

**MINUTES OF THE 17th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION of BOAT OWNERS, held on 22nd NOVEMBER 2008 at
STAFFORD BOAT CLUB**

Present: Stuart Sampson, chairman, in the chair, Carole Sampson, general secretary, Stephen Peters, treasurer, four other Council members and 26 members.

Apologies for absence: received from Erica Martin, Sadie Dean, Ellen Dexter, Mr & Mrs M Clarke, Brian Holt and Peter Foster.

Minutes. The minutes of the 15th AGM held in 2006 were distributed. Proposed by Howard Anguish, seconded by Joan Jamieson, and with all that were present in favour, they were accepted as a true record. The chairman signed the minutes.

Chairman's Report.

Stuart started with his intention to keep his comments brief, to allow maximum time for questions and discussion items from the floor.

He wished to pre-empt two questions: firstly, as he was wearing a kilt, yes he was, as it was a cold morning! Secondly, why is he going? There were four reasons.

- 1) He feels he has passed his use-by date. He has been NABO Chairman for five years, and feels it is time for a new face.
- 2) He and his wife still dream of cruising waters new, and it would be unfair to abandon NABO during a year if an opportunity suddenly appeared.
- 3) He would like a little of his life back, and the freedom to cruise without having to be somewhere specific at a specific time to attend meetings.
- 4) The buttons are falling off his blazer and he's no good at sewing!

Stuart went on to stress that there is no animosity whatsoever driving this change of chairman: he is trying to quit while the going is good. He will not be abandoning all his NABO work, and will be continuing as NABO News editor, which he described as the most influential role.

Finally, he thanked everyone, particularly Council, for the support he has received, and asked that the same be given to his successor .

Stephen Peters proposed a vote of thanks to Stuart for all his hard work. This was enthusiastically seconded by a warm round of applause.

Stuart then proposed a vote of thanks to Carole Sampson, who is retiring from Council and the role of General Secretary. Further applause.

Financial statement.

The accounts had been distributed to the members present. Stephen Peters, treasurer, invited members to ask questions.

Q: Why has there been such an increase in Subscriptions and Donations?

A: We made a donation of £500 to SOW.

Q: Why is the advertising revenue zero?

A: The space given to Enterprise Rent-a-Car and RCR are free-of-charge as a reciprocal arrangement for the discount given to NABO members. It is also very time-consuming finding advertisers and chasing them up upon renewals.

Q: Why is the NABO News expenditure less?

A: Less inserts have been put in with the mailings, and less costs. Stephen Peters explained that we have a good deal with our present printer and we pay promptly so he is happy.

Q: Are there any membership figures?

A: Carole Sampson apologised for not having chased these up, but thought that membership had increased from 1700+ to 1800+.

It was suggested that perhaps these could be included on the accounts in future. SP will look into it.

Annual subscription fees.

In line with tradition, the treasurer stated that he would resign if the membership fees were to change. He therefore proposed, seconded by Carole Sampson, no change, especially as we have a healthy balance of funds. All present were in favour.

Appointment of the auditor.

Stephen Peters explained that the present auditor, is prepared to continue in 2007-2008. He proposed, seconded Carole Sampson, that Alan Davis be NABO's auditor, all were in favour.

Election of Council Members.

Nine people are standing for Council, namely, Howard Anguish, Richard Carpenter, Andy Colyer, David Fletcher, Stephen Peters, Simon Robbins, Geoffrey Rogerson, Brian Rowland, and Stuart Sampson .

There being no need for an election, Stuart asked the meeting if it wished to elect them en bloc or individually. All were in favour of election en bloc, so, proposed Stuart Sampson and seconded by Carole Sampson, the nine were elected to Council for the year 2008-2009.

Questions from the floor

Stuart explained that Council had submitted a no-change response to the suggested licence change suggestions. Firm proposals had been put before the BWBoard on 20th November. He had tried to elicit the outcome from BW, but had been told he had to wait until the press release is issued, by 26th at the latest. He had been told that : "User groups have been listened to".

Q: Who will be taking over from the retiring officers?

