



ERB COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes

Date:

6th December 2007
14.30 – 18.30 hours (local time)

Place:

Gdansk Music and Congress Centre, 1 Ołowianka St

Participants:

ERB BOARD MEMBERS

Johnson, Mr	Bernth	ERB President, Blekinge County
Byczkowski, Mr	Wiesław	On behalf of Mr Jan Kozłowski, Member of the Board, Pomorskie Region
Mincinauskiene, Ms	Raisa	Member of the Board, Klaipeda County
Petersen, Mr	Per Ole	ERB Vice-President, Bornholm
Pluhin, Mr	Mikhail	Member of the Board, Kaliningrad Region

ERB COUNCIL MEMBERS

Batalin, Mr	Boris	ERB Council Member, Kaliningrad
Bolmar, Mr	Ken	ERB Council Member, Bornholm
Frank, Mr	Bo	ERB Council Member, Södra Småland
Gajos, Mr	Robert	ERB Council Member, Blekinge
Gregorev, Mr	Alexander	ERB Council Member, Kaliningrad
Haider, Ms	Monica	ERB Council Member, Södra Småland
Hilmersson, Ms	Marie-Louise	ERB Council Member, Södra Småland
Kaliff, Mr	Roger	ERB Council Member, Kalmar
Koshelev, Mr	Victor	ERB Council Member, Kaliningrad
Lisicki, Mr	Maciej	ERB Council Member, Pomorskie
Lundgren, Mr	Bo	ERB Council Member, Kalmar
Svensson, Ms	Suzanne	ERB Council Member, Blekinge
Zielińska, Ms	Joanna	ERB Council Member, Pomorskie

GUESTS

Abrahamson, Mr	Kjell Albin	Swedish Radio Correspondent in Warsaw
Ahnström, Ms	Eva-Lisa	Europe Direct, Blekinge
Andrzejczyk, Mr	Cezary	Feedback / Hill & Knowlton
Erlandsson, Ms	Ann-Kristin	Blekinge Lanstignet

Cederström, Ms	Anna-Lena	CEO of Region Blekinge Administration
Gustaffson, Mr	Bengt	Region Blekinge Administration Officer
Gyllensting, Mr	Kenneth	Karlskrona Municipality
Hansson, Mr	Niklas	Regional Council in Södra Småland
Jabłoński, Mr	Maciej	ICT Pomerania
Johansson, Mr	Mats	Chair of the Board of Regional Council in Blekinge County
Kömmits, Mr	Urmars	Regional Council in Södra Småland
Koroleva, Ms	Elena	Coordinator at CBC Department, Ministry of Territorial Cooperation, Kaliningrad
Lindén, Mr	Olle	University of Kalmar
Löfberg, Mr	Per Ole	Regional Council in Södra Småland
Müller, Mr	Jens D.	Nord Stream Communications Manager
Wróblewska, Ms	Krystyna	Director of International Cooperation Department at Pomorskie Marshal's Office
Zukiene, Ms	Dalia	Green Wave NGO, Klaipeda County

SECRETARIATS

Andersen, Mr	Niels Chresten	ERB Secretariat, Bornholm
Andersson, Mr	Ulf	ERB Secretariat, Södra Småland
Butorova, Ms	Elena	ERB Secretariat, Baltijsk
Demkowicz-Dobrzański, Mr	Slawomir	International Permanent Secretariat
Fridh, Ms	Marie	ERB Secretariat, Blekinge
Joelsson, Ms	Ulrika	Regional ERB Secretariat in Kalmar County
Johannesson, Ms	Mariana	ERB Secretariat, Södra Småland
Lindencrona, Mr	Per Gudmund	Region Blekinge, Project Coordinator
Liutkute, Ms	Viktorija	Klaipeda County Administration Officer
Olszewski, Mr	Zdzisław	Director of Secretariat of Association of Polish Communes ERB
Romanovski, Mr	Victor	Head of CBC Department, Ministry of Territorial Cooperation, Kaliningrad
Stańczyk, Ms	Kora	International Cooperation Department at Pomorskie Marshal's Office
Szymanowska, Mrs	Magdalena	Secretariat of Association of Polish Communes ERB
Zwolak, Mr	Piotr	Department of European Integration at Warminsko-Mazurskie Marshal's Office

SEAGULL II PERSONNEL

Gulliksson, Mr	Hans	Energy Network Expert
Håkansson, Mr	Hans	Transport Network Leader
Luzin, Mr	Andrey	Seagull 2 Website Administrator, Baltijsk
Zdanova, Mrs	Julia	Seagull 2 Russian Coordinator Assistant
Zdrojewski, Mr	Jacek	Tourism Network Expert

14.00 **Registration**

14.30 **Opening**

Deputy Marshal of Pomorskie Region, Mr Wiesław Byczkowski representing ERB Board member, Mr Jan Kozłowski welcomed the participants to the Council meeting.

ERB President, Mr Bernth Johnson opened the meeting and asked the Council members to approve of the proposed agenda.

The Council members accepted the agenda with no changes.

14.40 **ERB Internal Matters**

- The minutes of the previous Council meeting which took place on 14th March 2007 in Karlskrona were signed by ERB President, Mr Bernth Johnson and ERB Vice-President, Mr Per Ole Petersen.
- ERB President, Mr Bernth Johnson and ERB Vice-President, Mr Per Ole Petersen were appointed to co-sign minutes of this Council meeting.

14:50 **Status of the ERB Strategy 2007-2008**

ERB President, Mr Bernth Johnson and ERB Vice-President, Mr Per Ole Petersen presented a status report of the 2007-2008 ERB Strategy giving an account of the activities conducted between March and December 2007 which relate to the five objectives of the 2007-2008 ERB Strategy.

