

# November 2023 Østgarðr Commons Minutes

*The Province's monthly commons meeting was held November 15. Here are the minutes as recorded by Mathghamhain Ua Ruadháin.*

---

## Attendance

### *Present*

- Angelica di Nova Lipa, Vicereine
- Sofya Gianetta di Trieste, Vicereine
- Nagashima Ichiro Ujimichi (Uji), Seneschal
- Alienor Salton (Piglet), Exchequer and Whyt Whey Seneschal
- Drasma Dragomira, Herald
- Friderich Grimme, Webminister
- Zahra de Andaluzia, Chronicler
- Lada Monguligin, Social Media Officer
- Alexander MacLachlan (Alec), Fencing Marshal
- Vitasha Ivanova doch', Minister of Lists
- Mathghamhain Ua Ruadháin, Historian
- Iola Wulfsdóttir, Lions End Seneschal
- Marion of York
- Arnora Ketilsdóttir
- Ragnarr Bliskegg
- Perez ben Meir Gershon
- Catelin Straquhin
- Gibbs Moryss
- Eadwine the Younger
- Simon the Tanner
- Hanya Vladimirovna Polotskaya
- Richard the Poor of Ely
- Antonius Gracchus (Twyg)
- Eshtar of Appleholm
- Pádraig Ó Brádaig (Samson)
- Robert D'Whitmont

## *Absent Officers*

- Brandr Aronsson, Minister of A&S
- Albrecht Anker, Chatelaine and Acting Armored Combat Marshal
- Kunigunde Wedemann, Chancellor Minor
- Meadhbh mac Pharláin, Northpass Seneschal

---

## Opening

- Called to order at 7:31 P.M.
- The [SCA Harassment and Bullying Policy](#) was displayed and read.

---

## Vicereines

- *Sofya*: There have been a lot of activities going on lately, too many to repeat here; check out our report for the full list.
- Thank you to everyone who's contributed, and everyone who has participated..
- We hope to see people this Saturday at Hundred Minutes.

---

## Elections

- *Uji*: We're having officer elections.
- Voting will start tonight, or rather as soon as the ballot form is available. Mathghamhain has volunteered to get that set up, and once that's ready, it will be turned over to Their Excellencies.
- *Sofya*: Can we talk about the process? I'd like to make sure the details are clear so our newcomers understand it.
- *Uji*: When there is one candidate, they will be confirmed by a vote of the officers by email.
- When there are multiple candidates, a vote is held online. We use the Borda count method, but since there are only two candidates it's just like a regular ballot. The

election will be open as soon as the form is ready and will continue until 11:59 PM on December 19.

- *Mathghamhain*: All paid members living within the Province and aged 14 or older can vote.
- *Sofya*: Since we have two candidates for seneschal, I'd like to set up a "meet the candidates" night so that everyone knows who both of you are.
- *Uji*: Yes, I was going to bring that up.
- *Lada*: Can we see the list of candidates?
- *Uji*: It will take me some time to find the candidate information. My apologies for not having that ready. I will send information to Friderich for posting on the Ostgardr website and mailing list. Lada, please echo that information to social media.
- *Lada*: So we don't get to know who the candidates are?
- *Uji*: For seneschal, the candidates are me and Ragnarr.
- *Alienor*: Will we be able to see the letters of intent?
- *Uji*: Are you asking about letters of intent for all candidates, or just the contested offices?
- *Alienor*: We should share all of the letters of intent, so that the officers who are being asked to confirm solitary candidates can take them into consideration.
- *Lada*: Do you have a candidate for webminister?
- *Uji*: Not yet.
- *Lada*: I might have located a candidate.
- *Twyg*: I'm relatively new to the SCA. I'd be happy to help out with the webminister position. This idea has just happened in the last 48 hours. I will submit a letter of intent now. Thanks to Friderich for answering my questions about the web ministry.
- *Ragnarr*: For the "meet the candidates" night, should we choose a date now?
- *Uji*: Sure. How about a Wednesday night, like our commons?
- *Sofya*: Next week is Thanksgiving.
- *Uji*: How about the 29th?
- *Multiple People*: That's good.
- *Uji*: We'll get the list of candidates published after this meeting along with the letters of intent. For some incumbent officers, I only received a brief statement of willingness to serve another term; please send me a more detailed letter that includes qualifications.

