

**MINUTES OF A COUNCIL MEETING of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of BOAT OWNERS, held at The Waggon & Horses, Oldbury on SATURDAY 25th JANUARY 2003**

**Present:** Sue Burchett (SB), chairman, in the chair  
Trevor Rogers (TR) Adrian Stott (AS)  
Peter Lea (PL) Stuart Sampson (SS)  
Stephen Peters (SP) Gordon Reece (GR)  
Carole Sampson (CS) Peter White (PW)  
Aileen Butler (AB) David Harle (DH)

**Apologies for Absence:** received from Paul Herbert, Geoff Rogerson, and Peter Foster,

Action

**1. MINUTES**

With the addition of 'National Association of Boat Owners' to the heading, and the deletion of 'Trevor' from the voting for Vice Chairman, it was proposed by PL, seconded by AS that the minutes of the December 2002 meeting be accepted as a true record. With 8 in favour and 1 abstention, the chairman signed the minutes.

**2. MATTERS ARISING**

- a) TR had collected all of NABO's belongings from James Mason in Brentford.
- b) 2003 AGM. CS presented two venues, of which 'The Willow Tree' in West Bridgford, Nottingham, was thought to be preferable. After a short discussion, it was decided to book the minimum number of buffets to qualify for the free room, the cost to be passed on to the attendees at £6 a head, the cost of those outstanding to be met from funds. CS to pursue this.

CS

**3. MAKE-UP OF COUNCIL**

- a) Co-options.
  - 1) Proposed CS, seconded by SS, that Aileen Butler be co-opted onto Council. All were in favour. AB has agreed to take the post of Marketing and Events.
  - 2) Proposed SP, seconded by TR, that David Harle be co-opted onto Council. All were in favour. DH has agreed to become the Treasurer.
- b) Membership Secretary  
There is no-one to do this job at present. It was proposed by SB, seconded by SP, that Melanie Darlington be employed at £8 per hour to do the work. TR was concerned about the loss of personal service given to members by Roger Davis. CS volunteered to attend to the writing of replies and responses. Proposed AS, seconded by SB that it would be better to offer an annual fee of, say, £4000, rather than an hourly amount. This was agreed. A meeting is to be arranged between DH, CS, SB, and Roger to thrash out how the tasks are to be allocated.
- c) London Secretary  
AS has agreed to do this job.
- d) SB explained that Michelle Harris has resigned from Council, but has been

CS

uncontactable since. It was agreed to offer her the position of Honorary Legal Consultant, or however she would like the position titled. SB to continue to try to contact her by 'phone, then possibly followed up by a letter from CS.

Action

SB  
CS

A discussion followed about SB and CS acquiring their mail during the summer while they are away from home cruising. AS felt that NABO is now large enough to have a permanent address - a Post Office Box. This was seconded by PL. DH is to investigate cost etc. It was thought it would be more simple if Melanie Darlington set it up as she will be forwarding the mail.

DH

c) Format of Council meetings

CS explained that it might be a good idea for Regional Secretaries to have half an hour together, to discuss things which would be of no interest to the rest of Council: other groups such as the technical committee, or those working on the constitution, could get together at the same time. GR thought it would be useful. PL explained that this had been tried before, but it was found that items discussed were of interest to others. SB suggested that this could be done over lunch. GR and CS thought this could be possible.

d) Review of the Constitution

PL has been asked by SB to initiate this. CS asked that she be consulted. It was stated that ANY Council member with comments/suggestions about the constitution, should e-mail those to PL.

PL  
ALL

#### 4. FINANCIAL REPORT

TR explained that NABO had two accounts, a deposit account with the Cheltenham & Gloucester BS, and a current account with the Alliance & Leicester. During last year, two transfers of £5000 had been made as our expenditure had exceeded our income. After discussion with Andrew Sherrey, it was realised that there was no benefit being with the C & G, so all funds have been transferred into the Alliance & Leicester. DH will be sorting out the accounts. He had with him the appropriate form for transfer of signatories, who, under the constitution, have to be the chairman, vice chairman, secretary and treasurer, with any two to sign cheques. Discussion followed about the need for James M and Graham F signatures to be obtained, PL felt that it should be acceptable to the A & L if just one ex-signator (in our case there are two) was available - if a person dies it would not be possible!

RESOLUTION: Proposed Peter Lea, seconded by Stephen Peters, that the four officers of the National Association of Boat Owners be authorised to sign cheques (any two of the four) and that the treasurer be authorised to sign any variant of this resolution as required by our bank.

This was carried unanimously.

a) Expenses

This was raised by SS and CS, who incur an additional expense when attending meetings, which results in NABO having the benefit of both of

them at the cost of less than a rail ticket for one of them.

A discussion centred around the claiming of out-of-pocket expenses incurred which are of benefit to NABO, for example where someone travels to a meeting with a member of another organisation and buys lunch as a contribution towards the cost.

RESOLUTION: Proposed TR, seconded by PL.

