



ERB BOARD MEETING

Minutes

Klaipeda, 22nd July 2005
09.00 – 12.30 hours local time

Meeting Place:

Baltpark Hotel, Klaipeda, Minijos St. 119

Participants:

Members of ERB Board

Ms Annelise Molin, ERB Board Member, Denmark
Mr Bo Frank, ERB Board Member, Sweden
Mr Jan Kozłowski, ERB Board Member, Poland
Mr Alexander Kuzniecov, ERB Vice-President, ERB Board Member, Russia
Mr Zigo Rutkovskis, ERB Board Member, Latvia

Secretariats

Ms Elena Butorova, ERB Council Member, ERB Secretariat, Russia
Ms Dalia Makuskiene, ERB Council Member, ERB Secretariat, Lithuania
Ms Magdalena Szymanowska, ERB Secretariat, Poland
Ms Krystyna Wróblewska, Pomorskie Marshal's Office, Poland
Mr Niels Ch. Andersen, ERB Secretariat, Denmark
Mr Ulf Andersson, ERB Secretariat, Sweden
Mr Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski, ERB IPS Secretariat
Mr Victor Koshelev, ERB Council Member, ERB Secretariat, Russia

1. Opening and welcome

Due to the President's illness the meeting was opened by ERB Vice-President, Mr Alexander Kuzniecov. On behalf of everybody present he wished the President a quick recovery and continued to chair the meeting by presenting the agenda.

2. Board internal matters:

2.1 Approving the agenda.

Mr Bo Frank requested information on the status of two ERB projects: ERB Youth Games and ERB Youth Project, to be delivered by the International Secretariat under point 7 of this agenda. No further changes were recommended to the agenda.

2.2 Signing the Minutes from the Board meeting on 11th May 2005.

The Minutes were signed by ERB Board Member, Ms Annelise Molin. ERB President Irina Rozova will co-sign them at a later time.

2.3 Appointing Board members to co-sign the minutes from the Board meeting on 22nd July 2005.

ERB Vice-President, Mr Alexander Kuzniecov and ERB Board Member, Mr Bo Frank were appointed to co-sign the minutes.

2.4 Information from the Latvian Secretariat on the decision by the Kurzeme Development Council to appoint its representative to the ERB Executive Board in 2005.

On 21st June 2005 the Kurzeme Development Council had its first meeting after the municipal election held in Latvia earlier this year. One of the issues debated on was the decision concerning Latvian participation in the ERB cooperation. Mr Zigo Rutkovskis informed the Board that the Council had decided to continue its membership in the ERB cooperation until the end of 2005 and to consider the issue once more in 2006. The Board members welcomed the Latvian decision. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański asked if in such a case it can be expected that the Latvian fee into IPS will also be covered. Mr Z. Rutkovskis responded the fee will be paid following the reception of an official request from IPS. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański also inquired who the Kurzeme Council had nominated as their representative into the Board. Mr Z. Rutkovskis said it was him the Council appointed as the Latvian Board member. The Board took note of the information. Mr Ulf Andersson commented that he did welcome the Latvian decision but would still stress the need for involvement of Latvian politicians in the cooperation.

2.5 Information from the Polish Secretariat on its representative to the ERB Executive Board in 2005.

In accordance with the decision made at the meeting of the Board of the Association of Polish Communes on 17th June 2005, Mr Jan Kozłowski was unanimously elected Polish Board member in the ERB Executive Board. The Board took note of the information and congratulated Mr Kozłowski.

2.6 Approving the new date for the joint ERB Council and Board meeting to be held in Klaipeda.

Following the consultation among the ERB National Secretariats the Board discussed a new date for the joint Council and ERB meeting to take place in Klaipeda in

November 2005. The previous date seemed too early for all the member regions to work out their official position towards the approval of the final draft of the Joint Transnational Development Programme. A number of dates were proposed: 18th, 28th, or 29th but the Board members were ready to accept by consensus the two days at the end of November. The meeting will be a major event for ERB in the second half of 2005 when the final draft of the Joint Transnational Development Programme is approved by the Council and the Seagull 2 kick-off conference is convened.

3. Debate with the aim of adopting ERB positions concerning the ongoing debate on the future territorial cooperation instruments.

