

**MINUTES of a COUNCIL MEETING of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
of BOAT OWNERS, held at the Waggon and Horses, Oldbury on Saturday  
29<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2008**

Present      Stuart Sampson (SS), initially in the Chair  
                Stephen Peters (SP)                  Simon Robbins (SR)  
                Howard Aguish (HA)                 Geoffrey Rogerson (GR)  
                Richard Carpenter (RC)         David Fletcher (DF)  
                Graham Lambden also attended (GL)

Apologies for absence: Andy Colyer and Brian Rowland

1.      MINUTES

            With all those who had been present in agreement, the minutes of the 6<sup>th</sup> September meeting were approved by the outgoing Chairman (SS)

Matters Arising:

HA      confirmed he had still not received anything further from J. Bryant Simon Salem re consultation.

RC      i) has had meeting with Melanie and received updates on what she needed in terms of administration of software and her continued commitment to carry out the Membership Secretary's role.

            ii) Met in London with Brian Roland to discuss the MS Access programme used by Melanie – BR felt it would be no problem to update as she requires and increase our own ability for information gathering from it. He will visit Melanie in the New Year with a view to being present when she does her monthly renewals and admin and this will enable them to work out what is needed to update it. (BR to contact Melanie to sort out date DF said he might like to attend also)

            On going from this the idea is that the General Secretary and the Chair would have an updated disc of the membership forwarded to them each month so that analysis can be made as required and its availability for council meetings.

            iii) RC and BR looked at the web site briefly and felt that it needs simplification and revamp to become an information base for us and our members and also prove its value to potential new members. The idea would be that this would be looked at in more detail in council at a future meeting.

CS Outgoing Gen Sec had written to Nigel Stevens regarding the issue of confidentiality from members of BWAF to the committees and councils they represent.

## 2. MINUTES (2)

With all those who had been present in agreement, the minutes of the 22<sup>nd</sup> November meeting were approved by the outgoing Chairman (SS)

Matters arising

### Election of Chairman

a) David Fletcher agreed to take the Chair for the forthcoming year and was proposed by SP seconded by HA and elected unanimously.

b) David addressed Council and stressed his need for support from all council members in helping him to guide NABO for the coming year. He outlined his views and his ambitions for the organisation and stressed his ideas that he wished to ensure NABO was a broad church of boat owners and the need to work hard on increasing membership to ensure it was fully representative and powerful in its role.

He listed his main target to be issues surrounding Roving Mooring/Continuous Cruising/ Auctions of Moorings and interface with BW.

David asked for more help from Council on EA issues and contacts in particular and expressed that his acceptance of the Chair was greatly helped by the continued presence on Council of Stuart Sampson who he would rely on for help and advice (and his time)!

c) DF took over the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

## 3. ROLES ON COUNCIL

A revue of the Roles played by Council Members and required by NABO took place and are attached to these minutes as an addendum.

(SP) pointed out that many of these do not need to be undertaken by council members and can be shared, in particular on the regions.

It was agreed that a further request for help be put into NABO News and that (HA) and (DF) would be in touch with possible new recruits as well as speaking with existing representatives to seek their continued willingness to continue or not.

RC agreed to talk with Philip Ogden with regard to continued service as Disable Representative.

Council was asked to forward any ideas to Howard – he would try and track down people who attended the AGM to see if they would help.

All agreed that it was important to seek a Broads representative and ideas were welcomed.

DF stressed how important it was for council to recruit deputies for the senior roles during the year to allow a chance of cover in the event of problems and also to ensure roles were spread for the future.

DF requested that all Council members did a short note giving a resume of their own personal backgrounds and personal expertise – this would help us all understand depth of experience, boating history, current commitments.