A: Carole S explained that the new Council will meet during the lunch break, and hopefully, members will be informed this afternoon.

Geoffrey Rogerson stressed the need for more Council members: fresh faces and new ideas are always needed,

Q: A member observed that NABO's income is static: is there still any feed through from the last increase in membership fees?

A: No - the increase was some years ago.

Q: Are there any job descriptions available? People might be encouraged if they know what is entailed.

A: The main requirement is to attend a maximum of seven meetings per year, held in Birmingham. Each new Council decides how the jobs are organised and allocated.

David Fletcher and Richard Carpenter, as new Council members, spoke about their experiences. Richard went on to talk about his future role to develop promotion and marketing, and his thoughts about road shows instead of attending rallies. Watch NABO News!

There followed a discussion about promotion.

- The Trent & Mersey Society holds lock weekends. There is the opportunity to canvass boaters whilst they queue, and they often give a donation when the lock is worked for them - two possible benefits to NABO.
- A member talked about marina moorers. He said that 90% don't venture out very often, and when they do, they don't wish to communicate with other boaters, nor do they help others at locks.
- A member talked about a method by which leaflets could be displayed on the side of a boat for others to help themselves. Flyers for this would be required.

A continuous cruising member thanked NABO for its support and stand against any licence fee increase.

Q: How many members are continuous cruisers?

Q: Is there a representative on Council?

A: The statistics are not separated. We are all boaters and should remain united as divided we fall.

Q: Geoffrey Rogerson raised the issue of illegal BW proposals, asking what we do about them. Carole Sampson explained the Roving Mooring Permit issue, pointing out the costs involved of pursuing the matter to a judicial review if necessary.

There followed a discussion on this issue.

- Two members stated that it would be wrong for NABO to bankrupt itself
- NABO should join with other organisations to share the cost.
- BW could not police 'continuous moorers', hence the present proposal: they still won't be able to police the new system.
- BW didn't deal with the licence evasion problem in the past, so that now the problem is much bigger. BW must abide by the law and the law must be upheld. BW needs to spend more money to police the waterways.
- Bona fide continuous cruisers should not be penalised for the misbehaviour of others.

Geoffrey Rogerson went on to explain that if a cruising area is defined, this in effect places a restriction on navigation, which is not allowed. There are two ways forward:

- 1) a legal aid case
- 2) employing a solicitor on a no-win, no-fee basis.

Stuart Sampson said that we shouldn't try to pre-empt BW's proposals, we should wait and see.

Q: a member felt that NABO could be accused of spending too much time and money on what he perceives to be a special interest group, which uses the waterways the most and pays the least.

Q: waterways standards: how have things moved forward?

A: Stuart explained his role on the Customer Service Standards panel, but thought that this question should be saved until it can be addressed to Vince Moran of BW this afternoon.

Q: what feedback has been received from members re its implementation?

A: It is early days yet.

Q: Concern about the apparent privatisation of elsan facilities was expressed. A member reported that he had been told by a BW employee that it wants private operators to run them. They were locked after 5pm! They should be free, and available 24/7.

A: Stuart will bring this up at his meeting. He had been involved in a working party to discuss frequency of facilities, gap analysis, but this seems to have died a death.

Q: The problem re BW's apparent attempt to separate user group representatives from their organisations was aired. It was thought to be a ploy to keep bad news secret.

A: Stuart responded that the requirement to be open about such dealings with BW is now a requirement.

There followed a buffet lunch.

OPEN MEETING.

The meeting was joined by Vince Moran, Customer Operations Director, BW.

After being introduced by the chairman, Mr Moran addressed the meeting.

Vince spoke about his role within BW. He liaises between the General Managers of the business units and Robin Evans, and is also responsible for controlling BW expenditure. In order to achieve a steady state on the waterways, BW needs £125 million. This year, and similarly for the next two years, BW has £95 million. This is not enough to satisfy people's aspirations. The criteria for prioritising expenditure are safety, customer service, and efficiency. Utilities - fibre optic cabling, water sales, canal crossings (pipes etc.) - yields £20 million: the possibilities of hydro-electric schemes on weirs, and wind farms (or in BW's case, wind allotments) are being explored, as well as trying to obtain funding from local authorities to maintain their towpaths. BW is committed to increasing the use of volunteers.

