- vii. Need for classes helping students to progress – “moving up classes” from beginner to general and general to intermediate
- viii. Discussion of levels compared to other centres
- ix. Brainstorming of advertising ideas:
- x. Tube marketing discussed to be backed up with a community outreach plan
- xi. Retention of students from introductory course to beginner classes and package discussed
- xii. Local awareness of the centre is low

- xiii. Signage on lampposts discussed – little knowledge that the centre does have signage
- xiv. Sandwich board discussed
- xv. Park yoga demonstrations suggested
- xvi. Branding discussed and awareness of what Iyengar Yoga is versus the general public's understanding
- xvii. Geosocial media discussed
- xviii. Better publicity of what Iyengar Yoga is
- xix. International Yoga Day
- xx. Use of WhatsApp as communication with students
- xxi. Rewards for referrals
- xxii. Strategic linking with other brands such as Yogamatters
- xxiii. Note that the community we have is diverse compared to most yoga centres, which is very positive
- xxiv. Merchandise
- xxv. Instagram account noted as not very active
- xxvi. Charity should have access to Meta resources
- xxvii. More community events suggested such as film or art
- xxviii. Need for younger people at the centre noted
- xxix. Creation of brand loyalty

• **Hon. Treasurer (Sidharth Punshi)**

- i. Noted energy and enthusiasm of meeting was “music to his ears”
- ii. Noted that the annual nature of the meeting in June appears at odds with the presentation of the calendar year's accounts
- iii. Presentation of notes on 2024 accounts:
 - 1. Noted that key expenses were made in essential maintenance
 - 2. Additional new costs of advertising
 - 3. New treasurer on board and already engaged
- iv. Introduction and handover to new trustee Hermann Deres (absent)
- v. Suggestion to review insurers

• **Teaching Committee (Richard Ward absent, presented by Lucy Morris)**

- i. The year marked the 40th anniversary of the Iyengar Yoga Institute (Iyengar London), highlighted by visits from Abhijata Iyengar and Raya Uma Datta, continuing the tradition of connection with the Iyengar family
- ii. The Teaching Committee (TC) managed regular operations, including timetabling, teacher transitions, handling feedback, and welcoming new teachers. The office also saw the retirement of long-serving manager Alan Reynolds, with Lucy stepping into the role

- iii. Key concerns include financial sustainability and attracting younger students to ensure the organisation's long-term future. Initiatives such as offering shorter classes, promoting younger teachers, and modest membership fee increases are being considered
- iv. Workshops, particularly locally-led ones, have grown in popularity. The TC emphasises the unique depth of Iyengar Yoga, the dedication of its community, and the ongoing need for teachers to contribute to the Teaching Committee
- v. Suggestion from room of remuneration for TC participation to increase involvement

• **Diversity Advisory Group (Sidharth Punshi)**

- i. Introduction of new members of the group present at the meeting: Nazmul – the new chair – and Priti
- ii. Group has recently reactivated with Sid's help after Kristyan Robinson the previous chair left in September
- iii. Security upgrades and maintenance were a priority and are complete
- iv. Noted as an important group for the organisation
- v. Initiatives such as the diversity group support the work of the organisation
- vi. Group has a national link to the Iyengar Yoga UK association
- vii. Looking forward

5. Matters arising:

There were various points of discussion, and the group was very animated throughout the meeting. They are noted above. As the meeting was much longer than intended, this point was considered complete.

6. Receive the Annual Report (proposed Giorgio Ambrosetti, seconded Sidharth Punshi). Approved unanimously

7. Appointment of Directors/Trustees approved unanimously

8. Election of the Board of Trustees approved unanimously

9. A few words from the Chair: Diana Cesar

- i. Happy to see such enthusiasm and the impromptu brainstorming session
- ii. On board as a marketing expert to help
- iii. Looking forward to her term as chair and working with the organisation

10. Authorise the Board of Trustees to appoint the accountants to IYIMV approved unanimously

11. Any other business

- i. Suggestion to investigate endowment and sponsorship money
- ii. Thanks, and close from exiting chair
- iii. Applause and thanks to Giorgio, Andrew and Sid

- iv. Mutual thanks conveyed between Lucy Morris and Giorgio for support and learning
- v. Further notes on exit include idea of park festival for the summer

Meeting Adjourned 8pm