



Minutes of the 42nd AGM of the Netherlands Hong Kong Business Association

Held online on 28th May 2020 from 14:30 – 15:30 CET

Total number of registered members: 25

Members in attendance: 15

1	Ms A.	Ruigrok	Consul General	Netherlands Consulate General in HK
2	Mr M.	van Naarden	Head of Sales Benelux	Cathay Pacific Airways
3	Ms P.	Kant	Head of Investment Promotion	Invest Hong Kong
4	Mr H.	Poulis	CEO	IGC International bv
5	Mr M.	van der Dussen	MD	ProductIP
6	Mr E.	Hendrickx	CEO	MosquitNo
7	Ms F.	Chau	Deputy Representative	Hong Kong Economic And Trade Office, Brux
8	Mr V	Rauwerda	Personal Member NHKBA	Audit Committee Member
9	Mr N	Van Stappen	Client Manager Benelux	Finnair
10	Ms M	Zhang	Business manager	Rotterdam Partners
11	Ms J	Baud	Vice Chairman	NHKBA
12	Ms G	Ammerlaan	Director	Holland Matchmaking
13	Mr M.	Pronk	CEO	1421 Consulting Group
14	Mr H.	Versnel	Founder	Select Courier International B.V.
15	Mr V.	Martinez	Senior Manager	MERZARIO BV

1. Chairman Hans Poulis (HP) opens the AGM at 14:30 hrs and welcomes the participants. He expresses his regrets that the meeting had to be held online due to the Covid-19 epidemic and also expresses the hope that the members, their families and their business are doing well.
2. HP introduces Ms Annemieke Ruigrok, Consul General in HK and Honorary Advisor of the NHKBA to share her view on the situation and developments in Hong Kong.
Ms Ruigrok spoke for about 10 minutes and answered questions from members.
Note: The speech of Ms Ruigrok was not recorded
3. Approval of the minutes. The minutes were approved.
4. Membership development.
George Ammerlaan (GA) reports a drop in the membership from 129 in 2018 to 115 in 2019.
The number of corporate members dropped from 88 to 74
The number of personal members remained at 33
The number of life and honorary members remained at 8.
GA: When asked, members who cancelled reported that their business had shifted away from HK (eg design companies). A second reason was the retirement or departure from our contacts from various companies. Their successors (if any) did not necessarily have the same passion for HK.



Q from H. Versnel: “What was the trend in previous years”?”.

A from GA: “There is a gradual decline in the number of members. The attendance at events is high but the willingness to remain or become a member is lower than before. It seems especially the younger generation prefers to get information (if necessary at a cost) at events and not to join.

HP: “At the same time we see a strong increase in event partners, who support the event (and which includes a membership as well).

HP: We have to realise that we have to change our minds and strategy: the regular membership is becoming less popular, the event sponsoring more popular.

We also have to research how we can motivate startup companies and beginner traders to China/HK.

Q from M. Pronk: “Retirement is mentioned as a possible reason for members cancelling their membership. Are the resources of the NHKBA itself also an issue?”

A from HP: Yes, but we find ways to communicate with members and potentially interested parties. Follow up is, however, an issue. The board should be in a position to do more in this respect.

Q from H Versnel: What is the minimum number of members the NHKBA requires?

A from HP: We still make a profit and we will touch on this later.

5. Report of the Board

HP reports that 2019 was the first year with reduced services from the secretariat. The amount of money spent on the secretariat was reduced to make the NHKBA sustainable.

The NHKBA now aims to communicate stronger via events, newsletters and a new website. Besides George, a second person, Kim Janssens, has been hired to assist with IT, communication and administration. George and Kim form a strong team.

Our strategy is to organise strong events. We seem to succeed because the feedback we received after the 2019 events was very good. We are responsible for sharing information. We started to expand this in 2019 and will continue to do so in 2020.

The protests in HK in 2019 did have an effect on the perception of HK in the Netherlands. The NHKBA, however, does not take a political standpoint. We promote trade but at the same time we do not close our eyes. We do, however, focus on the business relationship between the Netherlands and Hong Kong. We are in communication with the right stakeholders and we have and will continue to inform the Hong Kong Government that we are concerned.

The focus of the NHKBA remains: helping business.



6. Marketing + Events

Marco van Naarden (MvN) mentions that the NHKBA stands for connecting, networking and the exchange of knowledge.

He next lists the events organised in 2019 and the results:

Feb 6th, the CNY reception in de Nieuwe of Litteraire Sociëteit De Witte in The Hague. Co-organised and co-hosted with the HKETO, Brussels. 193 guests.

Feb 8th, the CNY Dinner held at Sea Palace Restaurant in Amsterdam. 100 members and guests booked a seat. € 1888 was raised for the Foodlink Foundation in Hong Kong. The cheque for this amount was presented to the Foundation at a presentation in HK in the presence of the Consul General Ms Annemieke Ruigrok.

May 21st, the AGM at the beautiful Schielandshuis, organised with the support of event partner Rotterdam Partners.