3.1 Discussion on a proposal to change the budget allocation between the crossborder and transnational components of Objective 3 within the new Cohesion Fund 2007 - 2013

The ERB partner in Kalmar expressed their concern about the latest proposal for budget allocation between the objectives for European territorial co-operation, where only 21% are to be allocated for transnational co-operation. The original proposal offered a sound balance between cross-border and transnational co-operation elements. The offer was largely recommended upon German initiative, and so far it has not been protested by other EU member states except for Sweden.

The Board began a debate on whether the issue requires any special steps to be taken by Euroregion Baltic. Ms Krystyna Wróblewska noted that whatever steps will be decided on, ERB must consider differences between the regional and national interests. The geographical eligibility for the Baltic Sea Region as proposed now excludes most of Poland from the future programme, which naturally is not what the Polish government would favour but acceptable from our regional Baltic perspective. Mr Ulf Andersson agreed pointing out it would be difficult to get the Swedish politicians to act with respect to the eligibility of the future Baltic programme as it in fact responds to what the Swedish government expected. Ms Krystyna Wróblewska suggested we might focus our comments on the proposed priorities and limit an ERB position to just what areas of cooperation we think should be included in the Baltic programme. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański offered that IPS will then prepare a draft document with such comments and send it to the National Secretariats for further discussions. The Board accepted the proposal and agreed that the National Secretariats will work more on the issue.

3.2 Adoption of the ERB Position Paper on the EU Draft Regulation establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument

Following the Board's decision to adopt the common position towards the proposed ENPI, a draft position was discussed in the member regions. Amendments had been added and the new text was presented for approval. The Board members accepted the final text and informed how their regions will continue with the signing procedure. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański said that four signatures were already placed on the document by two Polish Marshals: Mr Jan Kozłowski of Pomorskie and Mr Andrzej Ryński of Warmińsko-Mazurskie, by the Chairman of the Association of Polish Communes, Mr Zbigniew Karpowicz, and by the Chairman of Kronoberg's Association of Communes and County Council, Mr Carl-Olof Bengtsson.

Ms Annelise Molin communicated that Bornholm will sign the paper after their Mayor is back from holiday on 8th August. Mr Ulf Andersson informed that the two remaining Swedish regions of Kalmar and Blekinge should be ready to sign at the beginning of August. Mr Alexander Kuznecov said the documents had been submitted to the office of Kaliningrad Oblast Governor, Mr Vladimir Egorov, and were just being processed by the relevant departments. He also said that he was quite positive about the Governor signing the position (the originals of the position to be signed were taken to Kaliningrad by the Russian delegation after the Board meeting). Ms Dalia Makuskiene stated that the Governor of Klaipeda, Ms Virginia Lukosiene, will be able

to sign the document later that day (which she did after the ceremony of the Klaipeda County's 10th Anniversary). Mr Zigo Rutkovskis informed that the Kurzeme Council had already expressed their support to the initiative and the document can be signed after their Chairman is back from holiday on 15th August. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański stated that the International Secretariat will then assure a smooth transition of the originals to be signed so that the national lobbying activities will start immediately after the 15th August. He also said he will be asking the National Secretariats to deliver translation of the position into native languages (Danish, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Swedish – English, Polish, and Russian versions are ready), and of a cover letter that will accompany the position (also prepared by IPS in English, Polish and Russian). Then, he asked the Board to confirm the lobbying procedure adopted at the meeting on 11th May and decide on the set-up of an ERB delegation to Brussels in week 38 or 39 in September. The Board confirmed that lobbying should follow the schedule already accepted and opened a discussion on the Brussels delegation. Mr Ulf Andersson proposed that the delegation is composed of the President and Vice-President, IPS, and three more national representatives from the remaining ERB member countries, travelling at their own cost. Mr Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski said that upon the Board's decision the key delegates could be financed by IPS. Mr Niels Ch. Andersen supported the proposal and suggested that each National Secretariat will inform IPS who their representative to the delegation will be. IPS will then be responsible for arranging the visit to Brussels. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański stated that the position sent to the EU institutions will be accompanied by a cover letter requesting a meeting in Brussels. Following responses from these institutions an itinerary of meetings will be made and distributed among the members of the delegation. Also, necessary invitations (e.g. in the case of our Russian partner) will be sent out. The Board accepted the above mentioned activities.

