

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on 12th October 1996 at Northfield, Birmingham commencing at 10.00am.

Present: Jon Darlington, Nigel Parkinson, Peter Lea, Penny Barber, Stephen Peters, John Griffith, Neil Walker, John Glock, Andrew Sherrey & Roger Hancock

1. Apologies: Nikki Timbrell, Pete Sterry, Phillip Ogden, Phil Bland & Denis Smith
2. The minutes of the meeting of 7th September 1996 were agreed to be brilliant.
3. Update on Boat Standards
Nigel reported the Technical committee met last week and refused class exemptions for RYA but altered the manual to cover. GRP fuel tanks are OK if meet fire resistance requirements. A type of fuel hose said to comply with BS appeared not to. Further investigations going on. Note to be included in Newsletter.
BW draft implementation proposals tabled with Committee for comment. Appeared to be some discrepancy with letter to JD from Fletcher indicating fixed position.
Discussion of used of definition of dangerous boat. This was a vindication of NABO's position in that BW were belatedly recognising some aspects more serious than others and scheme should be reduced to just those items.
Forum had discussed draft last week and accepted concept of dangerous boat but were not happy with hull integrity test which examiners were not competent to carry out & was outside BSS. Not willing to accept 3 month time to deal with failure items should be by next licence renewal. Hoped to secure 6 months. There were particular difficulties on rivers with few boatyards. Not happy no reference to appeals where time will have to be extended. Agreed to support Forum position. Jon to reply to Fletcher saying that document is a draft subject to consultation and contents not accepted. NP recommended lodging an appeal in all cases of failure. He was also trying to get class exemptions on fire extinguishers for all existing boats. BW had confirmed existing CofCs were valid until expiry. There was no guarantee of a BSS pass then.
Concern was expressed over the lack of quality controls over examiners. One surveyor was still failing boats with solid wiring.
4. BW Funding. Grant in Aid reduced by £4-5m. C&R campaigning for all to lobby MPs IWA ditto. NABO to encourage members to do so. List of bullet points being provided from Forum meeting. To be included in next (or following) Newsletter. We must ensure letters concentrate on public safety, drainage, heritage and other aspects not additional cost to boaters. PL to write article. Election candidates should also be targeted.
5. BW Licensing. 30.68% increase proposed over next 3 years. No consultation other than general initial approach. Specifics not mentioned. Breach of Charter and consultation procedure. Agreed move was probably political to aid discussions with Treasury and mobilise boaters. Doubt expressed whether complaint procedure would result in much success but on matter of principle meeting agreed (2 against) JD to continue complaints procedure he had already started.
NABO to object to years 2 & 3 and to use statement of Environment Agency that they were limiting increase to 3% in view of cost of BSS. We would expect increases in efficiency and reduction in wastage by BW in return for extra fees.
Press release to be drafted by NP. JD confirmed he would complete BSS complaint by end October.
6. Moorings. Standard agreement proposed for all moorings. PB expert on it. Local moorings policies differ and national policy needed. Some managers respond to wishes of users but a general policy was needed. JD to draft policy for discussion next meeting.
Forum were producing a list of local & national variations of policy. If anyone has specific examples, send to IWA for inclusion.
7. Towpath Cycleways. No further news save that information re Sustrans was not being properly passed on by BW.
BW indicating a review of cycling policy was being carried out.
8. Recruitment. Membership trend was up. 12% increase in the year approx. Efforts to continue to attract new members. A review of the effectiveness of rallies to be conducted.

9. Training of Volunteers. To be dealt with by new Council. There was need to improve training of area Reps as well. Anyone with agenda items for the first meeting to pass them to PL.
10. Canal closures and Water supplies.
 Closure of GU above Knowle not acceptable. Situation not improved by Lapworth Link. To be raised at Lapworth meeting. Stumpf was already ignoring agenda items requested by RBOA. The feeder reservoir were not closed to leisure activities for blue/green algae so no reason for stoppage. Nothing being done by badly fitting gates at Knowle until May when extra stoppage announced. Concern expressed over additional stoppages announced after main publication and lack of long term water improvement proposals. NP & NW to draft list of maintenance and water proposals for next Council.
 Railings on locksidcs. Unclear whether rumour or not but proposal for railings rejected on grounds of safety. Evidence to be collected.
11. AGM arrangements. 12 nominations for Council by deadline. No election needed. Changes to last year's CVs to NT by Wednesday.
12. Matters arising from last meeting.
 PL responded to BW Leisure & Tourism strategy
 PL pursuing correspondence with Peter Coyne re licensing rules.
 SP succeeded in getting BSS Technical Manual in all EA offices- congratulated.
 PL had passed comments on changes to Customer Charter to BMIF who were co-ordinating responses.
13. Matters arising from Reps.
 Demand for Council tax on unoccupied boat. Extract from Hansard makes it clear non domestic rates may apply but depends on ownership of land. Article to be included in Newsletter with Hansard extract.
 Treasurer presented accounts. Budget for rest of year to be available for next meeting.
14. AOB
 a) Advert invite from BW to go with licences. To be pursued as well targeted, depending on cost.
 b) SP reported Lee & Stort navigation to be transferred by BW to EA.
 c) River Wye. No attendance at enquiry. NW to make submission based on SP's work. He to provide disk & hard copy.
15. Next meetings. 23rd November AGM at Hockley Port
 7th December at Hockley Port

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