**2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**OF**

**THE IRISH LUGE FEDERATION**

**27 NOVEMBER 2023**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Brendan Desmond (BD) - Chair

Malgorzata Grzyb (MG) - Secretary

Martha Desmond (MD) - Treasurer

Connor Campbell (CC) - Performance Director

Kevin Cooke (KC) – Director

Elsa Desmond (ED) – Athlete

**LOCATION:** Virtual (via Teams)

The meeting commenced at 19h00.

1. **OPENING REMARKS**

All attendees were welcomed to the 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Irish Luge Federation (ILF).

1. **FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS**

The financial accounts were circulated prior to the meeting. MD indicated that the main income in 2023 has been from race fees and contributions from the Olympic Federation of Ireland (OFI). More income is expected in 2024 due to Olympic Solidarity funding. ED has been awarded $937 per month until Milan-Cortina. Funding is contingent on providing receipts. OFI have committed to arrange a call with all recipients to explain how the process will work and whether expenditure can be carried forward/brought back, as it is not spent equally over the year.

The outcome of the Youth Olympic Solidarity funding application for Lily Cooke (LC) is still awaited.

MD advised that ILF is a Limited Company by Guarantee and will need to complete a tax return in Ireland, but is exempt from paying tax.

1. **PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

ED gave an update on the 2022/23 season, which saw four athletes sliding, two on the development programme.

ED finished 29th overall in the World Cup, 26th in the Nations Cup, 20th in the European Championships, 35th in the World Championships and 29th in the sprint World Championships. She qualified for five World Cup races from Nations Cups and saw her best result at the Sigulda World Cup where she finished 25th.

On the youth side, LC ranked 29th overall in the European Youth A Continental Cup, with her best result at Bludenz, where she came 19th.

Looking ahead to the 2023/24 season, there will again be two athletes racing – ED at senior level and LC at youth level. The major races will be the World Championships in Altenberg in January 2024 for ED, and YOG qualification races for LC, aiming to qualify for YOG in Jan/Feb 2024. YOG quota places are due to be communicated by 12 December 2023.

The end of the season will provide an opportunity for ED and LC to practise the Double at the Nordic Cup.

MD asked if there will be an overall increase in the number of athletes this coming year. ED indicated that there may be fewer in the senior category, but probably more in the youth category.

The Double managed to have some start training in summer in Romania, but no track time yet. This will happen at the Nordic Cup. The pair will use a double sled loaned from the Norwegian team, and if it is decided to proceed with the Double, it will be necessary to rent a doubles sled for the season.

ED advised that there had been preliminary interest from 18-20 individuals in Ireland interested in taking up luge, but unfortunately none were able to take things further without funding.

Sean Donoghue will be travelling to the Nordic Cup but is currently focused on finishing his university degree. Conor Stevens has decided not to pursue luge but is happy to help with social media.

1. **FUNDRAISING AND SPONSORSHIP**

KC provided an update on a number of leads that he is pursuing, including with Choice Hotels, and Lidl Ireland. The challenge has been getting in front of the decision makers.

MD has had help from work colleagues in researching grants and funds to apply for, and will look to make some approaches after Christmas.

CC has a contact at Nike HQ in NYC and also a contact in e-sports, who he will reach out to.

BD will obtain details of the Colgan Foundation and pass to MD.

MD advised to keep going with as many approaches as possible and to ask for smaller amounts to keep the ‘ask’ reasonable and avoid putting people off.

1. **FIL AND OFI UPDATES**

MG attended the FIL Congress in June and sent a summary of the main things covered by email on return. The main outcome from discussions held with Team Romania and the FIL was the continuation of the partnership programme for Elsa for the current season, and the extension of the programme to include Lily.

MG updated regarding progress of the OFI Winter Sports Group. The development of the winter sports facility is a ‘slow burn’ with discussions ongoing with local Councils regarding land and funding.

OFI have been successful in obtaining €50,000 carding funding from Sport Ireland and discussions are now in progress regarding how to split this between the 6 winter sports. It is likely that we will need to submit an application for our allocation.

1. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

CC updated that both athletes are doing well and is particularly impressed with LC, who shows potential and is very engaged.

ED advised that she sent an anonymous questionnaire to all athletes to get feedback regarding ILF. Results showed that all athletes seemed happy and were satisfied that everything is athlete-focussed. A similar questionnaire will be carried out prior to the next AGM.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 19h45.