

## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on 20th October 1995 at Northfield, Birmingham commencing at 10.00am.

Present: Jon Darlington, Melanie Darlington, Penny Barber, Roger Hancock, Neil Hutchinson, Phillip Ogden, Stephen Peters, Nigel Parkinson, Mij Lambert, Christine Potter, Chris Boxall, Peter Lea, Pete Sterry & Phil Bland.

1. Apologies: Nikki Timbrell

2. The minutes of the meeting of 9th September 1995 were agreed an accurate record

3. AGM Arrangements 25/11/95

Draft Accounts, subject to audit were approved.

Agreed that a full audit of the accounts was unnecessary and that a definition of requirements should be agreed as follows:

"The Council defines the work it expects to be carried out by the auditors appointed under paragraph 9(e) of the Constitution to be: An examination of the books and records of the Association, and verifying that the Association's accounts are in accordance with them and the information and explanations provided, and are free of material misstatement"

This definition to be subject to confirmation by each Council at the first meeting each year.

Nominations. There were 20 candidates for 16 seats and a ballot would be held for the first time. Details of the voting system to be included in the Newsletter but to be a simple slip with all names from whom voters may select up to 16. The 16 with the most votes will be elected.

RH

4. Membership secretary.

Christine Potter was unable to continue and Melanie also. It was vital that the post was filled immediately as the option of doing nothing until the next meeting was unacceptable. A number of candidates for Council had indicated a willingness to do the job (without any clear understanding of what it entailed). It was vital that the right person was appointed as the well being of NABO depended on the efficiency of the membership secretary. It was agreed that PL, JD & MD should interview those candidates thought possibly able to fulfil the post. Also agreed that this need not be a Council post.

PL, JD,  
MD

After further discussion over lunch it was agreed in the absence of any real alternative to appoint Melanie Darlington to be the Membership secretary and to pay her a fee at the rate of £5 per hour for the period up to 9th March 1996. In the meantime efforts to be made to appoint a permanent postholder with sufficient time for the job to be properly handed over by Melanie.

Agreed that a careful definition of the activities required by the post should be undertaken as it might prove impossible to do it entirely by volunteer labour and consideration may have to be given to making it a paid post.

5. Council Priorities

There may be a need for continuity with a new Council to be considered in due course but Council identified as the main priority for the coming year recruitment of new members. Consideration to be given to providing tangible benefits as well as the lobbying efforts. It was agreed that outside issues like Standards would have an effect on membership and we needed to be as effective and ahead of other organisations with such issues. We must also tell people about it.

Recruitment on the track was essential and Christine Denton was willing to undertake the organisation of this. Exclusive benefits for members would help and a budgeted plan to achieve this was needed. It was necessary to regard this issue with the same importance as had been given to political issues in the past.

ML

Agreed a marketing plan should be prepared with costings and objectives. A target of 2500 members by AGM 1996 was agreed and efforts should be made to identify tasks to be done and recruit volunteers from existing members to do them. It may be necessary to pay for some of them. All members to be asked to complete the draft questionnaire designed to get volunteers and suggested that the June Council meeting should be replaced by a day blitzing a section of the system looking for new members. Agreed that Vice Chairman should take responsibility for co-ordination of marketing and recruitment effort.

Organisation of meetings. Agreed this needed to be improved to enable concentration to be directed on important issues. Recruitment and marketing to be high agenda items at all meetings. Reports from Reps only to be on exception basis for important issues but otherwise not to appear on the agenda and to be replaced by written reports to the secretary 2 weeks before each meeting together with any agenda items. Secretary to send out agenda and reports in future.

REPS  
SEC

Preparatory papers to be circulated similarly.  
 Council member's handbook and Policies. NP had not identified many policies from information he had. SP to provide details of those he thought had been adopted. SP  
 Agreed handbook should be completed asap and SP agreed to take on this task, delegating attendance at meetings as necessary. SP  
 Agreed responses from members likely to be better if SAE provided PB to investigate cost of Freepost envelopes and proceed if cost less than £100. Hopefully to be available for the survey PB

6. Council Member's reports

- a) Funding. Melanie reported the accounts were reasonably sound and a windfall of £1199.52 received from C&G merger.
- b) Membership Melanie reported 1400 members.
- c) Marketing. nothing further. It was noted various changes had occurred to BW personnel and that Bernard Henderson was seeming to be taking a more active role giving apparently a more open approach.
- d) The Newsletter. Items to be sent immediately. JD to supply Warden article. CVs where not done direct to NT JD ALL
- e) Regional representatives.
- i) North West. Neil reported on a new format adopted for meetings in Borders- more open and well attended by staff.
- ii) North East. Pete Sterry added to written report that a new vandal proof paddle was being tried on the Chesterfield canal (&K&A) and that BW were trying to get compensation from BR for delays caused at Keaby railway bridge. If successful they will share with boaters affected.
- iii) Midland. Chris' report circulated. Confusion lay in defining his area. NH to provide details of all rep boundaries. He commented on water supply issues particularly at Stone. Repair of leaking gates made major contribution to management viz. Southern GU and use of overflow paddles in flights had been proved in Stephen Goode's area. NH
- iv) South East. Peter Lea reported the main problem was with national Trust and new Bylaws. He had written objecting. Also written protesting about landfill tax and reported BW & NRA discussing an exemption. Also written supporting upgrading of Sheffield canal to cruiseway status.
- f) River users co-ordination. Stephen's report circulated.
- g) Navigation. NH reported the stoppage list was late. Not happy delayed for Standards stuff. The printed version no longer accurate. NH to provide details of revised Christmas Windows for Newsletter. Wanted to complete work on getting definitions of standards and dimensions agreed with BW. NH to liaise with DIG who were also working towards this. NH

7. Matters arising from last meeting

- a) Tent. Agreed to purchase new American tent at cost approx £669. NABO logo to be printed on canvass. PS
- b) Boat Safety Standards. BW have notified scheme is in existence. 50% of detailed points raised by NABO have been agreed but no success on 2.13, 7.1 & 7.14. Technical committee met and agreed to pursue with BW. Advice had been ignored. Agreed to complain using Complaints Procedure on basis that major changes made without explanation, the technical manual was excessively expensive in view of its content and was not available, examiners not trained, course not complete, no clear instructions what standards applied in changeover period. NP to draft letter on technical aspects for JD. JD to write about failure to supply surveyors list as required (notify RH if JD don't get your copy) and the questionable legality of giving formal notice in the middle of a general article in Waterways News. NP
- Appeals process not clear. Secretary to ask for details of how they will operate. RH
- It was noted all three requirements of s17 had to be in place before licences could be refused.

8. A.O.B.

- i) SP to pursue provision of BW environmental code of practice. SP
- ii) Dave Green & Christine Potter willing to help organise a NABO event if required.
- iii) Badges. Agreed to order 200 dark blue, hopefully ready for AGM. Next version to consider addition of the slogan "For Navigation". PB to organise merchandise stall for AGM. Suggestions of badges for Council members and a roundel for Council member's boats were approved. ML
- A new A5 poster should be sent with next Newsletter concentrating on Standards.
- iv) Thanks were expressed to Christine Potter and Melanie Darlington for all their excellent work.

- 9. Next meetings. Saturday 4th November, Friends Meeting House, Northfield, Birmingham, meeting with Ray Wood.
- AGM 25th November
- Next Council 9th December.