

Minutes of the BV GA 2013

People present

Moderator: Thorgal67

Minutes take by: duesseldorf

Present in Fürth: duesseldorf, claudiaab, thorgal67, sitatara, shevek, jeanyves, lvers0n, wind, polyglot, planetcruiser, leopoldR, chmac

Actively present online: crumbking, leoalone, jilrev, tsjoek, ppec, natalia_sevilla, templanza, matthias, guaka, platschi, fhina, girandoliere, mikael, lantti, railslide, sitarane, pablobd, mahouni200000

Saturday, 2nd November 2013

- **10h00 Annual Report 2012-2013**

We reviewed the annual report: http://www.bevolunteer.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Annual_report_2012-2013.pdf

Finances: It was very visible that when the donation bar was not on the front page the donations decreased.

Support Team: 15 members/ 9 active ones. ORTS regularly breaks down so the Support Team ask for a new server. There is also the need for some new Support team volunteers for Turkish, Spanish, Russian

Software Development and testing: There have been more than 250 bug fixes and feature improvements in the past year (report says 230, but 20 between writing the report and the date of the GA). Currently 4 active coders working on Rox and 3 or 4 coders are working on Welen. The website <http://dev.welen.org/> shows the most recent work on Welen.

Safety Team: All 4 serious cases where members have been banned were cases where the members have been kicked out from other hospitality networks and then signed into BW and have been reported.

The discussion on the GA suggested introducing a neutral Ombudsman who is neither member of the Safety nor the Forum Moderators team to moderate disputes between members and the team. One suggestion was that the Ombudsman could be not a member of the BoD but elected by the BW community, but must be a member of BV.

- **11h00 Financial Report 2012-2013**

We reviewed the financial report for 2012-2013: <http://www.bevolunteer.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/BV-Finances-2012-2013.pdf>

When the report was finished on 23.10.2013 we had a bank balance of 5030,83 €.+ 720,22 € on paypal.

The income comes solely from donations. Main expense is server costs. This year it was possible to create an emergency fund of 1300 €.

Until today there are no applications for the BeActive Campaign. If the money is not used within the next year, the BoD can decide whether it will go into the next BeActive campaign, or into the general budget.

- **11h30 Permanent Funding Channels**

There were suggestions to permanently put the donation bar on the main page. Discussion was about why this should be done, because BeVolunteer/BeWelcome currently does not need more money as there are only low costs. On the other hand it makes sense to let the people know that BeWelcome is free to use but not free to run. It was agreed that the current "Wikipedia"-approach is okay for now, as there are no more expenses to cover. Still members need to know that they can donate also in between donation campaigns. The information how to donate needs to be accessible at all times and could be a bit more visible. The GA suggests that the Communication Team find a solution by renaming the side menu entry 'help the project' in a way that clearly indicates it is about donation as well as volunteering.

- **12h00 Break for lunch**

- **13h00 Being ready for higher numbers**

What would happen if tomorrow there was a huge influx of members on BW? Are we prepared for that? What would be the necessary actions to prepare for this? If a few thousand new members sign up every day, the server would slow down or even crash. Moving the database to a new third server would speed up the process. It would take something between a few hours and one or two days for a new server to be available and set up. We have sufficient cash at the moment to immediately get a new server. There is a second server in the budget right now. Do we need a financial plan for a third server? The consensus was at that time: no need at the moment to add a third server in the budget. In order not to depend on different providers, we should move everything under our own control.

An increase in the number of members is not only about servers. We would also need an emergency plan on how to handle this increase, for example by authorizing someone to

spontaneously get a new server. The BoD should set up an emergency plan (what do we need, who do we give powers to).

We are short on SysAdmins so we should postpone the third server as long as possible. If the number of members increases we need more volunteers.

Support team: If the growth is slow and steady, the volunteer teams will probably grow at a similar pace.

Currently the FAQs are not easily visible. We should place them more prominently and point out that there are indeed 6 pages of FAQs. A second email could be sent out after the confirmation message with information on how to use the website, links to FAQs etc. This could reduce the workload of the Support Team. Also an active New Member Welcome Team might help to answer questions. There needs to be a search for keywords on the website (e.g. for finding the FAQs).