Questions followed from Mr Kjell Albin Abrahamson, correspondent of the Swedish Radio in Warsaw:

Why is there so much optimism in Euroregion Baltic?

Mr Bernth Johnson pointed out that the new financial perspective in the European Union brings new funds to sustain the cooperation within Euroregion Baltic. In addition, the Baltic Sea Region will become a new priority in its own right with the Swedish presidency in the EU.

Mr Per Ole Petersen observed that the cooperation within Euroregion Baltic is a win-win situation benefiting all the regions involved and contributing to the good neighbourly relations among them.

Ms Krystyna Wróblewska based her optimism on the experience of the ten years since 1998 and successes achieved during the time, e.g. managing to convince the European Commission to change their approach to 2007 - 2013 CBC programmes and establish the South Baltic CBC Programme.

Mr Victor Koshelev was of the opinion that optimism is a result of such joint achievements as the Joint Development Programme and outputs of common transport projects recommending new transport routes in the Baltic Sea Region.

Mr Zdzisław Olszewski stated we can be optimistic because ERB invests in the future. One such investment is the establishment of the ERB Youth Board and the inclusion of young people into the ERB decision-making structure that the Council is about to sanction today.

Which year was the most crucial in the ERB history?

Ms Krystyna Wróblewska said the most important moment in the ERB history came in 2001 with the realisation that we needed a joint development strategy instead of a series of loosely connected projects.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen referred to two more events in the ERB history: the inclusion of the Russian partners in the cooperation (Euroregion Baltic was the first CBC structure to formally comprise a Russian entity) and the establishment of the joint secretariat.

What ERB mistakes can be a lesson for other Euroregions?

Mr Zdzisław Olszewski said success has many fathers while failures usually have none. Still, he saw the ERB information policy insufficient in reaching the local governments and communities.

Ms Krystyna Wróblewska agreed though she considered it room for improvement rather than a failure. Euroregion, she stressed, definitely needs to popularise its activities.

Mr Roger Kaliff concluded by saying that Euroregion Baltic introduces a new dimension into European integration, that of the people-to-people character. Euroregion is important for the local government too, not only by enabling the exchange of experience with others but also because it means money that is of use for such an exchange.

15:20

Changes in the ERB Statutes

Following the debates within ERB and internally, the Council members were requested to approve of the changes proposed to the attached Statutes, including:

- changes to §5.3 and §8.1, allowing the regionalisation of ERB Board;
- changes to §4.1.3, §5.1.7, §6.1, §8.2.3, §9 and §13.2, allowing the establishment of the ERB Youth Board;
- changes to §8.2.3, §10.2, §10.3, §10.5 and §13.2, allowing the transition of the Seagull II reference networks into ERB Working Groups.

The Council members agreed to approve of the changes providing for the establishment of the ERB Youth Board and the transition of the Seagull II reference networks into ERB Working Groups.

During the discussion on the regionalisation of the ERB Board, Mr Ken Bolmar of the Danish delegation proposed a new phrasing of §8.1 specifying that Board decisions should only be valid when more than 50% of the Board members from at least three countries are present.

The Swedish delegation asked to see the new §8.1 in writing since it had not been presented to anyone before. The Polish delegation expressed its approval of the Danish proposal. The Lithuanian and Russian delegations did not agree to have the new §8.1 approved and explained internal consultation was necessary before any formal decisions. Under the circumstances the Council agreed to postpone their decision on the regionalisation of the ERB Board until the next meeting on 22nd February 2008.

15:30 **2008 ERB Budget**

Following the debates within ERB and internally, the Council was request to approve of the 2007 actual and 2008 planned budgets as presented by Mr Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański of the International Permanent Secretariat.

The Council members agreed to approve both the actual 2007 and planned 2008 budgets.

15:40 **Amber Route Resolution**

Following the continuous involvement of Euroregion Baltic in support offered to joint transport projects around its territory, the Council was asked to approve of the resolution in support of the Amber Route recognised as the Council of Europe Major Cultural Route, as requested by the Amber Road Cities Association and presented by Ms Joanna Zielińska.

The Council members agreed to approve of the resolution.

16.00 **Information Round**

- Baltic Link

Mr Per Ole Ljöberg from Växjö informed the Council on the outcome of the Baltic Link project and further plans to follow up on its results.

- Baltic Master report,

Mr PG Lindencrona from the ERB Secretariat in Blekinge informed the Council that the Baltic Master project had been announced the best European maritime project in the competition for the European Regional Champion Award. Behind the award stands the EU Committee of Regions (whose members vote for the nominated candidates) and the magazine Regional Review. The purpose of the award is to highlight innovations and good examples from regional level in the EU member countries.

- Baltic Gateway

Mr Bengt Gustafsson from Karlskrona informed the Council on the outcome of the Baltic Link project and further plans to follow up on its results.

- celebrative events in 2008,

Mr Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański presented an outline of events in the coming twelve months which, apart from the already planned Council and Board meetings included: *We Are from the Sea Arts Competition* in May 2008, *Baltic Festival* in Karlshamn between 17 and 19 July 2008, and a *Hockey Tournament* in January 2009.

Mr Zdzisław Olszewski took the floor and on behalf of the Mayor of Elbląg, Mr Henryk Słonina invited the Council to convene their meeting on 22nd February 2008 in Elbląg.

Mr Ulf Andersson said it was important to react to Mr Olszewski's proposal and supported the idea to move the next Council meeting from Malbork to Elblag.

At that moment the agenda was completed and ERB President Bernth Johnson closed the official part of the meeting.

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Mr Bernth Johnson
ERB President

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Mr Per Ole Petersen
ERB Vice-President