NABO confirms its policy of only reimbursing basic travelling costs while on NABO business. However, in exceptional circumstances, other expenses in lieu of travelling will be accepted where it can be clearly demonstrated that this results in a beneficial result to NABO. Wherever possible, these arrangements should be agreed in advance with the Treasurer.

All were in favour.

Expense claims should be sent to DH for authorisation.

b) Auditor

Ann Tilman has agreed to audit this year's accounts, and would like all the paperwork by the end of June. SB had sent the customary case of wine as a thank you. We need a new auditor for 2003-2004: under the constitution, it has to be someone who is a member of a professional body recognised by the Companies Act 1985. Council members were to ask around people they know.

n.b. "Definition of the Audit" to be placed on the agenda next time.

ALL

CS

## 5. OUTSIDE MEETINGS

a) RYA discussion meeting re Inland Helmsman's Course on 07/03/03. SP raised the question about the validity of supporting this. AS felt that we need to be there to have our voice heard. Doubt was expressed about the reasons for RYA arranging such a course. Sadie Dean had just arrived at this point, and, as she is in the area at that time, agreed to attend on NABO's behalf if she finds she is available.

b) BSS meetings. TR explained that these are divided into Technical Committee and Management Committee, which can lead to various sub committees. In the past, these have been attended by the Chairman and Vice Chairman, but he felt we should encourage some new blood. A member, Nigel Parkinson, has already offered to help, and it was agreed that we try to find other interested members from NABO News.

c) London User Group meeting 18/02/03. AS will attend as London Secretary.

d) RYA Inland Navigation Panel 1/03/03. AS, TR, and SS were interested in attending. SB will decide who goes. CS to write to generally accept the invitation.

e) RFERAC Committees. SP had obtained application forms for some of the regions, and urged regional secretaries to apply, in spite of our limited success in the past. CS said she had discussed the Northeast with Peter Foster, who will apply. It was agreed that SB will write to David Lawrence in support of our candidates, CS to write to accompany each application.

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SB

CS

## 6. BSS TECHNICAL BRIEFING

a) TR explained that a risk assessment had taken place as part of BW's Boat Safety Review. (Glossy reports produced.) Although he felt that the

emphasis may be wrong, he senses a desire to back off and make more items advisory. This is very much a face-saving exercise. There will also be a re-writing of the technical manual. Penalising craft which comply with the RCD but not the BSS may be contrary to European law.

- b) TR informed Council of the meeting with Alun Michael, at which the IWA dominated. Funding for the EA has been settled for the next three years. It was clear that DEFRA would not rescue a failed navigation authority (e.g. UANT or LANT) - this government department is not as flush with funds as DTR. PL suggested that SB and TR set up a meeting with the appropriate civil servants to put our points across, then follow this up with a letter outlining those points to the minister. Obviously, the discussion topics need to be outlined beforehand.
- c) REGULATOR. Bob Clarke and 'Canal Boat' magazine and a prominent Birmingham MP are mounting a campaign and questions will be raised in The House. Factual information is required about mooring hikes and other BW customer-unfriendly practices. SS to check if he still has the information. NABO has been asked to mount a campaign, put up banners at Crick etc.

TR  
SS

POLICY: IT IS NABO POLICY TO CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR A WATERWAY REGULATOR. All were in favour.

SS appointed Press Officer, SS to prepare a press release to this effect.

SS

## 7. ISSUES

- a) EA Registration Proposal. EA proposes that all boats on or connected to its waterways should be registered. This would include those in private marinas on all EA navigations, up creeks, etc.. TR felt that it could be the thin end of the wedge, and lead to a safety requirement and insurance, and ultimately lead to fewer boats on EA waters. There is further talk of harmonising licences on all EA waters. PL had been dealing with this issue in the past, and will continue to do so. NABO supports harmonisation, but not compulsory registration. Basic registration would be acceptable, as long as it was not compulsory and not extended to creeks etc.
  - b) Craft Licence Fees. PL has prepared and sent NABO's response, after consultation with various Council members. CS congratulated him upon it. SS to put it in NABO News.
  - c) Mooring Agreement update. TR and SB had had a meeting with Paul Wagstaffe about this, but it was a case of being told rather than being consulted.
  - d) Mooring Prices situation. James M. had admitted that he had not consulted the Office of Fair Trading. Thus, the situation has stalled. James M. to be asked if he has any paperwork pertaining to this.
  - e) Continuous cruising policy / overstaying on visitor moorings. This is a mooring problem, not a cruising problem.
- n.b. As it would be impossible to decide policy on this subject within a short period of time, this to be placed on the agenda next time.
- f) Policy re angling from visitor moorings. CS felt that certain questions need to be asked about this: when are the angling licences due for renewal, and what will BW's attitude be towards excluding anglers from moorings at renewal? What signs will be erected? What are the moorings for if boats

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cannot use them? etc.

- g) IWA and dredging policy. AS had distributed background information prior to the meeting. NABO, DBA and IWA had agreed a joint approach to BW about non implementation of the agreed policy on dredging, since when the IWA has been dragging its feet. AS asked that NABO should ask the IWA why they have broken rank. PL will do this.

