

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on 15th January 1994 at the Port 86, Hockley Port Birmingham commencing at 10.00am.

Present: Penny Barber, Chris Barnacle, Phil Bland, Jon Darlington, Melanie Darlington, Roger Hancock, Neil Hutchinson, Collin Paillin, Stephen Peters, Christine Potter, Pete Sterry & Nikki Timbrell

1. Apologies: Peter Lea, Harry Winter & Roy de la Haye

2. Venues for future Council meetings:

Neil Hutchinson confirmed that the Coventry Boat Club would welcome us once or twice a year. Penny Barber stated that the facilities at Port 86 would still be available but there was some unease in using premises now controlled by BW, particularly as they were not now charging a fee for their use. Although there was support for a permanent base for meetings there was also benefit in moving around to give members a chance to come along. It was agreed that Neil Hutchinson should check further with boat clubs in the area SE of Birmingham, with easy motorway and public transport access. Christine Potter to check with the village hall at Lawsonford.

NH
CP

3. The minutes of the meeting of 4th December were agreed an accurate record.

4. Matters arising.
 - a) No letter had been written under 9.4.3 but it was felt that it was still worthwhile, although now late. Jon Darlington to write as minuted. JD
 - b) Nothing had yet been done about cheque signatories. Penny Barber had this in hand and signature cards would be circulated shortly. PB
 - c) Harry Arnold had indicated a willingness to Pete Sterry to accept an article for "Waterways" on how and why NABO started. He was interested in working in parallel with NABO. Pete was to investigate the possibility of articles being published in other journals in which Harry Arnold had an interest. PS
 - d) Roger Hancock stated that he did not have a complete list of navigation Authorities yet but this was largely redressed by Stephen Peters handing him a complete list of river navigations. He would sort out those still missing. RH
 - e) Waltham Abbey. no contact had been made despite efforts to do so. Nikki Timbrell to pursue. NT
 - f) Chris Barnacle gave a report on his discussions with Mr Dean at Market Harborough. He wanted someone to take over the organisation which was fully funded, but for which there would be no return. We would be excluded from discussions on the project and it was agreed not to take part. Jon Darlington to write diplomatically. JD

It was revealed that BW intended to remove the toilet accommodation at the basin as part of the redevelopment. Pete Sterry was to make inquiries and representations to BW over the removal of the facility if it should prove to be a permanent feature. PS
Neil Hutchinson was to do the same with the similar proposal at Bishop's basin Coventry. NFI C P

5. The chairman's paper 94/2 on NABO Policy Statements was intended to provide a framework in which to operate for the benefit of members of Council and the membership generally. There was a need to identify existing policies and Penny Barber agreed to go through all past minutes in an effort to identify items which could be classed as policy. PB

There was a robust discussion on whether existing decisions, which some members regarded as policy already, should be subject to a consultation process or whether only new policy statements should be. Concern was expressed over the publication in The Boater of a large number of statements for approval by members and the possibility of appearing over concerned with paperwork.
It was agreed as there had been only a short time in which members could consider the proposal that the matter would be referred back to the next meeting and in the

- meantime all members were to write to Jon Darlington with their views as soon as possible. He and Penny Barber would produce a paper following the trawl of minutes. It was agreed that where possible the agenda and accompanying papers should be posted 14 days before the meeting to ensure adequate time for consideration of papers. It was also agreed that where a paper was produced by the Chairman there should be a substitute chairman of the meeting appointed to guide the discussion on that issue. ALL JD PB
6. Stephen Peter's paper on Services to members was approved subject to amending 5 to read in the final line ".....possible other appropriate bodies.", and inserting the words "and views" after "actions" in line one of 7.
7. Those council members who had not sent in job descriptions to Jon Darlington are to do so as soon as possible. Jon to consider any gaps or duplications. It was agreed that a standard should be set for performance commensurate with the fact that NABO is a voluntary organisation. This would assist new Council members in particular. ALL
8. Penny Barber presented her treasurer's report. (annexed). She felt that it was necessary not to rely solely on a written report as a verbal one could be more up to date. It was agreed that the publishing of her report in the minutes should be done. A letter of thanks had been received for our contribution of £50 to the end of garden moorings costs.
9. Council Member's reports
- a) Membership. Christine Potter stated there were over 1400 members. New members were slow but possibly caused by the closed season. Neil Hutchinson suggested the appointment of a recruitment officer and Collin Paillin volunteered to take on the task. It was felt that all members should be encouraged to recruit new members through enclosing leaflets in copies of The Boater. A new colour (yellow) for a new batch of leaflets was approved and Nikki Timbrell was to arrange the printing of 5000. NT
- The new database was undergoing trial but looked satisfactory. It would incorporate a field for boat names.
- b) The Boater/newsletter. Nikki Timbrell had technical problems over the publication of a Boater which was now due. It was agreed that Jon & Melanie Darlington would print it but articles for inclusion should be sent to Nikki by Saturday 22nd at the latest. ALL
- There was some discussion on the issue of using a boat as a "dwelling" arising from the article in Boater 6. Phil Bland had seen a solicitor's letter which set out BW's attitude on the point but which local managers appeared not to have been briefed. He would try to obtain a copy and permission to publish the letter in The Boater. PhB
- c) Publicity & Public Relations. Pete Sterry had nothing to report save that there were a number of rallies in the pipeline. It was agreed that copies of The Boater and Newsletter should be supplied to Canal & Riverboat and Waterways World and, subject to Council approval, to other suitable publications. We should not prejudice our policy of ensuring that members were given news first. This was not thought a problem because of the long publication dates of the other journals.
- It was agreed that the article in the May edition of Canal & Riverboat should be accompanied by a recruiting advert on the facing page, subject to the cost being no more than £200. PS
- It was agreed that the Chairman should have a postal subscription to both Canal & Riverboat and Waterways World to ensure he was up to date on all current issues. Penny Barber to arrange. PB
- d) Regional representatives.
- i) South East. Harry Winter has difficulties in attending meetings and wished to pass this task on to another. He will continue as technical officer. Peter Lea was willing to co-ordinate the area but needed help in attending meetings. Nikki Timbrell was willing to assist. It was agreed that there was need to discuss the co-ordination of area representation and production of reports when discussing job descriptions at the next meeting.
- ii) North West. There was no co-ordinator at the moment and Neil Hutchinson agreed

