



**Swiss American Club
of SW Florida**

Minutes of the General Assembly

Saturday, March 23, 2025 at 5 p.m. (17.00)

The Club at Gateway

12091 Gateway Greens Drive

Fort Myers, FL 33913

Board Members Present:

Joe Huber, President

Gemma Huber, Treasurer

Urs Brunner, Vice President and IT

Lily Kraft, Director Events

Urs Pfister, Director of Events

Vicki H. Burkhard, Secretary

Apéro

The evening started with an apéro and appetizers at 17.00. On a big screen a slide show showed pictures with snapshots of all the events we had during 2024. Once all members had arrived events director Urs Pfister rang the club cow bell to inform attendees to settle down at their tables.

Welcome

At 17.42 president Joe Huber welcomed all 54 members present at the 27th general assembly meeting. A special welcome went out the new members Yassir and Zuleidy Neher-Fernandez and Matilde Cosio. Joe mentioned that today is Walter Heierli's Birthday which earned him a big applause. A special welcome was extended to honorary members Maria von Atzingen and Hans Wenger.

Meeting

Joe handed the microphone to secretary Vicki Burkhard, who read the minutes of the last year's general assembly meeting. Joe asked the membership for approval and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Joe then gave a quick overview of the past year. Four board meetings were held at the homes of board members who hosted to board for dinner after the meetings. Joe offered his sincere thanks to all who did host a board meeting. He also thanked the Albrech family who make it possible for us to use their beautiful club location for some of our events. He thanked all the silent helpers behind the scene as well. Then he asked for a minute of silence for Rosmarie Strather, a honorary board member, who passed on in 2024. He mentioned that he will let the other board members speak to their

respective responsibilities und handed the mic to interim vice president and IT/Media director Urs Brunner.

Urs mentioned that our club is active online and in social media, specifically on our own website, LinkedIn, Facebook and e-mailers through MailChimp. We've had our website for 4 years and last year added a member businesses page. He asked members who have a business to send him the information so we can add them to this page. Urs also mentioned our resources page with may useful information for anything Swiss and Southwest Florida related. Urs has some additional ideas he will present to the board and in due time to all members. Our LinkedIn page has 56 followers and growth is slow. He encouraged all members who are active on LinkedIn in to like us. On Facebook we have 1,200 followers, of which interestingly 61% are men. On all social media sites we poste interesting information about Switzerland, Southwest Florida as well as club events. Urs encourages all members to connect with our social media pages. He mentioned that we are aware of some e-mail issues through our mail service with MailChimp. In 2024 we sent out a total of 150 e-mail blasts. Some members with certain e-mail addresses have not received our e-mails. Urs is aware, which e-mail addresses these are and will connect with each member individually to resolve the issue.

Then it was time for director of events Lily Kraft to take the mic to report on the 2024 events. We held eight events in 2024 starting with the New Year's brunch in January. In February it was our popular Fondue. In March it was the Easter PicNic. The general Assembly was held in April. Unfortunately the one-day trip to the Ringling museum had to be canceled due to lack of participants. In June it was Pizza and Bowling. Augst 3rd was supposed to be our 1st August Celebration, however we had to cancel last minute due to a storm warning. However three weeks later we organized an impromptu Bratwurst grill event, which was very well attended and we were able to use our Bratwursts. October was our Minigolf, November our popular sunset cruise and as the year come to an end we gathered for our Chlaushock in December. Our Happy Hours are well attended and attract more members than the lunch Stammtisch used to.

Next was treasurer Gemma Huber. She mentioned that 2024 was another profitable year and ended with a profit of \$186.62 over the previous year. Account balance as of December 31, 2024 was \$19,938.18. In 2024 we did not sell Bratwursts anymore due to lack of freezer space. The club has invested in twelve fondue sets to avoid asking members to bring theirs in the future. Secretary Vicki Burkhard read the audit report. Audits are done by three people, one board member and two active club members. In 2024 it was Vicki H. Burkhard, Hans Wenger and Ursula Heierli, who all approved of the audit. Joe asked the membership to approve the audit and was done so unanimously.

Membership director Gemma Huber gave an update. At the beginning of 2024 we had 148 members and by December 2024 we had 156 members with a net increase of 8. There were 23 new members and 15 departures. Most people find un on the website, Facebook or are referred to us by current members.

Joe called for the election of the board members. Board members serve for two years and need to be elected every two years. At this point Joe mentioned that treasurer and director of membership Gemma Huber and he himself will step down from the board. He recommends two new members to serve on the board. Marianne Zeltner as treasurer and Erika Marti for secretary and director of membership. He also noted that the other current board members will serve another term and that their bios were sent in the mailer for the general assembly for all to read. Joe asked the membership to vote collectively for the whole board. The new board was unanimously elected.

The new board members are as follows:

Vicki H. Burkhard, President

Urs Brunner, Vice president and Director IT/Media

Erika Marti Kain, Secretary and Director Membership

Marianne Zeltner, Treasurer

Lily Kraft, Director of Events

Urs Pfister, Director of Events

Joe and Gemma got a long standing ovation of members thanking them for their dedication and hard work on the board over the last six years. Hans Wegner asked to say a few words and thanked Joe and Gemma for their dedication and that we all appreciate all what they have done. More applause for Joe and Gemma.

Director of Events Lily Kraft then spoke about future events we are planning for 2025:

April 13	Easter PicNic
May 15	Pizza and Bowling – with Wanderpokal
June 22	Soup-er Social Special
August 2	1 st August Celebration
October 15	Mini Golf - With Wanderpokal
November 15	Sunset Cruise
December 13	Chlaushock

Misc. and Q&A

Joe said that the club is now in very good hands with the newly elected board. He jokingly mentioned the one thing he wanted to achieve in 2024 is to lower the bank balance in 2024. However instead to lower we had another small profit. He then went on to say that we do not need so much money in the bank and should try to lower the amount. He recommended to subsidize more events. Helmuth Steinlin asked what a good amount would be to keep on reserve. Joe answered he thinks \$10,000 would be a good amount to keep in our bank account.

Theres Bauer asked if we are an official non-profit. Yes we are and file a N990 form every year.

Markus Albrecht cautioned not to subsidize too many events and not to start experimenting too much. Joe mentioned that today's event was subsidized with \$35 per member.

Chris Stern stood up and asked for a motion for Joe and Gemma Huber to be made honorary members for their hard work and dedication on the board over the last six years. Several other members second the motion and it was unanimously approved. No further question or comments at that time.

Joe adjourned the meeting at 18.30

A nice buffet dinner followed the meeting and everyone enjoyed the relaxing, social gathering.

Respectfully submitted
Vicki H. Burkhard