

**MINUTES OF A COUNCIL MEETING of the NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION of BOAT OWNERS, held at The Waggon &
Horses, Oldbury, on SATURDAY 5th JUNE 2004**

Present: Stuart Sampson, chairman, in the chair (SS)
Gordon Reece (GR) Aileen Butler (AB)
Stephen Peters (SP) Celia Kennedy (CK)
Carole Sampson (CS)

Apologies for Absence: Peter White & Geoffrey Rogerson. Geoff thanked everyone for the birthday card.

1. MINUTES

- a) A minor correction having been made, the minutes were approved as a true record. The chairman signed the minutes.
- b) Action Reports from the previous minutes.
- CS All done.
- GR 1) Has written to Hannah Luff, but received no reply.
2) No enquiries made about alternative banking as yet.
3) Done.
4) The Montgomery Canal Consultation was at its final stage, and GR had already responded to an earlier document. He noted that some of his suggestions had been incorporated. He felt it redundant to distribute this latter document.
- SS 1) Done.
2) Has contacted Ann Davies, but has had no reciprocal contact.
3) and 4) Done. John Russell attended the inaugural SIBUG meeting at Crick. He has already sent a comprehensive report to SS. The organiser of SIBUG, Sally Ashby, was pleased to see a NABO representative there, and hopes that the new organisation will work with NABO.
5) - 9) Done.
10) Done: he had sent an e-mail to Head of Personnel BW, and had received no response. SP is to look into the Act of Parliament which covers security, then contact Nigel Johnson, legal director BW. SP
- SP Done.
- GRo Not received. No further knowledge.
- JJ Joan Jamieson had prepared a letter re Trent lock-keepers, which CS had commented upon. Presumably this had been sent, no further knowledge.

• CS asked if SP had received any response to his letter about the impending parking time limitation.

• SP had received a response dated 7th May, which promised a further response.

Nothing further had been heard. SP will follow this up. SP

2. EA TRANSPORT & WORKS ORDER

SP thought that this should be available for public consultation by now, and wondered if anyone else had heard anything.

SS informed Council that it is still not available, and that EA is dragging its feet.

3. RED DIESEL

SS informed Councillors about his conversation with Ann Davies, APCO. It seems that the red diesel sold to boaters is in fact, gasoil, which is of such a poor quality that it is causing problems to occur with Ebersbachers, and the engines of hire boats in particular. APCO is pursuing the matter.

SS feels that there is a safety argument that equality in price of diesel and petrol would cause some boaters to resort to petrol engines, which would be dangerous.

SP mentioned the RYA argument that coastal vessels would buy their fuel (much more cheaply) from abroad - Channel Islands for example, although he felt that this would have little influence on the final decision. He has still had no communication from the RYA.

4. COMPUTERS AND e-MAIL COMMUNICATIONS

SS expressed concern that some Councillors were having lots of problems with NABO computers. He wondered whether communicators, such as the Nokia one that Sue Burchett used to use, would be more beneficial for those who spend long periods of time on their boats.

GR said he does not use his NABO computer as, following repair, it had lost Windows XP. He asked for approval to buy the programme (approximately £60) to see if it could be made to work.

AB wondered if she had a copy with her computer (same model). If so, she will post this to GR, if not, all agreed that GR should buy the programme. AB GR

SS said that it could be sold if it didn't work.

CS proposed: that NABO purchases communicators for those on Council who would find one beneficial whilst afloat, subject to ratification of facts and figures.

Seconded SS, all agreed.

At this point in time, only AB wished to take up this offer, and she felt that she would not need a printer.

AB contacted Sue Burchett.

- a) It is possible to use a printer with a communicator as long as the printer has an infra-red port (possibly around £300).
- b) Communicators are available from Vodafone and Orange.
- c) Limited storage facility for e-mails, but it is possible to purchase extra memory cards.
- d) Cost £50 per month for two phones and insurance.

This was thought to be expensive, but there might be alternative plans available. AB to visit Vodafone and Orange outlets to make enquiries, then to contact GR or CS to organise purchase so that she is not out of pocket. AB

It was considered useful to know who uses which Mobile phone service provider.

CK	O2
AB	O2

GR	T mobile
GRo	Not known
SS	Vodafone, with Orange tendencies.
SP	Does not have one.

5. DEFRA QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW OR BW - NABO RESPONSE

SS informed Council that this is taking place, and that NABO has been invited to comment.

CS asked what categories we need to comment upon: not known.

- SP felt that the downgrading of some commercial waterways such as the River Severn, went against the government objective of promoting commercial use of waterways.

- CS wondered if we could comment on the lack of maintenance of the canal system if it is not within the remit of the review.

- CK feels that too much money is being spent on money-making schemes, rather than on infrastructure maintenance. Current lack of this could lead to claims against BW for s

SS felt that we need to give evidence that this is happening.

SP and CK can provide hard fact information to back this up.

SS stated that everyone should post such facts on the Waterway Reports Board so that they can then be used as evidence.

- SP thought we could mention the lack of moorings provision, both long-term and visitor.