- *Ragnarr*: I will share my letter of intent, and look forward to having a conversation about how best to run the Province.
- *Uji*: I've been doing this for nearly two years. Ragnarr, you're an excellent candidate, and I'm looking forward to our meeting.
- *Catelin*: I've just sent a letter of intent to Uji.
- *Uji*: Catelin has just volunteered to serve as Chatelaine.
- *Mathghamhain*: Are there any offices for which you still don't have a candidate?
- *Uji*: Chamberlain, Historian, Herald.
- *Mathghamhain*: Herald is a required office. I'm willing to step up if needed.
- *Uji*: Great.

---

## Deck the Halls of Valhalla, January 20 (Ragnarr)

- *Ragnarr*: The New Hampshire primary date was announced, and it looks like the date for Birka will not conflict with Valhalla.
- *Sofya*: We usually have our bardic championship at this event, but we're not sure which dates our current champion will be available for.
- *Angelica*: He is still on the road and has not responded to my email.
- *Sofya*: He might not be available to run the tournament as the champion.
- *Ragnarr*: I suggest we have a planning meeting on Wednesday December 7. We could discuss other activities besides the bardic championship that could be held at Valhalla.
- *Jenna*: Traditionally we've sometimes held the bardic championship at the Lions End spring schola.
- *Mathghamhain*: Tradition calls for the champion to organize the tournament, but not necessarily to run it in person.
- *Vitasha*: Ragnarr, I'll teach kumihimo at Valhalla if you are looking for classes
- *Uji*: Ragnarr, do you have a deputy event steward?
- *Ragnarr*: I'm going to get one...
- *Arnora*: I'll do it.

- *Friderich*: Given that winter is a time when people get sick, it might be good to also have a backup that lives in a different house.
- *Ragnarr*: Yes, by next commons we'll have two people confirmed to assist.
- *Mathghamhain*: Is there a budget for this event? Was it already approved?
- *Ragnarr*: I've sent a budget to the financial committee. I can publish it more widely if desired.

---

## Bear's Tavern, March (Oliver)

- *Uji*: Is Oliver on the call?
- *[No answer]*
- Bear's Tavern is coming up in March.
- I believe he's still looking for a cook. Last time we were there they had a working stove, but not the ovens. The tavern style event means that food comes out throughout the day, it's somewhere between a dayboard and a feast.
- *Uji*: He's also looking for volunteers to teach classes with a nautical focus.

---

## Local Activities

### Fighter Practice

- *Uji*: I think the fighter practice will move indoors after next week.
- *Ragnarr*: Last one was this week. Albrecht is looking for indoor practice space.

### Appleholm Gallery Sunday (November 26)

- *Mathghamhain*: Appleholm is going to the recently-reopened Hispanic Society museum, to see their indoor gallery decorated like a Renaissance Spanish courtyard with fifteenth- and sixteenth-century artifacts.
- We'll probably walk out for coffee and a snack afterwards. Join us!

### Cooking Class

- *Uji*: Brandr has the flu and couldn't be here. Friderich, have you discussed the plans?

- *Friderich*: Come to Brandr's house for a class on "how to be the head cook for an SCA event dayboard."
- Brandr, Uji and I will walk through the process of how to deal with planning, logistics, menus, and more, from beginning to end.
- This will be a relaxed gathering, likely with drinks and snacks.
- If you're interested in being an SCA cook, this is a chance to talk with three people who have experience and can share their pool of best practices.