Other teams like Safety or Forum Moderation might not be able to handle a sudden increase of members and of complaints.

If the workload increases like predicted, there might be the need of several more teams (e.g. spam check) or additional tools like an 'activities check'. On top of creating more groups and looking for more volunteers, we should also think about technical solutions like self-moderation by the members by flagging posts and hiding reported posts etc. This is a task for programmers. With automatic responses we need to make sure our members receive feedback about their reports. If there are automatic self-regulation systems, there should always be the possibility of appeal to an Ombudsman or the BoD (e.g. to prevent mobbing).

BW needs a legal disclaimer that we are not responsible for any activities organized through the BW website. BW is not responsible for activities even if they are sponsored by the community - this should be pointed out very clearly.

The Communication Team need to think about preparing official statements to the media. At the moment, the questions we receive from journalists are about BW politics and show that journalists realize what the "niche" is of BW (open-source, transparent...an alternative to other hospex sites).

- **14h00 Discussion about the Terms of Use (ToU)**

http://www.bewelcome.org/wiki/Terms_of_Use_-_Final_Draft

Discussions about

1. Membership: The suggested wording about silent, active and inactive membership is a bit vague so that it leaves room for future evaluation. There should be a limit to change the status to silent membership (e.g. every 30 days) because stalkers could use their profile and immediately hide afterwards to prevent reactions, write negative comments and hide immediately afterwards not to receive a reciprocal negative comment. There should be a message explaining "if you set your status on active now, please take into account that you are only able to switch it back to inactive/silent after 30 days".

Change: "the profile WILL not be listed" to "MAY not be listed".

2. Conduct: The current procedure is: if mandatory data is not correct we always ask the members to correct the data themselves. If they don't react or don't comply we ask for a proof of their ID. Only if a member does not comply, we will ban the profile. The member always has the possibility to appeal to the BoD or the Ombudsman.

Adding the "willingly" is not needed in our current process. Volunteers will never have the chance to prove the intention of the member.

4i: we stick to the suggested wording.

4l: publish inappropriate content: too wide in a list of examples. We are sure that "covering our ass" by such wording is not necessary because it is covered in section 6.

4e: traumatizing: the word is very vague and leaves too much room for interpretation.

Change it to "... that glorifies violence or harm against self or others".

5. Content: The suggestion of polyglot is accepted.

Deletion of content: This whole paragraph makes no sense with wrong references and technical impossibilities behind it (e.g. technically not possible to immediately delete all the content).

Discussion about deleting all forum post after the deletion of the profile. At this moment there was no consensus, so it was decided to postpone it till the next day so that a working group could rephrase this paragraph.

6. Cancellation of membership: If there has been a dispute between members or some sort of abuse and a volunteer saved information about it, do we keep the data of that member if the member leaves BW? In case of serious problems the data should be saved longer than in case of minor issues. This is not a question about changing the ToU but the safety team should come up with a suggestion (what tools are needed to mark something as minor or serious).

6f. might be included in 6e.

9. Litigation: The suggested wording by polyglot is agreed upon. What happens with forum posts and comments by a member who leaves? A solution was provided the next day.

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- **16h15 Organizing a 3-month long BW working event**

Suggested by Templanza and Natalia_Sevilla.

Such an event would be very welcome and positive, boost the community feeling and at the same time get work done.

However, such an event comes a little bit early in the history of BW and maybe the proposed period is too long - shortening the time frame could be an option. It might take place around the anniversary of the Monnai camp that gave birth to the whole camp "movement" in the hospex world.

At the moment we need more time working in the groups, installing processes, guidelines...

Such an event does not make sense if the currently active volunteers are not involved.

Would the current volunteers who know the procedures in place have time to attend?

That's an important question.

One possible goal for such an event could be to create some audio-visual material for BeWelcome. There could be a donation campaign (maybe a Kickstarter) or the donation bar on BW - not using the money on BV account. This could be decided by the BoD once a budget and a description and goals of the project are presented.

A group on BW will be created to define the goals, budget and preparations for such an event. The group should also suggest which tasks could be handled. The present suggestions are not precise enough for the GA to decide. The new BoD should try to decide about it once the project has more structure.