4. Information from ERB IPS.

4.1 Interim Financial Report

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański presented the financial report from the International Secretariat on the period between 1st January and 30th June, 2005 (see Attachment 1). He also informed the Board that in July, which is not included in the report, the Lithuanian Party transferred the money into the Secretariat, and the refund of the Seed Money Seagull II expenditure was made. Mr Alexander Kuznieciov said the Russian Party will pay out their contribution and Ms Krystyna Wróblewska stated that the Board of the Pomorskie Region had just effected their transfer so the money was on the way. The Board took note of the report without any further comments.

4.2 Proposed schedule for activities within the Seagull II Project.

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański informed the Board that the Seagull 2 Project was approved, subject to condition that some extra information is provided by the Project Leader until 15st August. He will be responsible for delivering the requested clarification, which is being prepared in cooperation with the other project staff. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski also said that one of the requests from the Programme Secretariat was to include all of the ERB partners in the project. The information he then had was that the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region will sign their partnership statement on 9th August. He added that the invitation was passed on to the Secretariat in Baltijsk with the request to deliver them to the Kaliningrad Oblast Administration. Mr Victor Koshelev said the papers are now in Kaliningrad, awaiting the Governor's signature. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański asked Mr Zigo Rutkovskis about possible Latvian participation in the project. He added that he had already contacted the Latvian Secretariat, offering to come to a Kurzeme Council meeting to discuss the project if necessary. He also said there are two possibilities for the Latvian partner: full participation with a financial declaration, and silent with just a letter of intent. Mr

Zigo Rutkovskis stated that he will try to contact all the Kurzeme Council members by email but thinks it more feasible that the letter of intent will be signed by Kurzeme. Mr Niels Ch. Andersen reacted that it is of extreme importance that the Latvian partner participates fully as only in such a case they will be eligible to benefit from the project. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański supported Mr Andersen, saying there is more to gain for Kurzeme than to deliver. Mr Zigo Rutkovskis responded that he will inform the Kurzeme Council members of the three possibilities regarding the Seagull II project: full participation, silent participation or no participation at all.

Afterwards, Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański requested that the Board accepts to take on its new role of the Project Steering Committee. Mr Alexander Kuzniecov asked what new responsibilities will result from this new function. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański responded that the Board, acting as the Steering Committee, will take an overall control of the project. The reason behind the proposal was also of financial character, as it will enable to save money on the project coordination (no extra people or meetings involved). Mr Niels Ch. Andersen added that there is also a logical reason behind the solution: ERB is building its institutional capacities and it would be quite strange if a newly established body, outside already existing structures, took the steering function of the project. The Board then agreed to act as the Steering Committee for Seagull II.

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański also presented a proposed schedule for the activities to be taken in the first Milestone, the most important being:

- the meeting of all project staff in Elbląg in September,
- identification of reference networks by Work package 1 in October,
- the kick-off conference in Klaipeda in November by Work package 3,
- selection of the e-facility in December by Work Package 2.

The Board approved the schedule.

5. A draft of the first issue of the ERB international newsletter.

Following the Board's decision to launch the newsletter the International Secretariat presented the first issue of the newsletter, which was created in a collaborative effort of the National Secretariats. The Board, who had agreed to act as the newsletter's Editors' Board, approved the proposed contents and allowed it to be printed and distributed in August 2005.

A short discussion followed on the quantitative distribution of the newsletter among the partners. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański informed that the paper version of the newsletter will be printed in 2,000 copies and asked according to which criteria these 2,000 copies should be distributed. Ms Krystyna Wróblewska suggested that each region should receive a fixed number of copies, e.g. one hundred each on regular basis and then be given extra copies depending on their special needs. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański reminded that some copies of the newsletter will also have to be sent to the EU institutions. Mr Niels Ch. Andersen commented that the addressees in Brussels must be real people, not just institutions; otherwise our newsletter will end up in a bin. Mr Alexander Kuzniecov proposed that each ERB member region should receive 150 copies, and then apply for more if needed. The International Secretariat will on its part find out which people to reach in Brussels how many copies should be reserved for them. The Board agreed and accepted this proposal.