July 2nd, the annual Hand Over event attracted 142 guests. The event was supported by the HKETO, Brussels, InvestHK, the HKTDC and Rotterdam Partners. The focus was on the GBA. Belgian presenter Lucas de Man gave a shortened performance about his experiences in China.

November 11th, the Shooting Star Award, Dongzhi event was held at Kasteel de Wittenburg. 64 guests attended. The event was organised in cooperation with the Dutch Chamber of Commerce in HK, the HKETO Brussels, Invest HK and the HKTDC. The Shooting Star was awarded to the Dutch company BlueMeg from HK.

December 2-4, Chairman HP represented the NHKBA at the annual HK Forum of the Federation of HK Business Associations Worldwide. 2 prizes were won: The best Initiative award (HK\$10,000) and the Excellent StartUp award (HK\$5,000) for Origin-X from NL/HK.

7. Presentation of the new website by Jacqueline Baud (JB).

JB mentions that the new website was the last step in the process of renewing the look and system of the NHKBA. "We migrated everything to the new platform of Eventbank (today GlueUp).

This platform combines a CRM system, possibility to announce and promote events and other news, etc. The members have been migrated to the directory of the new platform.

The move should lead to less admin time and lower costs. We will invite members more and more to use the Eventbank app to go online and become involved.

8. Financials, presented by Paula Kant (PK)

PK presents the financials (which have been distributed to the members) and mentions that the NHKBA realised a small profit in 2019.

Income was derived from membership fees and event partners. There was a reduction in the income from membership fees but a rise in the amount raised via event partners.

Admin costs were reduced in 2019 by € 18,000. As there was no longer a requirement to have a real office, the contract for the rent of the office was cancelled. This saved another € 15,000.



PK announces that the financial report was vetted by the audit committee and that they approved the figures.

Q from M Pronk: on the basis of the numbers, can we assume that the NHKBA is facing a challenging time?

A from PK: Yes and No, We have strong reserves. We have cut costs since 2018 and are more flexible now. In 2017 we lost money, now we are back in black numbers. We have to continue that in 2020.

We have to increase the activities on the new member front. We need to attract more young entrepreneurs.

M Pronk compliments the board on cutting the costs. He expresses his concern that the revenue is dropping almost as much as the reduction in revenue.

A from PK: We have lost a substantial amount of income from partner members (corporate members who pay more for more services). We need to work harder at getting more revenue from events. The NL is a mature market. The awareness about HK is high. This trend is the same in similar countries. HK associations are growing in Southern Europe.

Q from M Pronk: I see the Hand Over event contributed strongly to the income. Will Covid have an effect on the income in 2020?

Answer from PK: We are aware of the risks this year. That is why we have already decided to flip events in 2020. The Handover event will now be moved to November (Shooting Star Event) and we will also organise a smaller scale event in September.

Remark H. Versnel: My compliments to the board for governing the revenue in 2019. I have to leave the meeting now.

PK thanks the members of the audit committee, Mr Joop Litmaath. Mr Robert Kalkoene and Mr Victor Rauwerda, for vetting the financial report 2019.

Next PK presents the budget for 2020 (distributed to the members). She mentions that the expectations for the year are conservative but that a positive result of € 6,000 is possible.

9. Discharge of the Board

HP asks the AGM to discharge the board for 2019. This proposal is approved by the AGM.

10. Appointment Audit Committee 2020

PK ask Mr Litmaath, Mr Kalkoene and Mr Rauwerda is they are willing to continue being the audit committee in 2020. They agree and are appointed.

11. Membership Fees 2020

PK informs the AGM that the membership fees will remain the same in 2021: € 450 for corporate members and € 50 for personal members. These amounts are exclusive of VAT.



12. Election of Board Members.

The two year term of board members JB and MvN ends at this AGM. Both have indicated they are available for re-election.

The board nominates Jacqueline Baud and Marco van Naarden for a new term.

The AGM approves the nominations.

13. Upcoming Events

MvN mentions that the event “HK as a sourcing hub” is planned on 14 September.

A visit to the Van Gogh Museum is planned on 15 October.

The Dongzhi (including the Shooting Star) event is planned on 24 November in Utrecht.

2 events have already been held: the CNY reception and the CNY dinner.

MvN calls on the members present in the AGM to co-organise events with the NHKBA and host meetings if and when possible.

HP agrees with MvN. He mentions in addition that events result in leads for new members.

He also mentions that the NHKBA is discussing ways of cooperation with NLinBusiness, especially on the topic of the Greater Bay Area.

Regarding the planned event at the Van Gogh HP remarks that the museum has already agreed to sponsor.

Finally, HP mentions that the HK Forum would be a good opportunity for new members to be introduced to HK and China.

14. AOB

Q from M Pronk: What is the backup plan of the NHKBA in case the Covid-19 epidemic prevents live events from taking place?

PK answers: we are already looking at moving events from live to online, such as an event focussing on the startup scene.

As there are no further questions, Hans Poulis closes the meeting shortly after 15:30 hrs.

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