- **17h00 Expanding Emergency fund + Increase Be Active campaign**

Emergency fund:

It was suggested to add each year's surplus automatically to the emergency fund. If there is a real emergency and we need to hire a SysAdmin then 1300 € are not that much.

The GA agreed to add the current surplus of 500 € to the emergency fund this year but not add every year's surplus automatically.

BeActive campaign:

There are no applications so far. Before raising the BeActive budget for next year, we should review the current campaign once we have received applications.

Before eventually raising the amount we should also consider to change the rules of applications like adding rental costs for accommodation for the next year. It makes sense not to limit the amount to 40%. Right now paying for accommodation for hackathons where really important work for BW is done, is not possible. At the same time we want to make sure not to sponsor accommodation for a fun party event. There should be a report created by the organizers as some form of quality control - simply sending the invoice to be reimbursed is not enough.

The GA participants agree that there is no need to raise the amount for the next BeActive campaign right now. The BoD can raise it after a review of the current campaign (as long as all costs can be covered by a separate donation campaign. No regular donations should be used for the support of activities.)

The BoD can also suggest new rules for the BeActive campaign after a review of the current campaign.

- **17h45 Monnai camp anniversary**

Guaka suggests organizing a huge camp with up to 500 participants in a rural place near Limoges called Bourganeuf. The idea is to do it exactly 10 years after Monnai, around 14th of July, the French national holiday. Sounds good to the participants of the GA.

- **18h00 End of day one**

(But discussions about ToU continued until 19h00)

Sunday, 3rd November 2013

- **12h00 Securing a better & bigger volunteer base**

Suggestion is to re-write the get-active page and everybody present agreed. We need a better description about what tasks a volunteer can do in the team. By not offering this we lose a lot of motivation for members becoming active as volunteers. There is the suggestion to feature one team per NewsLetter, for example presenting a "normal" work day or average tasks to make the work known. We should introduce a "job board" if a team is looking for new members. A page could be set up to make the volunteers more visible - a list of all teams and their members with links to their profiles. Such a page should always be kept up-to-date which is another task for the team coordinators. Additionally there should be a volunteer coordinator, who could take on this task among others. It was suggested that a member of the new BoD could be responsible for this.

There should also be more feedback to "old" volunteers, to say "thank you", since it can sometimes be quite frustrating working for BW. For the developers and the testing team there is always a thank you note in the release message (community news). We could also show appreciation in posts on the website or in newsletters. It makes the active people more visible and it is a recognition. It might also motivate members who are thinking of becoming active volunteers to have a look at the other team members they will be working with.

There was the suggestion to work with titles, badges, icons and similar "tokens" but that was almost unanimously rejected.

There could be some sort of an organogram on the website to help members find their way in our organization.

- **13h00 Changes to the Statutes**

There was a suggestion that all members of BW should be able to vote at the GA and not only the BV members. There was also the question whether the three months' waiting period is not too long or less democratic. The current statutes don't allow changing this for this GA because we would first have to go through the legal process of changing the statutes. BW is right now the only activity of BV, but this might change in the future. Allowing all BW members to vote at the GA would give those members a power which surpasses the BW limits. It was agreed not to change the statutes but discuss the membership conditions in the Rules and Regulations.

There is no mentioning of the cancellation of membership in the statutes. Should we change the statutes to define the termination of membership? For example, when somebody dies without our knowledge, right now this person stays a member of BV. As there is the extraordinary termination of membership the BoD can always do this on each individual case. We don't see the need for any change right now.

- **13h30 Terms of Use**

Continuation of the discussion from yesterday.

6: There is a section that seems repetitive with 5. Those sentences were removed.

5. We don't include explicitly what will happen with forum posts. We intend to anonymise them.

There is a discussion about how the new ToU are going to be announced and if members have to accept them actively or are only informed and "passively" accept them by continuing to use the website. The majority of the GA participants decided that the new BoD will have to decide on how the members will be informed and/or if they actively have to accept the new ToU to be able to use the BW website.

- **14h00 Budget 2013-2014 + need for Extraordinary GA**

The budget for 2013-2014 is discussed: http://www.bewelcome.org/wiki/Budget_2013-2014

Server costs: Renting a mail server is suggested instead of setting up our own mail server because this requires a lot of work by volunteers.