6. Information on the current status of the ongoing projects in Euroregion Baltic.

6.1 Second Draft of the Joint Transnational Development Programme

Mr Ulf Andersson provided updated information on the evaluation process of the Second Draft of the Joint Transnational Development Programme, including a short review of the comments sent to the Project management. He informed the Board that the Latvian partner had not submitted any comments and the Lithuanian partner had

expressed them only verbally at the Steering Committee meeting on 26th May. Mr Zigo Rukoviskis insisted that the written comments from Kurzeme had been sent in and Mr Ulf Andersson said he would investigate it. Then, he went on to present a new structure of the strategy with three separate documents:

- 1) general strategy with four focus areas of economic growth, social growth including health and culture, infrastructure and transport, environment and energy,*
- 2) list of concrete actions to be taken and possible ways of financing them,*
- 3) background information and statistics.*

Mr Ulf Andersson announced that around 15th September the final draft of the Joint Transnational Development Programme will be sent to the Seagull Steering Committee, which will then decide whether to approve it at its meeting in Karlskrona on 20th September. The Board took note of the information presented by Mr Ulf Andersson.

6.2 Seagull Work Package 2 Water Forum kick-off conference

Upon WP 2 Leader, Ms Carolina Gunnarsson's request, Ulf Andersson announced a conference to be held in Klaipeda on 6th October, 2005 in cooperation with the international Lagoon Conference 2005 in order to discuss the formation of a Water Forum with the objective of making ERB a pilot area for transnational and cross-border cooperation and implementation of modern methods for water management.

6.3 Seagull Work Package 4 event in Bartoszyce

Mr Ulf Andersson provided information on the event, which will be organised by the Seagull Work Package 2 in Bartoszyce, Poland. The meeting will take place between 19th and 20th August and include workshops dealing with the question of rural development, as well as cultural and culinary activities. The Board took note of the information.

6.4 Danish-led Tourism project

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen briefly informed about the Tourism project. Its first seminar was held on Bornholm between 17th and 20th May 2005, with participants from all regions except Kronoberg and also with no official representatives from Bornholm or Warmia & Mazury. The second and final seminar will be in Elblag between 31st August and 1st September, and before that the participants in each region are expected to have a short follow up seminar discussing some agreed questions. Summary from these seminars should be sent to the Research Centre on Bornholm not later than 20 August. The major topics in the project are the organisation structure of a Tourism Development Working Group (TDWG) and 5 agreed priorities for further discussion:

- 1) Tourism research and market research network*
- 2) Common transregional product development*
- 3) Tourism institutional network including exchange of information*
- 4) Sustainable tourism education and training*
- 5) Sustainable tourism strategy including ecological, social and economical perspectives.*

The Board took note of the information provided.

7. **Any other business**

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański informed the Board about the current status of two ERB projects. The Youth project involving about 150 young people aged 15 – 21 living in the Baltic Sea Region is just completing its main activity, i.e. a film made in a joint effort by all partners

in the project, showing everyday life of the youth in the context of the integration process in Europe. The film is supposed to be of educational character. Made by the young and for the young it will aim at presenting in an interesting way how their peers in other countries live, what their history, traditions and culture are. The other project: ERB Youth Games, took place in Starogard Gdanski in Poland between 24 and 26 June. More than 400 sports youth, both boys and girls from around the Baltic Sea competed in boxing, basketball, volleyball, and football. Boxing matches involved young boys in a number of weight categories, up to 64 kilograms, with most fights won by Polish and Russian contenders. The home team of Starogard won the boys' basketball tournament, and the outstanding Swedish team beat all their rivals in the girls' competition. Volleyball proved a Polish specialty. The boys' team from Malbork and the girls' team from Kwidzyn scored better than their opponents from Kaliningrad and Klaipeda. Football games were played in two groups. The winners in each group: Lithuanian team from Klaipeda and Polish line-up from Tczew had their showdown on the last day of the Games. After the exciting ninety minutes of matching performance from both teams, Tczew managed to score three goals as opposed to two delivered by Klaipeda.

At this point ERB Vice-President, Mr Alexander Kuzniecov thanked all the participants for their attendance and closed the meeting.

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Alexnader Kuzniecov
ERB Vice-President

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Bo Frank
ERB Board Member