- to do this until a replacement had been found. Melanie Darlington was to search the database for members living and mooring in the area to identify a suitable candidate. iii) Midland. Collin Paillin reported he had written to all Waterway managers and had only one reply so far. He would attend the Midland Canal Forum at Fradley on 15/2 with Pete Sterry and do a report for The Boater. MD
ColP
- Penny Barber raised the proposed development at Hawkesbury Junction where 12 residential berths were to be provided at a price of £18000 for a 25 year lease. It was not clear whether this was an additional provision or a reduction in the number of existing residential berths at Hawkesbury. Collin was to pursue this with BW. Neil Hutchinson stated that this sort of development needed monitoring throughout the system and suggested that each Council member should monitor some part of the system to keep an eye on similar proposals. This would be further discussed under job descriptions but contact with each BW office would help. Christine Potter agreed to monitor Lapworth and Chris Barnacle, Braunston. CP
CB
- iv) North East. Nothing to report.
- At this point Peter Sterry and Phil Bland left the meeting.
- v) River users co-ordination. Stephen Peters presented his report (attached). He was to look at the Upper & Lower Avon development plan which had just been issued. Consideration was given to financial support of the Avon Weirs Trust, where there appeared to be no body responsible for their maintenance, but it was felt that such support could be a precedent for all restoration projects and that it was better to raise the matter with NRA when the proposed meeting was held. Appreciation of Stephen's efforts was expressed. SP
- Neil Hutchinson raised the question of responsibility for co-ordination of Rivers issues within a regional representative's area. It was agreed that the Regional representative was responsible for the whole area but that he must keep Stephen fully informed on issues relating to rivers within that area. Neil Hutchinson was to look at job descriptions in this light and Phil Bland was to be asked to co-ordinate BW policy statements generally. NH
PhB
- vi) Navigation. Neil Hutchinson was unclear about the exact nature of his role. Jon Darlington confirmed that it was as a general watchdog for threats to navigation from all sources and there was a need for all members to feed to him any such threats they became aware of. Neil was to write a job description indicating the type of reports he needed to fulfil the task. NH
10. The Living afloat Conference. Penny Barber confirmed that the proposal for a major conference on the issue had been abandoned. Instead there would be small working parties highlighting particular difficulties and the next meeting was scheduled for 6/2.
11. Changes at IWAAC. The exchange of correspondence in 94/5 & 6 was noted and that the next meeting was to be minuted. Disquiet was expressed over the role of the DOE but it was accepted that little could be done. The representation of boaters was being further eroded by the non reappointment of David Stevenson and the replacement of Giles Baker as Chairman. Stephen Peters was to write as a navigator demanding greater representation on IWAAC as he had done for many years and Jon Darlington would write to the DOE and an article for The Boater. SP
JD
12. Response from BW to various issues contained in 49/7 & 8. It was agreed that BW's response was unsatisfactory and did not attempt to answer the points raised. Neil Hutchinson commented that we had got no further since April 1993 on the availability of Waterway Standards. The important figures were now being hidden away in Business Plans not available for inspection and the Standards documents he had seen at Braunston were the same he had seen 2 years ago. Jon Darlington was to reply to BW asking for each point made to be addressed properly and in the meantime to publish suitable extracts in The Boater to demonstrate our difficulties in dealing with BW. JD
13. A.O.B.

a) Following objections by a member to BW complying with a request for information from the Inland Revenue it was agreed that nothing could be done as the Revenue were exercising their statutory powers.

b) A suggestion had been made that there ought to be meetings for boaters. It was agreed that anyone could attend council meetings if they wished and that Council members were available to discuss problems. There was no desire to add to existing burdens carried by Council members.

c) Neil Hutchinson was authorised to update the insurance survey.

NH

d) It was agreed to accept the IWA invitation to meet. Jon Darlington, Penny Barber & Peter Lea to attend.

JD, PB & PL

e) 2 non boat owning applicants were approved for membership (intended buying boats) Mr E A Owen and Mr Lee Pascal.

f) Chris Barnacle would represent NABO at the Ashby Rally. He would mark leaflets to identify the source of new members.

CB

g) Peter Lea's report on Boat Safety to be published in The Boater.

JD

14. Next meeting. Saturday 26th February Port 86 Hockley Port. at 10.00am.

rmh 15/1/94