There was then the opportunity for questions from the floor.

Q: There are 30,000 boats on the system at present, say, there will be 40,000 in ten years time. How will BW deal with them?

A: On the one hand, great - more boats = more income, but there would be more congestion.

Q: Is BW thinking about the problem?

A: I've no answer to that, no, not as far as I'm aware.

Q: In avoiding dealing with licence evasion in the past, BW has a greater, more expensive problem to deal with now. Shouldn't BW be recognising the future problem and planning for it?

A: Quite right.

Q: Is licence evasion now at 8%?

A: Last year, it was at 10%, this years' boat count is taking place now.

Q: After the targeting, there has been a significant increase in the number of boaters going into BW offices to buy their licences. Doing away with canalside offices will lose a facility which generates income for BW.

A: BW has to strike a balance: it is expensive to have staff sitting around in offices.

It was suggested that a list of 'outlets' for the purchasing of licences etc. be published.

Q: Moorings tenderings. All user groups advised against adopting this system: is BW going to take any notice?

A: You'll be disappointed. BW listened, but has decisions to make.

The strength of feeling against the scheme was transmitted.

Q: the frequency of sanitary stations does not appear on the CSS standards.

A: The standards are listed as a realistic delivery prospect.

Q: Once one's bucket is full, it is full, and this should have a higher priority.

A: If faced with a choice, I (Vince) would opt to enter into an arrangement with a private supplier rather than the time and expense of creating BW's own new facility.

Q: At local level, volunteering is not being generally welcomed.

A: BW has a policy. We are starting to try to change the attitude of our own staff.

Q: Will you be able to convince Health & Safety that there is no such thing as a lock?

Q: There is a core of feeling amongst boaters that they should not help BW if it continues to screw as much money as possible out of boaters. There is also the perception that BW is stupid, putting in needless bollards instead of repairing bridges which are signed 'unsafe', silly signs etc.

Q: Regarding maintenance, are you losing ground each year?

A: We must be.

Q: Could you explain the BW bonus scheme - who gets it and how it is allocated?

A: Every member of staff can earn a bonus. Bonuses incentivise staff. There is a remuneration committee made up of 4 or 5 non-executive BWBoard members. They decide.

Q: Could we know BW's latest licence proposals?


A: I can't say.

Q: Will users' confidence in the consultation process be restored?

Laughter

A: I hope so.

The meeting closed at 3.10pm.

Signed: _____ 

Date: _____ 21/11/09

NABO Audit at 31st March 2008

Auditor's Report to the Members of the National Association of Boat Owners

I have examined the Books and Records of the Association and am satisfied from the information presented to me that the Financial Statements give a true and fair view both of the Association's funds at 31st March 2008 and the surplus for the year ended on that date.

Financial Issues from previous Audits

A number of financial issues arose during the course of previous Audits, all of which now appear to have been addressed with the exception of:

Stock held in Central Store

The stocks held in the Central Store have still not been verified with the accounting records. I recommend the Association ensures a physical stock-take is undertaken next time the store is emptied (e.g. after the next rally). From the information presented to me, the current situation has no material effect on the Association's Financial Statements.

Financial Issues – 2008 Audit

From information given to me and from ensuing discussions with the Accountants, no new financial control issues arose during the course of the 2008 Audit.

