

MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE HELD AT THE IRISH CENTRE ON 14TH APRIL 1987

PRESENT:

Rev T Scully OMI, Mrs M Hannon, Miss M Kenny, Mrs B Shaw, Mr T Dunne, Mr T Mangan, Mr J Myers, Mr C O'Connell, Mr F Swan, Mr G O'Flynn.

APOLOGIES

Rev S Fullam, Rev J O'Donoghue

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting having been circulated, were taken as read and were adopted on a proposal by Mr T Mangan and seconded by Miss M Kenny.

MATTERS ARISING

Tenders for cleaning have been received but no decision has yet been made.

No reply has been received from J Murphy & Sons regarding outstanding work.

An invoice for fees for work done in 1981 has been received from the Quantity Surveyors (£5,500.00) who have defamed us by publicly stating that we are bad payers.

FINANCE

The accounts for 1986 are now with the printers and will be distributed to members as soon as possible.

Fr Scully said that the Irish Centre is not making a profit. It is kept in existence by fund-raising. We must examine costs, sales, management and staff. We must do a complete analysis and reduce costs and sell at maximum possible rates. We must make savings wherever possible. Bulk-buying might be one way. Electricity charges are ridiculously high. The lighting system needs to be adjusted.

We must get those who are criticising us outside to come in and tell us to our faces what we can do to improve the situation.

The first quarter of the Annual Welfare Grant was received today from the London Borough of Camden.

P Keegan said that management should not be asking questions at the AGM.

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WELFARE REPORT

Miss B Brandon presented a short written report of statistics for the month of March and commented on the various details. A total of 203 new clients were seen in addition to 2000 re attenders. There was an increase of 58.5% over new clients seen in March 1986. There were noticeable increases from Cork, Limerick and the West of Ireland. The number of families seen also showed an increase, as did the number of husbands. Many of the new arrivals are very pessimistic about the state of affairs in Ireland. Many had made very little preparation for emigrating. Lack of birth certificates was still causing problems in gaining DHSS assistance. Many callers are aggressive and threatening.

Fr Scully said the 1974 Rent Act had caused a shortage of living accommodation. The Irish Embassy has an obligation to help under 16's and those with special problems. The recent controversy about Irish passports has made the situation more difficult. A letter outlining problems giving advice to prospective emigrants has been sent to all local papers in Ireland and also to RTE. A monthly report is sent to the Irish Government.

HOSTELS

Fr Ryan was unable to attend the meeting because of pressure of work. Both hostels are fully booked. St Louise's has not any great problems but the passport controversy has caused problems for Fr Ryan because of the involvement by radio and television as well as the police.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

(a) Development of 51/52 Camden Square

Contractors will be on site on 5th May. D Egan has accepted the contract and is co-operating fully with ANCO and is supplying a very good general foreman to supervise. He will rectify faulty work by previous contractors.

Verbal confirmation has been received from the London Borough of Camden that the grant is available. It only requires signature by the Grants Office who is away at present. The contract cannot be signed until written authority is received.

P O'Shea of ANCO has had a lot of problems with the specialists.

Community Industries are clearing out and decorating two rooms on the top floor. They will be used to accommodate ANCO workers who have come over from Ireland. Beds and bedding will be required. Mrs B Shaw will supply the bedding. It is estimated that it will take 21 weeks to refurbish the ground floor which will house the Day Care Centre and the Youth Section. This will account for the grant of £120,000.

(b) Community Services Projects Schedule

They have commenced work on the two rooms for the ANCO workers. Three

were in to-day and the team is scheduled to start work next Tuesday on the outside of the building on Camden Square side. Scaffolding will be required for the top floor. All will be done in the same colour which will be selected in conjunction with the Architect Angela O'Grady. The work to the outside should be completed by the middle of May.

It is also intended to decorate the foyer, entrance and the McNamara Hall. The Douglas Hyde Lounge will be done plus some alterations to incorporate a new lounge to be constructed over the stairwell which is now sealed off. The small bar will then be converted for use as a meeting room. It is hoped to complete this work by Christmas.

(c) Licence McNamara Hall - Music and Dancing

The above licence is due for renewal shortly and we have been advised that there will be objections including Camden Council's Pollution Department. Our solicitor is dealing with the matter on our behalf. Our local Councillor, Sheila Field, will also support us.

(d) Co-Ordinator Community Services Department

The replies received following the advertisement in the 'Guardian' have not revealed any worthwhile candidate. The advertisement has now been given to the 'Irish Post' and the 'Sunday Press'.

(e) Secretarial appointment

Mrs K Leddy has accepted the position.

(f) Episcopal Welfare Conference

Fr Scully and T Dunne will represent us at the above in Dublin in Easter Week.

The Western bishops have produced a Lenten Pastoral on emigration in which they estimate that 50% of 18-25 age bracket will leave Ireland before 1990.

Manpower Services are producing a document to advise prospective emigrants of the problems they will encounter and the preparations they should make.

(g) Federation of Irish Societies Annual Congress

The Congress will take place in Jersey on 2nd May and Fr Scully will represent The Irish Centre.

(h) Council of Irish County Associations

The Executive Committee of the CICA has asked for a meeting with the Administrative Committee to discuss problems and complaints. This was agreed and the date suggested was Sunday 26th April at 3pm.

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(i) Fund-Raising

A meeting of the Committee was held on 12th April. It was decided to repeat the 12 monthly carddraw with the first draw on 1st November. In view of the increased cost of cars it may be necessary to adjust the cash prizes.

It was agreed to repeat the car raffle at the London Irish Festival. Problems over the licence have been resolved.

Other fund-raising ventures planned are:-

(1) Jumble Sale on 25th April.

(2) Race Night on 1st June. This is being organized by the Waterford Association.

Management

There was no report as Mrs D'Arcy was too busy with a function in the McNamara Hall.

Any Other Business

C O'Connell complained about the dress and demeanour of the bar staff particularly as the B & I function. We should insist on staff being properly dressed. They should receive a half-hour's training each week. Unfortunately there was nobody here to train them.

***DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 12TH MAY 1987 ***

As this was the last meeting of the present Committee the Chairman thanked members for their help and support during the year and hoped to see many of them on the incoming Committee.

J. [Signature] 12/5/87