

## **Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Annual Meeting Minutes Saturday, May 6, 2023 9:15 AM Mindekirken**

The 105th Annual Meeting of Bygdelagenes Fellesraad was held at Mindekirken Norwegian Lutheran Church on Saturday, May 6, 2023 at 9:15 AM CST. Fifty participants attended in person for the first time since 2019 due to covid emerging in 2020. Board members present were President Elaine Hasleton, Vice President Marilyn Sorensen, Treasurer Robert Torkelson, Secretary Mary Gross, Director and Webmaster Eugene Rodi, Director Don Teigen, Director Nancy Pickering, and Past President Marilyn Somdahl. Director Jean Knaak was excused.

President Hasleton called the meeting to order at 9:15 AM. The meeting agenda had been sent to participants by email and was also available in print. She asked for a motion to approve the agenda and Don Teigen so moved. Motion was seconded and passed.

**Roll Call of Voting Delegates:** Secretary Gross called the roll of voting delegates of all bygdelag. These were the delegates present:

Agderlag:	Sandra Bestland, Jerry Ugland
Gudbrandsdalslaget:	Nancy Pickering, Marilyn Sorensen
Hadeland:	Dale Hovland
Hallinglag:	Kristi Stolen, Diane Magnusson
Hardanger:	Don Teigen
Landingslag:	Ann Delano, Eric Goplin
Møre og Romsdalslag:	none present
Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken:	Marilyn Somdahl
Nordfjordlag:	Sandy & Kevin Hoff
Nordhordland:	Betty Hagen, Laree Opdahl
Nordlandslag:	Linda Mohn, Shirley Sampson
Numedalslag:	Sonja Thune
Ringerike-Drammen:	Chuck McKeen
Rogalandslag:	Denny Kalvig
Romerikslaget:	Mary Gross, Linda McKeen
Sigdalslag:	Janice Johnson, Debra Lee Pritchard
Sognalag:	Jen Dauer

Sognefjordlag:	Nancy Wigdahl, Hunter Dauer
Solørlag:	Doug & Kathy Johnson
Sunnfjordlaget:	Tamra Foster
Sunnhordland:	Sheryl Hove
Telelaget:	Elaine Hasleton, Jeffrey Huset
Totenlag:	Judy Evenson, Sheila Andorfer
Tronderlag:	none present
Valdres Samband:	Rebecca Wood
Vestlandslag:	Ann Romo
Vosselag:	none present

**Presentation of Officer's Slate to be Elected Board Members:** Director Don Teigen introduced the Fellesraad Board. Mary Gross is retiring from her position as Secretary. All others had agreed to continue if re-elected. Ann Romo was nominated as Secretary to replace Mary Gross.

**Election of Officers:** Past President Marilyn Somdahl asked for a vote and current officers and new secretary Ann Romo were elected with no nominations from the floor. These officers are President Elaine Hasleton, Vice President Marilyn Sorensen, Secretary Ann Romo, Treasurer Robert Torkelson, Webmaster/Director Eugene Rodi, Director Jean Knaak, Director Don Teigen, and Director Nancy Pickering. Jeff Huset moved to accept this slate of officers as elected. Motion was seconded and passed.

**Lag President's Greetings and Lag Reports/Summaries of 2022 Accomplishments:** Nancy Pickering presented a power point with the 2022 reports narrated by bygdelag presidents or their representatives. Most bygdelag had contributed to this fine presentation.

#### **Officer Reports:**

**Secretary's Report:** Minutes of the 2022 Fellesraad Annual Meeting done on zoom had been emailed to participants. Jeff Huset moved to accept minutes as read. Motion was seconded and passed.

Mary Gross thanked the Fellesraad Board and bygdelag members for their support and respect given to her during her ten years as Fellesraad Secretary. She was presented with a thank you gift and card from the board.

**Treasurer's Report:** Robert Torkelson presented his report for the year ending April 30, 2023. Total assets are currently \$98,504 with \$6,096 in our checking account. The Thrivent account has \$34,435 at present. Stocks of Excel Energy at \$39,611, Center Point Energy at \$9,770, and AT & T at \$8,592 adds up to the total assets of \$98,504.