### Northpass A&S Workshop (December 10)

- *Uji*: Vitasha is hosting Northpass A&S in December.
- *Vitasha*: Come learn to make some favorite holiday drinks.
- My apartment is small, so I can fit eight people in here, and then we'll be doing video streaming for folks who can't make it in person.
- Learn about Hippocras and the very-similar Clary, as well as Posset, which is like eggnog but with white wine rather than rum.
- *Uji*: Will you make an ingredients list for people who are attending remotely?
- *Vitasha*: I will share my presentation notes which includes research and an ingredients list.

### Brokenbridge Craft Day (December?)

- *Hanya*: Another craft day is in planning. (I'll write up the info for that for the event announcement some time in the next week.) I may do a double running stitch class that day so others can help with stitching as well.

### Medieval Music Jam

- *Alienor*: Join us for our next medieval music jam.
- We're rotating between venues around the city.
- Usually scheduled for the second Thursday of each month.
- Reach out to Þorfinn Hróðgeirsson <[143578@members.eastkingdom.org](mailto:143578@members.eastkingdom.org)> for details.

---

## Regional Events

- *Uji*: November 18, Hundred Minutes War, Rusted Woodlands, Sparta NJ.
- December 2, Bergental/BBM Yule, Western Mass (RP).
- December 9, Bhakail Yule, Philly (RP).

- January 6, Beast of the East tourney, Iron Bog.
- January 13, East Kingdom Twelfth Night, Buckland Cross (RP)
- January 26–28, Birka, Stonemarche.
  
- *Uji*: There's also an interesting non-SCA virtual event, "Africa & Byzantium."  
<https://tinyurl.com/yc27v7t6>

---

## Other Business

- *Uji*: Is there anything else people want to discuss?
  
- *Alienor*: What about my proposal of pre-paying for a year of storage?
- *Multiple People*: That sounds good.
- *Alienor*: Okay, I'll start with our unit and then see if Northpass can do the same thing.

---

## Branch Mergers

- *Mathghamhain*: *Uji*, I saw a note in your report about Midland Vale. Do we need to discuss it? Have you spoken to kingdom officers for guidance on how to manage this process?
- *Uji*: Samson isn't here. He has started talking with kingdom. Kingdom said they need Ostgardr to approve the idea before Midland Vale can begin the process.
- *Perez*: I can speak to this topic based on my conversations with Samson. The kingdom seneschal needs confirmation that it's been discussed here. I don't know what kind of approval is needed. But there needed to be a discussion.
  
- *Friderich*: For those of us who are not in the know, what is it that Midland Vale is interested in? Would someone please summarize the idea?
- *Uji*: Midland Vale is considering changing from a shire to a canton and becoming part of Ostgardr.
- *Uji*: Midland Vale covers Sullivan, Orange, and Ulster counties.
- *Mathghamhain*: Here's a map showing the location of Midland Vale and of Old Stonebridges, which might be considering something similar.  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tmMVAEf7Qy5OOJtzgPc6EKnLCtKS2d4T/view>
- *Ragnarr*: Great map Math.

- *Perez*: A merger would mean that we were better connected to them, and could collaborate on events using spaces in that area.
  - *Richard*: Usually cantons want to LEAVE a barony!
  - *Friderich*: What is Midland Vale hoping to get out of this?
  - *Perez*: Take this with a grain of salt, because I'm acting as a go-between, but here's my understanding: the people who are most active in the shire (and who often participate at kingdom level) have an interest in becoming a barony, but they don't have enough people to become a barony on their own, and the other local shires haven't been interested in joining together to become a barony.
- 
- *Sofya*: I don't think this topic was presented clearly to the Province. This conversation should have begun with a presentation that lays these issues out.
  - Midland Vale is a small community. They come to our events and we go to their events. When you're part of a barony, you have more people to support you. Baronies provide an opportunity for local recognition.
  - I support the idea of a merger. I haven't said anything up to this point because I think we should have something in writing from the EK Seneschal that lays out the procedures to be followed. Uji, have you received something in writing from her?
  - *Uji*: No, but I did receive an email from the Midland Vale seneschal, which was also cc'd to the kingdom seneschal.
  - *Sofya*: I don't want this conversation to just be talking about rumors. Stonebridges has also been discussing this topic. But until we talk to the East Kingdom and get direction on the process, I think we're limited to just sharing of information.
- 
- *Friderich*: Thank you for the summary. I'm not going to be an officer any longer as of December, but speaking as someone who's lived in the northernmost canton, we're considering adding people who have long travel times down to the city. In the past this has led to communications challenges and feelings of isolation. Before we move forward we should have a conversation about how to ensure that everyone can communicate, and everyone feels included. We should have a conversation about how to organize events, how we deal with varying procedures, and so forth.
  - *Alienor*: Sofya mentioned Stonebridges, so I wanted to mention how close we became when we were sponsoring them. We went through a lot of things: they changed their name, and had to deal with various challenges and requirements. There are a lot of connections between our populace and theirs, across a variety of different areas: martial, A&S, service. I think we can grow together. It's great that we're having this discussion here, but we need to also get this information out to the populace.

