

**MINUTES OF A COUNCIL MEETING of the NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION of BOAT OWNERS, held at The Waggon &  
Horses, Oldbury, on SATURDAY 23rd APRIL 2005**

**Present:**           Stuart Sampson, chairman, in the chair (SS)  
                  Peter Foster           (PF)                               Gordon Reece       (GR)  
                  Stephen Peters       (SP)                              Geoff Rogerson   (GRo)  
                  Tony Haynes         (TH)                             Carole Sampson   (CS)

**Apologies for Absence:** Aileen Butler and Celia Kennedy.

**1. MINUTES**

- a) With all who had been present in agreement, the minutes of the 5/03/05 meeting were approved as a true record. The chairman signed the minutes.
- b) Actions from the previous minutes.
- SS    i) The next PWG meeting has been cancelled due to the general election.  
      ii) Done, but latterly, so awaiting a response.  
      iii) Done.  
      iv) Done.
- PF    PWG meeting cancelled.
- CS    Done, and sent to PF.
- GR    Not done.
- AB    Done.
- TH    i) Done, see later agenda item.  
      ii) Done.
- GRo   Done, although Trevor thought he was being contacted about money! TR  
      thinks we/NABO has had considerable influence re the BSS.
- ALL   i) CS had investigated pens, not necessarily for selling, but for giving to  
      new members. TH was concerned that the pen should work. CS to try  
      to obtain a sample.  
      TH thought that we could sell amusing stickers against dog-fouling. PF  
      said that there had been some in the past and that he had some at  
      home. PF to send one to CS. **PF**  
      ii) SS had purchased a table from Lakeland Ltd. and had passed it on to  
      Ken Bennell, the member providing transport for the stand to go to  
      Crick. AB still needs to purchase chairs.
- c) Updates from the previous minutes.
- i) Canalwatch scheme.  
      This has been successfully launched on the Basingstoke Canal, and is  
      already showing results. Unfortunately, the Basingstoke Canal Authority  
      has missed a number off the phone number stated on the leaflets and  
      signs. As a result, new signs were having to be purchased, and  
      overprinting on the leaflets. BW is watching the outcome closely.
- ii) Press releases.
- a) Trent lock-keepers. PF had been interviewed for the local Newark  
      newspaper, and the item had been widely printed.
- b) Cutcrime. Ditto

SS noted that narrowboatworld.com has said we need more press releases. TH has the BSS in mind, and will be contacting Trevor for information for an article, but feels we should wait awhile. TH

## 2. RCR MEMBERSHIP OFFER

TH had contacted River Canal Rescue, and received a reply making generous savings to NABO members, as follows:

20% reduction upon joining the Bronze, Silver, or Gold schemes, then upon renewal, 5% discount on Bronze, 10% discount on Silver, and 15% discount on Gold.

After discussion, it was agreed to accept this generous offer, and in return to offer:

- Free A5 advertisement in every issue of NABO News
- Free distribution of publicity leaflets when no extra postage costs would be incurred
- Free 12-months membership of NABO to RCR customers, without voting rights, upon receipt of a completed standing order or direct debit form.

CS to reply to the letter.

CS

TH was thanked for his input with this.

## 3. NOMINATIONS / REPRESENTATIVES

### a) Ombudsman Committee.

SS explained that NABO can nominate up to three people. Peter Lea had applied for one of the unaligned places, and had been unsuccessful. He is therefore interested in being a NABO nominee. CS read out the requirements. GRo expressed interest. It was agreed that GRo, then Peter Lea, would be nominated. S

### b) National Stoppage Meeting, 13th June at Hatton.

GR offered to attend. TH was also interested, so SS will contact BW to see if two people can go.

GR TH SS

## 4. B. W. A. F.

SS went through the application form for joining this forum. He is to attend the inaugural meeting on 11/05/05, when the chairman and vice-chairman will be elected by secret ballot. NABO can nominate candidates for either or neither of these. GRo thought it might not be in NABO's interest to hold either of the posts at this time, wait and let things settle down.

After discussion, it was agreed that:

NABO should join BAAF

NABO should nominate Ivor Caplan for vice-chairman - SS to check his willingness to stand. SS

SS had two reservations: a) should both officers be from boating organisations?  
b) should both come from the inaugural committee?

SP and GRo felt that boating should be represented as fully as possible, and all agreed that SS should vote for a boating candidate in both elections. S

## 5. FINANCE

a) Further to the discussion via e-mails, new rectangular stickers in a new design have been ordered. 1500 have cost £477.52

Proposed CS, seconded PF that the cost be approved. All were in favour.

b) i) SS explained that he does a lot of on-line work, such as website management, accepting NABO News contributions, and receiving consultation documents which come to him as Chairman. His current connection method, via Bluetooth and mobile phone, is slow and expensive. He has made some enquiries, and decided that a Datacard, which plugs into his computer will speed up the process and ultimately be cheaper as the mobile phone will not be involved.

There are two plans:

Connect 5 - £199 for the card + £11.75 per month including 5 Mb of data transfer, £2.35 for each extra Mb,

Connect 75 - £149 for the card, then £23.50 per month including 75 Mb of data transfer, £1.76 for each extra Mb.

It seems that 5 Mb is insufficient, and 75 Mb far too much! No plan in between.

SS to investigate the possibility of an in-between plan, but failing that to purchase the 75Mb plan and downgrade after 6 months if excessive. SS

SS was prepared to buy the card himself, if NABO would pay the monthly fees, preferably by Direct Debit from the bank account.