PL

## 8. FUTURE EVENTS / RALLIES

- a) Earls Court Boat Show. This has been and gone, and we coped, mainly with the enormous amount of time given by SB. Thanks were given to her by Council. SB felt that we wouldn't do it again, unless favourable terms were offered to us next year when the event moves and is expected to have a much larger inland navigation section.

The Thames Ring book, given away for publicity, has virtually run out. Some to be offered to members upon request (CS to see to this), the rest to be given away at the Penton Hook rally, and maybe also in the boaters' packs for the National Rally. A re-print is being considered for distribution by 'Canal Boat'. Some discussion took place about whether NABO would be prepared to subsidise the cost.

CS

n.b. This to be placed on the agenda next time.

- b) Boats on Show. AS reported a meeting between himself, SB, Mike Shefras and Ian Hartley at Penton Hook Marina. There is space for only 20 boats, although SB felt that more could be accommodated, and PH will charge £20 per boat for the weekend (two nights). We could have the use of a bar on the Friday evening, and a barbecue possibly for the Saturday evening. By the time a small profit is added on, together with the licence cost, AS felt it was not worth it. CS reported that the EA were offering a one-third discount on licences, providing they were purchased through the rally organiser. It was decided to proceed at £25 per boat + licence. Leaflets, provided by Boats on Show Ltd., will be included with the next NABO News. AS to write a publicity article for NABO News.

AS

- c) Other events.

Little Venice - Mayday Bank Holiday 3 - 5 May

Crick Boat Show - 24 - 26 May

Penton Hook - 16 - 18 May

National - 22 - 25 August

Wendover

NIA

GR will be attending the Federation of Bridgewater Cruising Clubs rally at Aspley Green

The show details are to be included in NABO News asking for help.

AB asked about the promotion of NABO as an organisation. Council members were asked to think about this.

AB will be the contact for goods mail order, Melanie D. to be asked to be the packer and poster.

SS  
ALL

## 9. REGIONAL REPORTS

- Anglian - PW reported a problem attending meetings. The member (Mike Smith) who has attended on NABO's behalf for the last few years is still

attending, and EA don't seem to recognise our new secretary. After discussion, it was decided that SB will contact the member by 'phone to explain the situation, this to be followed up by a letter to EA from CS.

Northwest - GR informed Council of his being overlooked in two recent user group meetings. He has written to the regional Director concerned and awaits a reply. CS had noticed from recent minutes that a proposed cut in staffing levels at the Standedge Tunnel is proposed, and questioned whether this should be condoned as the costs of maintenance and passage through the tunnel are to be borne by boaters via the licence. It would be unreasonable to then cut the service. CS to write to Paul Wagstaffe.

Northeast - CS is dealing with the proposed re-development of the Loughborough Town Arm, brought to her attention by a concerned member. Peter Foster had submitted a written report to SB, CS to type this up and distribute it via e-mail.

Rivers - EA has produced a questionnaire which requires a response by the end of March. SP directed Council to the EA website to view this. SP had contacted the Cruising Association (a sort of coastal version of NABO). SP to arrange a meeting with them, which AS will attend, to see how we can work together. We need to decide in advance what we want to talk to them about.

No other reports received.

SB  
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CS

SP  
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**10. SECRETARY'S SLOT**

- 1) A firm called MDA want us to include a flyer for their publication (A Thesaurus of Boating Terms) in a NABO News. This was NOT approved, unless they are prepared to pay us for doing so.
- 2) CS has a year planner, and asked that any Council member who attends a meeting inform her of it, either before or afterwards. AS requested that it be put on the website.
- 3) CS is collecting a "Pool of Information" which will contain details of how NABO operates: financial details, how NABO News is produced, how the website is accessed, which members attend User Group meetings on our behalf, etc. etc.. This was thought to be a very good idea. CS to proceed.

ALL

CS

**11. E-MAIL COMMUNICATIONS**

SS spoke about the problems which have been occurring with council@nabo.org.uk and said he hoped they will be resolved by the end of February when our ISP updates our system. It is better for Council members to make up their own Council mailing list (by typing in each address to make a group) in the meantime, and the use of rich text or HTML would often lead to gobbledygook.

SS said that when he first joined Council, it was par for the course for every Council member to produce articles for NABO News. Therefore, he would be pleased to receive them from those apart from SP (!), especially snippets (such as otters returning to Leeds) from User Group meetings.

ALL

**12. A . O . B.**

- a) Insurance. Due to the time, those interested were asked to stay behind after the meeting had closed.


The meeting closed about 5.30p.m.

**INSURANCE**

CS explained what we are covered for. It was decided that the following alterations to the policy are required:

- 1) Community Risks Policy - £500 for equipment to include in transit  
£1000 for computer equipment to be removed  
(members to insure computers themselves)  
£1000 for tv's audio-visual, gardening, tools etc. to  
be removed  
Money in transit to be rationalised  
Public liability to be reduced to £3 million **CS**  
Libel & Slander, and Personal Accident to be added

CS to attend to this.

Signed: 

Date: 8 - 3 - 03