Currently OTRS and lots of dev tools etc. are hosted on the same server which the tech team suggests to move to two servers. A third server for testing Welen and not to mix it up with the servers running BW. The discussion is about do we need three servers - decision is that we budget all three. It was agreed upon that this does not mean we have to get a third server.

Domains: Discussion about whether to register and host welen.org on BV. Suggestion to register the main BW and BV domains for as long as possible = 10 years. The risk is to forget the need to re-register after such a long time. It was agreed upon to raise the sum for domains to 200 € to be able to register both domains for 10 years (assuming that a domain registration is 10 € per year).

Bank fees: no discussion

Support to local events: There can always be another BeActive campaign if some local activities come up and we want to fund them. There is no need to raise the budget.

Lawyer fees: We would like to have a lawyer look over the privacy policy within the next year. We will not get the same cheap price for the next task. To be on the safe side the budget was raised to 800 €.

Revenues BeActive campaign: If the money raised in 2013 is not spent, we will have to raise less in 2014.

- **14h30 Hold an extraordinary GA within 90 days to decide on the budget for the suggested 3 months event**

As the BoD was empowered to decide on this, there is no need to plan that right now. The BoD can call for an extraordinary GA any time.

- **14h35 Suggestions for changes in the Decision Making Process**

If we follow the current process, only the option with the highest "score" gets implemented and all others are dropped even if other options have received a positive score as well and could be combined with the best option.

Example: There are 10 options. 7 get the median "bad", 2 get "good" and one gets "excellent". The 2 good ones could be implemented alongside the "excellent" one but in the current process should be discarded. Our question now is: Is it ok to implement those two also? Decision is to take all the options which are not mutually exclusive and not only the first and most highly rated one.

- **15h00 Focus on Welen/Mobile site for one year**

Intense discussion about what Welen really means for BW/BV, how that open source software development project is linked to BW, how to improve the dialogue between Welen and the BW leadership. We offer more support for them, get more dev volunteers because some of our 50.000 members will be symfony programmers who probably would be happy to contribute. We might then be able to support hackathons financially. The new BoD will establish closer contact with the Welen team. The BoD will look for a "bridge person" between BoD and the Welen dev team. Haiku is the contact person for Welen.

API: Should be part of the Welen project. A responsive web design (that adapts to different sizes of screens) is what we need right now.

Terms of use are missing for an API, which could hold up deployment of an API.

Agreed to focus on responsive web design for Rox and leave API to Welen.

- **15h40 Questions for BoD candidates**

Question 1) Who would go for treasurer? Claudiaab, wind, sitatara and guaka did not rule it out since being a treasurer is not a full time job and two people can take it over.

Question 2) Who is willing to commit for regular online meetings (once per month is currently required in the rules and regulations)? All accept the need for this. chmac added that he would like to introduce office hours for the BoD.

The suggestion that the BoD publish a short notification after every meeting including a link to the meeting report to inform the community found agreement.

Question 3) Who is in favour for receiving bitcoins? Sitatara and claudiaab have no strong opinion on the issue, planetcruiser and chmac are in favour, wind is undecided, Pablo is not in favour or does not see the benefit. Guaka is very much in favour and would be willing to implement it.

Question 4) Where do you see BW in five years?

- Wind: A non-profit project is the most important, stable activity inside the community so that we don't need disappointed members from other networks.

- Claudiaab: agrees with wind and is positive about current growth rate, hopes that more families will participate
- Planetcruiser: Sees BW in five years still as a non-profit, strengthened. It will have an exemplary role. In five years we will be running on a new software for four years already ;)
- pablobd: wants to see BW keep the quality over quantity approach, and with a more diverse member base in all continents.
- Sitatara: a new website, more modern, transparent, non-profit, better volunteering structure, bigger membership base well distributed around the world, easier to find hosts
- Chmac: very enthusiastic about BW future, he sees BW becoming THE engine for hospex, the most significant network, still non-profit, something of the significance of wikipedia.
- guaka: sees a much larger potential than just hospex. Including focus on other forms of sharing.