- *Friderich*: Thank you for saying that Alienor. I was concerned, but this makes me feel better. It's important to be deliberate.
- *Uji*: I see Samson has arrived. Would you like to address this issue?
- *Samson*: As your neighbors, we've been puttering along as an adorable little shire. We run Daffodils and a few other events; this year we also had Ducal Challenge. But all of our events have been run with help from the province. We have the three required officers and a handful of other local participants. We're looking to help build a strong local game and you folks are the strongest game in town. We already do everything together. We'd like to start a conversation about coming home, as it were.
- *Sofya*: I'd like to get clarification from Kingdom about the correct process to go forward. I'd love to get this in writing for clarity and formality. I do support this, I love you northern folks. But I want clarity — do we just talk about it, or do we vote? Just the officers or the populace? Do we vote first, or let your shire vote first?
- *Samson*: Yes, these are great questions, because we don't want to get started on the wrong foot. Before my elevation, I was squire to Valgard and protege to Audrey, who is kingdom seneschal, so I've talked with her about this already.
- It's supposed to be discussed in your business meeting and then discussed in our meeting. Our meetings are only quarterly and we often only have five people. In our last shire meeting, we agreed that we do want to request a polling to join as a canton.
- Now Ostgardr, in your meeting, you need to decide if you want to move forwards as well. Next, Uji and I, as seneschals, would inform the Kingdom, and they will conduct a polling.
- I just walked in the door so my apologies for not having this better organized.
- *Sofya*: We should formalize this with Kingdom to obtain direction and make sure we're following it.
- But this is the first time most of our people have heard about this.
- Was just talking about it enough, or do we need to formally agree on it?
- We might need to set up another meeting specifically to discuss this. And get information from the kingdom seneschal and give our populace a chance to participate.
- *Samson*: That sounds good.
- *Uji*: Yes.
- *Sofya*: I'll prepare an email to the kingdom seneschal. We can have another meeting in which Samson can tell our populace about what you're looking for.

- *Uji*: There is a logistics issue, in that the Midland Vale is in the Central Region. I have a guess as to how this would work but don't know for sure. I will have to ask Audrey about it.
- *Samson*: Uji, as seneschal of Ostgardr, do your cantons send reports to you, or directly to Kingdom?
- *Uji*: The cantons file reports to the southern region or the kingdom officer.
- *Alienor*: When we sponsored Old Stonebridges, they filed reports to their region and sent a copy to us. With the new report forms, the results get sent to the regional deputy directly. Then we email copies to the province.
  
- *Uji*: So there are some things that definitely need to be discussed with the East Kingdom seneschal.
- *Sofya*: I think we're at the start of a good conversation here. When we get more information we can set up another meeting in December to move on to the next step
- *Samson*: That sounds great.

---

## Chronicler (Zahra)

- *Zahra*: Send me stuff for the next issue of the e-Horse, which will be published on December 1.. Haiku, photos, articles, anything else you might want published.
- *Lada*: Although the e-Horse will come out after the "meet the candidates" night, I think we should include letters of intent in the December newsletter.

---

## Closing

- Meeting closed at 8:33 PM.