Signed:



Alan C Davis, FCCA,

14th November 2008

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR

YEAR ENDED

31 MARCH 2008

	Note	31.03.08		31.03.07	
		£	£	£	£
INCOME					
Membership Fees	1		18,019		17,806
Donations			1,247		959
Profit on Merchandise Sales			240		109
Advertising Revenue			0		0
Deposit Interest	2		1,315		922
Sale of "Boats on Show" Share			0		334
Other Income			6		706
			<u>20,827</u>		<u>20,836</u>
LESS EXPENSES					
Printing & Distribution of Newsletter			6,273		6,786
Rallies & Marketing Expenditure			946		683
Printing, Postage & Stationery			516		783
Telephone and Office Expenses			488		589
Travelling & Conference Expenses			2,682		2,803
Room Hire & Meeting Expenses			642		760
Subscriptions & Donations			64		569
Insurance			1,234		1,127
Secretarial & Computer Support			2,151		1,846
Accountancy costs			332		327
Storage Costs			715		680
Legal Costs			0		0
Web Site Costs			234		234
Sundry Expenses			122		90
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	4		302		295
Disposal of Computer	4		(1)		0
			<u>16,700</u>		<u>17,572</u>
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE			<u>4,127</u>		<u>3,264</u>
Corporation Tax			534		244
			<u>3,593</u>		<u>3,020</u>

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

BALANCE SHEET

31 MARCH 2008

	Note	31.03.08		31.03.07	
		£	£	£	£
TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	4		207		703
CURRENT ASSETS	5	49,911		45,485	
AMOUNTS DUE WITHIN 1 YEAR	6	(15,623)		(15,286)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			34,288		30,199
TOTAL NET ASSETS			<u>34,495</u>		<u>30,902</u>
RESERVES					
Reserves brought forward			30,902		27,882
Excess of Income over Expenditure			3,593		3,020
Reserves carried forward			<u>34,495</u>		<u>30,902</u>

1. MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees are shown net of a reserve for advance subscriptions. At any time the Association has a commitment to each member to provide a service for the length of time up to his or her renewal date. The reserve accounts for this commitment. The reserve for advance subscriptions is shown in note 6.

2. DEPOSIT INTEREST

Deposit interest is received gross. Provision for Corporation Tax has been made against this and other profits at 20% (2007: 19%) and included under current liabilities.

3. BOOKS OF ACCOUNT

Members are welcome to inspect the Association's financial records at any time mutually convenient to the member and the Treasurer. Please contact the Treasurer if you want to exercise this right.

4. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	TOTAL	Office Equipment	Other Fixtures
	£	£	£
Cost Brought Forward	9,097	8,329	768
Additions	204	0	204
Disposals	(799)	(799)	0
Cost Carried Forward	<u>8,502</u>	<u>7,530</u>	<u>972</u>
Depreciation Brought Forward	8,394	7,626	768
Charge for Period	301	281	20
Disposals	(400)	(400)	0
Depreciation Carried Forward	<u>8,295</u>	<u>7,507</u>	<u>788</u>
NET BOOK VALUE at end of year	<u>207</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>184</u>
Net Book Value Last Year	<u>703</u>	<u>703</u>	<u>0</u>

An Apple computer bought in December 2006 for £799 was sold to Tony Haynes for £400 when he left the Council.

	Notes	31.03.08	31.03.07
5. CURRENT ASSETS		£	£
Stock of Merchandise		992	1,162
Stock of Promotional goods & Stationery		1,170	489
Membership fees owing		725	795
Debtors & Prepayments		1,311	1,815
Bank Current Account		5,879	5,204
Bank Deposit Account		39,834	36,020
		<u>49,911</u>	<u>45,485</u>
6. AMOUNTS DUE WITHIN 1 YEAR		£	£
Trade Creditors		308	127
Accruals		921	1,227
Advance Subscriptions		8,537	9,056
Members Credit balances		4,483	4,041
Corporation Tax	2	1,205	671
Capital Gains Tax		169	169
		<u>15,623</u>	<u>15,286</u>

I have examined the books and records of the Association and have verified that the Association's accounts are in accordance with them, and the information and explanations provided, and are free of material misstatement.


I have not carried out an audit as defined by the Auditing Practices Board of the Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies.

November 2008

Alan C Davis (Chartered Certified Accountant)
9 Fryer's Walk
Tring
Herts. HP23 4AY

Accepted by the membership at the
AGM held on 22nd November 2008

Proposed : D Fitch
Seconded : T. Rogers

Signed : 
Date : 22/11/08