Question 5) Strategies to get more active members outside of Europe:

- Planetcruiser - translations are important to reach the local member base and not only the international travellers or expats. Talking to locals about what they need and what they miss
- Sitatara - thinks that this question is not really a BoD question but should involve the whole BW community.
- chmac - supports a BeActive campaign with a non-European focus to boost membership in certain areas like the USA, supports volunteering events like hackathons etc outside of the EU.
- pablobd - translations are very important, we should also look how to adapt to local ways of hospitality (create family groups, community profiles), give strength to rural areas by creating specific tools.
- Wind - Bewelcome should try to make cooperations with other international non-profit organisations. This would increase the membership in Europe, but also outside of Europe as these organisations are widely spread around the globe. Potential co-operation partners could be for example international student organisations.
- **16h10 End of the GA**

Results of the 2013 General Assembly Votes

Polls

GA 2013 - Financial Report 2012-2013

Approval (or not) of the Financial Report for the 2012-2013 period. The link to the report can be found here: http://www.bewelcome.org/wiki/Financial_Report_2012-2013

This poll was started on 2013-11-02 00:15:59 It ended on 2013-11-05 23:59:59 23 people have contributed

Possible choices (Exclusive)	Results
I am not satisfied with the financial report	1 (4.3%)
I am satisfied with the financial report	22 (95.7%)
blank votes	0 (0.0%)
Total	23 (100.0%)

Polls

GA 2013 - Annual Report 2012-2013

Approval (or not) of the Annual Report for the 2012-2013 period. The link to the report can be found here: http://www.bewelcome.org/wiki/Annual_report_2012-2013

This poll was started on 2013-11-02 12:42:12 It ended on 2013-11-05 23:59:59 23 people have contributed

Possible choices (Exclusive)	Results
I am not satisfied with the report and the secretary should rewrite it	0 (0.0%)
I am satisfied with the report	23 (100.0%)
blank votes	0 (0.0%)
Total	23 (100.0%)

Polls

GA 213 - BoD Election

Which candidates do you want to be in the next year's BoD? Please select all the candidates that you want to vote for. If you are not voting for a candidate leave his/her field blank. Please support all candidate unless you have good reason not to do so. Read more about their candidacy here: http://www.bewelcome.org/wiki/General_Assembly_2013 Note that this poll is anonymous. No one will know what you have voted. This poll is open until Tuesday 05/11/2013 23:59h CET

This poll was started on 2013-11-03 13:00:19 It ended on 2013-11-05 23:59:59 23 people have contributed

Possible choices (Inclusive)	Results
guaka (Kasper)	15 (65.2%)
Wind (Johannes)	16 (69.6%)
chmac (callum)	17 (73.9%)
pablobd (Pablo)	19 (82.6%)
claudiaab (Claudia)	20 (87.0%)
sitatara (Rima)	21 (91.3%)
planetcruiser (Meinhard)	21 (91.3%)
Total	23 (100.0%)

Polls

GA 2013 - Budget 2013-2014

Please vote to approve (or not) 2013-2014 Budget. More info can be found here: http://www.bewelcome.org/wiki/Budget_2013-2014 23 members are registered to vote. The budget will only be approved if it receives a minimum of 12 positive votes.

This poll was started on 2013-11-03 16:18:46 It ended on 2013-11-05 23:59:59 22 people have contributed

Possible choices (Exclusive)	Results
I do not approve the 2013-2014 Budget	0 (0.0%)
I approve the 2013-2104 Budget	22 (100.0%)
blank votes	0 (0.0%)
Total	22 (100.0%)

Polls

GA 2013 - Terms of Use

Please approve (or not) the suggestion for the new Terms of Use Click here for the pdf: <http://www.bevolunteer.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/BeWelcome-TERMS-of-USE.pdf> The Terms of Use need at least 12 positive votes to be accepted

This poll was started on 2013-11-03 16:40:27 It ended on 2013-11-05 23:59:59 22 people have contributed

Possible choices (Exclusive)	Results
I do not approve the new Terms of Use	0 (0.0%)
I approve the new Terms of Use	22 (100.0%)
blank votes	0 (0.0%)
Total	22 (100.0%)

Approved by the BoD 2013-14, 1st December, 2013