- CS - BW has concentrated on the elimination of the safety-related backlog, neglecting day-to-day maintenance, eg dredging. Also, newly opened canals have only been restored to "minimum standards", which means that considerable expense is needed to make them properly navigable. This money is not being spent.

SS - If the lack of maintenance has led to a new safety backlog, then we can complain.

- CS - BW is not enforcing its own bye-laws, eg motorcycles on towpaths, and those relating to cyclists.

6. ITEMS FOR BW CORRIDOR ISSUES MEETING 14/7/04

- CS feels that 'meaningful consultation' as required by law under the BW Act 1995, is not taking place. CK and GR agreed. She went on to state that there is wide discrepancy around the regions as to the meetings that take place.

SS asked that all regional secretaries should send details of when and how their consultation meetings are organised to CS, so that we can present a factual case to Eugene Baston.

REGIONAL SECRETARIES

SS + CK + CS feel that the regions are taking no notice of Eugene Baston. (re his user group guidelines.)

- CK feels that the question of identification for anglers and cyclists should be raised.

Complaints can be made against boaters, who are immediately identifiable by the registration number on the boat, but we do not have similar redress against them.

SS thought that this had been raised before, but thought it should be raised again.

7. NABO POLICY REVIEW

BW as a navigation authority - SS's fleshing out was accepted.

Cycling - Add a clause about lock wheeling using a cycle.

Angling - after considerable discussion, the policy statement needs to be re-worded. CS to do this. SS to include them in NABO News. CS SS

GRo's statement on water points had not been received.

8. RESTORATION PRIORITIES

This had been placed on the agenda at the request of Adrian Stott, who is concerned that various restoration schemes have all but been abandoned in the current financial situation. He feels that users should have some input into which are pursued and which are abandoned.

SS wondered if consultation over restoration possibilities is part of NABO's remit.

A lengthy discussion ensued, with no common standpoint amongst Councillors.

SS said that George Greener is asking for NABO's support for the Bedford/Milton Keynes Link, but he is now refusing to discuss the other restoration priorities. AS is to be advised to add this subject to the agenda for the forthcoming Corridor Issues meeting to see how other representatives respond. SS will do this if AS is not attending.

9. LICENSING, CONDITIONS & CHARGING

Default item on the agenda.

SS informed Council that OXERA, which had already recommended criteria for basing licence fees, was now being similarly consulted about mooring fees. SS welcomed this, as at least NABO will have something to argue over, rather than the 'market forces' excuse.

10. A. O. B.

a) SP had problems obtaining copies of BW bye-laws.

b) CS raised the issue of Anglian representation. Council was unhappy that our Regional Secretary cannot be contacted either by Councillors or by members during the summer months. Council decided to accord responsibility to Mike Smith during that time, and it was agreed that he should be included in the council plus mailings. CS to contact Mike.

CS

c) Following the letter sent after the last Council meeting, Mike Smith had received a rather non-committing reply to his request to be included on the Fens Waterway Advisory Group: CS read this out.

SP felt that Mike should fit the bill as he is also a member of the River Nene Cruising Club. NABO represents members and has a knowledge of the River Witham and the Northampton arm of the Grand Union, from where all visitors would come to use the link. CS to write another letter, endorsing Mike's candidature, but not asking that NABO be given representation, as the EA is not keen on organisations. CS

d) AB wondered if the proposed NABO cruise of the River Severn next year would clash with the IWA National Rally, and that possibly the cruise should be elsewhere. CS responded that there are enough boats on the system, a minority of which attend the National Rally, for the cruise to be supported: members would have to choose, and in any case, she wouldn't necessarily want to have more than about ten boats.

e) AB asked if the hand-out packs (previously handed around at the meeting to show what would be provided in 2005 for members attending rallies on NABO's behalf) were available for the Saul Rally. CS answered no, as these were for Runcorn and next year.

f) AB had heard that there is another firm making Dunton windlasses. GR had heard of this, but felt that they are of inferior quality.
CS felt that we should charge extra for them to non-members.

g) Having arrived first for the meeting, AB had gained the impression from the licensee that he was unhappy that he was taking less money for the lunches now that Council is smaller. CS had spoken to him about this last time, and he'd said he didn't mind. SS to ask again when he pays the bill. S

h) GR expressed his frustration over his being unable to contact anyone who knows anything at the Alliance & Leicester. It seems that the Access store in Reading is still being paid, in spite of his written instructions last February. CS had also spoken to someone on the phone after that and had been told the standing order was being cancelled there and then.
SS asked GR to write to all available addresses plus one to the highest-up person possible, and also to send a copy to Access. GR

i) SP asked if we will be sending a Council nomination form to Peter Foster. CS said that she already had it in mind to send one to Trevor Rogers. It was deemed appropriate that Peter should receive one also now that his mayoral commitments are over. CS

j) SS informed Council that Tony Haynes, NABO's South Secretary, has offered to help with NABO News, and wishes to be co-opted and/or stand for Council from September onwards. CS thought he could come to the September meeting in any case, and stand for Council at the next AGM, which is the following meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.35pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____

18 / Sept / 2004