CS asked if it could be passed on to someone else if/when SS gives up his NABO work. SS said anyone could pretend to be him and use the card, providing the computer has a suitable slot to take the card.

TH thought that SS should not be out of pocket, NABO should buy the card.

Proposed TH, seconded GRo that this should be so - all agreed. SS

ii) TH explained that his financial circumstances have changed, and that he will shortly become a Continuous Cruiser. Whilst afloat, he uses a mobile phone modem for electronic connections. He asked if NABO would be prepared to pay for the appropriate proportion of his phone bill.

CS said that this has already been done by past Chairmen. TH should submit a copy of the phone bill, with the relevant calls highlighted, as a legitimate expense.

SS mentioned the Boaters' Phone Company, which has supplied him with a copy of a CD Rom, with free 6-months membership of the 'club', about how to get the best out of a mobile phone whilst afloat. Ostensibly for review in NABO News, he thought TH might be able to use one of the plans and save money. SS to liaise with TH over this. SS

c) Travelling expenses.

TH questioned why NABO only pays expenses for fuel. Other organisations pay between 40p and 60p per mile. Why should NABO Councillors give their time, thought and hard work while effectively subsidising NABO at the same time?

CS thought any change in the system would need to be approved at the next AGM.

SS thought a change might encourage more people to stand for Council, or attend meetings on NABO's behalf.

CS thought this should NOT be put into NABO News where it would be read by BW and others. This was agreed.

SP felt that the matter of expenses is not in the Constitution, but that expenses had to be agreed by Council.

TH proposed that a rate be set at half the 40p which BW currently pays - i.e.20p a mile at this time. After further discussion, it was agreed that expenses on a mileage basis for representatives be appropriate. CS to prepare a wording for the next meeting to vote upon. SS to try to find out what other organisations pay. SS

CS

## 6. REPORTS

a) DEFRA. SS had received the report following the quinquennial review of British Waterways. He thought it disappointing, mainly comments about the business aspect, although there is a minor comment that BW needs to take more notice of users.

### b) REGIONAL REPORTS

i) Northwest. GR had left the meeting, but wanted it recorded that he didn't attend all the U/G meetings due to duplication of information imparted. David Lowe had attended the meeting in Wigan, and reported that it had mainly been an information-giving session.

ii) Yorkshire. CS reported that a representative from York City Council had attended the meeting for the first time.

- Concern was expressed about the state of the moorings and facilities in the city.
- During Royal Ascot, to be held in York this year, there will be a Park & Sail scheme.
- There are 30 full-time lock keepers employed throughout Yorkshire, + 12 seasonal staff
- Licence evasion has been reduced from 12.6% last October to 4.6% in February
- Moorings waiting lists have been rationalised from 500 to under 100
- the vedge pledge is 80% completed
- CS accepted onto the Waterway Representative Consultation Group to consider plans for the re-development of Leeds Canal Basin
- Keadby Lock will be mechanised this winter, about a 12-week stoppage

CS reported that the meeting in Leeds had nothing to do with consultation. Users were talked at for 90 minutes, then a presentation consisted of projected words being read out.

iii) Wales & Border Counties - no report

iv) Central Shires. A meeting has been suggested between NABO representatives and BW to discuss boating issues. Chris Boxall is involved and should be liaising with Celia K. The vedge pledge has not been done well.

v) East Midlands. CS had contacted Joan Jamieson. No meetings since her last report, but she, after complaints that the new lock paddles on the River Soar are too stiff - BW reckon that they can be operated by an average, reasonably-fit, middle-aged lady - , has been accepted as the reasonably-fit, middle-aged lady! She has yet to be used!

TH thought a press release would be in order once she has been used.

vi) South. TH reported that:

- Paddle gear on the River Wey is too stiff, so two different types of gear are being tried, but users don't know where they are!

- In-house dredging is to be done on the Wey
- IWA 2006 National Rally is to be held up the Basingstoke, to expose the ineptitude of the Canal Authority !!!!!
- The National Trust and the BCA are talking about a joint licence
- The BCA won't allow him to attend U/G meetings - SS to contact them. SS

vii) London. SS had contacted Adrian Stott.

- Concern was expressed about construction debris on the Paddington Arm
- A commercial operation is to start up
- Plans are afoot to move Olympic construction materials by water, if London is awarded the ceremony for 2012
- The plans for the Cross Rail link will cause problems in the Docklands, Poplar and Blackwall Docks will be closed for 5 years. Up to 120 moored boats will have to move, which cause problems for the rest of the area. AS is dealing with this.

viii) Mike Smith has submitted a report, in which he asks if Council could approach the EA for it to pay expenses when the meetings have been moved some considerable distance away.

ix) Rivers

- SP - the deadline for responses to the EA Transport & Works Order has been extended yet again.
- PF reported on the lack of invitations to the River Ancholme U/g meetings and also the Fens Waterway Link meeting - he is invited to the latter through Newark Council links.

It was agreed that SS should raise these issues at the NNUF meeting on 3rd May, + the paying of expenses. SS

GRo asked about vehicles on towpaths, such as emergency vehicles and hire boat maintenance vehicles. It seems that all gates are now padlocked following the accident on the K & A.

## 7. A. O. B.

1) TH asked if long-standing, hard-working Council members could be compensated for their commitment with honorary life membership.

This led to considerable discussion. PF thought it would be divisive. CS questioned how it could be given to some and not others, and in any case, how did Council members know what others did.

It was decided to air the subject casually at the AGM, when the new category of life membership is discussed. CS

2) PF is now on the committee of The Boating Association.

The meeting ended at 2.30pm.

Date of next meeting: 4th June 2005