Don Teigen, Director, had conducted an audit of the books in April of 2023. He reported that the checking account at Wells-Fargo balances and transactions were verified and tested. The

investment account balance calculations were reviewed. Recommendations to improve certain accounting and reporting procedures and controls were communicated to the Treasurer and Board Members at a Board meeting held by zoom on April 27, 2023. Implementation of recommendations in these areas is underway. Marilyn Somdahl moved to accept these reports. The motion was seconded and passed.

**Lag Week Activities Report for 2023:** Vice President Marilyn Sorensen reported on Roots Tech and Lag Week which took place in Salt Lake City in February/March. Several bygdslag members attended and felt it was enjoyable and productive. Next year Roots Tech will take place February 29-March 2 and Lag Week will take place March 3-9. Lag members are encouraged to attend either or both events in 2024.

**Webmaster Report:** Webmaster Eugene Rodi presented a power point on changes he's made to the Fellesraad Website. He's updated the site to use a new form of the menu and a newer navigation code. Fellesraad paid for the new SSL certificate to improve security for the site. The Fellesraad site receives approximately 6,000 hits each month. He asked lag members to continue to update information on their bygdslag by informing him of any changes. It's important that information be kept current and accurate.

Gene explained that lags can print their own copies of the brochure "Explore Your Norwegian Roots" from the Fellesraad website. Gene can also help with this if needed. He encouraged lag officers to distribute copies of the brochure at the stevner and to groups in their communities such as Sons or Daughters of Norway.

Fellesraad has continued to pay for Zoom Pro so that the Fellesraad Board and other Lags can continue to hold their meetings on zoom. We can have up to 100 persons participate in a meeting at one time. People can also log in by using their phones. If needed, bygdslag can use our Zoom Pro for their own meetings. Gene can help them with this.

**President's Report:** President Hasleton thanked the members of the Fellesraad Board for their work during the last year, especially Marilyn Sorensen, who has been involved with Elaine in meeting weekly with Norway House staff about Bibliotek and Archive construction. She has also been responsible for going through thousands of books that have been donated to Mindekirken and Norway House. So far over 300 books have been accepted by Norway House. Anyone interested in donating books can contact Marilyn Sorensen.

Elaine explained how each bygdslag will be able to contribute some of their research materials to the Bibliotek and Archive space. Shared Bygdslag books will be available to those doing their own research and can be taken out for annual stevner. There will be a catalog of materials in the Archive for those coming to do research. An Interactive Learning Center (Bibliotek) is in process and will be something all ages will enjoy. A goal is to have something each visitor can learn about and take with them from their visit. There will be information available on how to do research on other areas in addition to Norway.

She described four areas of emphasis of interest to the Archive and Bibliotek:

1. Finnskag
2. Sami
3. Mining
4. Cleng Peerson, one of the 1825 emigrants.

The Bibliotek and Archive will partner with the Salt Lake City Family Search Library to share resources. There will also be a partnership with the Norwegian genealogy resource Slekt og

Data. The Norwegian church data base and links to webinars will be accessible. Fellesraad is also partnering with the 2025 Commemoration Committee to plan local events with other groups in the area for 2025. Fellesraad and the Bygdelag will have a plaque at Norway House giving credit to them for their substantial donations. It's important to have visibility in the community to encourage interest in the Bygdelag.

Elaine had emailed a survey from a research team at the University of Wisconsin about Norwegian emigration to lag officers to distribute to their membership. She feels it's important to partner with established groups like this to make Bygdelag more visible.

She encouraged people to consider attending Lag Week to work with others on genealogy. Elaine stressed how important it is for lag officers and members to distribute the Explore brochure. She copied 200 brochures and has them available for participants to take along today. She encouraged lag members to use Family Search Wiki, which has really improved doing genealogy.

Another thing Elaine brought up was the questions she's been getting about Bygdelag filling out Form 990 for retention of 501c3 non-profit status. There was some discussion about problems lags have had doing this. Lag officers were encouraged to investigate options available to them and seek a good resource for information related to this.

There are many donated books available on the tables today for lag members to take with them. Two large posters given to Elaine Hasleton and Marilyn Sorensen from Norway House are also available to interested persons.

President Elaine adjourned the meeting at 11:30 AM. Pr. Gunnar Kristansen, who had just returned from Norway, then gave an extremely interesting presentation on the Sami. This was followed by lunch, and then we moved to Norway House, where we were given a tour of the Bibliotek and Archive there by Joe Grodahl.

Mary Gross  
Fellesraad Secretary