4. DEBRIEF FROM AGM of 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2008

a) A discussion took place about the suitability of the venue and the general poor attendance. It was felt that while the venue was excellent in terms of facilities it might be sensible to look at something a little further south in the future. A budget was approved of £500 to look at South Birmingham, North Oxfordshire, Lapworth areas. RC to investigate.

b) It was discussed that perhaps it should be more of a social event for NABO members with a wider range of presentations relevant to them to encourage attendance – the detail of the AGM not being much of a turn on.

c) It was felt we should contact attendees at Stafford who were not on council to obtain feedback (HA doing)

d) Discussion took place about the suitability of speaker – generally council were not overly impressed however it was felt that the general standard of questions were poor and that Vince Moran was too high up in BW to be able to handle small detail. If we went for this type of speaker in future we need to prearrange good questions from the floor.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM AGM

SS stressed that he felt we should continue to press for a boaters champion to the BW Board following the revelation that only a Non Exec director was a boat owner.

SR made the point that the bonus payments available to Directors and Senior managers which could be based in part on performance in terms of increasing revenues etc only add to our lack of confidence in consultations procedures and their transparency.

DF requested that Council provide him with six examples from the past 6 months that could be strongly followed up as broken promises from BW.

He needed this for his meeting with DEFRA in early December

6. FINANCE

- a) The Treasurer outlined our balances and his report was proposed by SS and seconded by RC.
- b) SP organised new signatory to be RC together with himself and HA to replace CS.
- c) The overall budget (£4k per annum) for the Membership Secretary was discussed and agreed to stay the same. To date this comes in less than this and so still allows if there are any increases in hours of membership secretary rises. This also applies to the stuffing of NABO news envelopes etc.
- d) A long discussion took place about a budget for legal advice (covered in item 7) it was agreed that the current level agreed would continue and that further requirements would be agreed as we go along. Proposed SP and seconded HA.
- c) NABO News costs would continue to vary based on our print run and levels of membership.
- d) Honorarium was agreed for the audit of £100 (RC organising)

7. LICENSING, MOORINGS, CONDITIONS & CHARGING

- a) CONTINUOUS CRUISING. The debate of proposed increases was continuing being discussed within BWAF with our input (GR)
- b) ROVING MOORING PERMITS. GR reported on his informal discussions with our legal advisers in particular about BW exceeding their powers. A long debate took place about whether we should take the matter to a judicial review - all agreed that we need to take legal council opinion on this action. SR pointed out that the congestion on moorings was hardly likely to be solved just because boats were required to move and that the £150 extra being proposed would only be swallowed up by administration and extra policing costs. SS asked "What is our policy on this? Does it currently do a job or should there be a legal challenge?"  
Council agreed on an initial informal approach to Sally Ash for more information (SS) following which DF, SS, GR will meet our solicitor to discuss further action. DF would further seek clarification on IWA's position following a meeting with Clive Henderson.

- c) DF issued two BW documents to council – one contained notes from Nigel Johnson BW's legal Director in relation to the Continuous Cruising Charge, the other contained general discussion notes on BW's response to BWAf on continuous cruisers, mooring rules and mooring permits. He requested Council pass comments to him before his planned meeting with other stakeholders. In particular he asked for SS, SR and GR to provide him with as much information and background to enable him to accurately discuss these matters with all his future contacts.
- d) MOORING AUCTIONS. SR reported that the IWA, RBOA and other boating organisations were all unhappy and asked if we could work jointly on initiatives. SR not opposed to open up his own extensive work to them. Unanimous support given by council to this.

8. NABO NEWS

Stuart Sampson agreed to continue to edit NABO News and as usual sought contributions from council although he had already some good content.

DF would write a new Chairman's piece and both SP and HA were doing pieces.

SS will ask Sally Ash to write a piece regarding BW policy on Roving Mooring Permits etc.

Procedure for printing and stuffing/ mailing through Ruth Field to continue as before direct from Stuart whilst he is editor.

9. NABO Promotion and Marketing

RC outlined his thoughts on how NABO is promoted (it's not really) and the need for the creation of more publicity to show potential members what it does and why to encourage membership.

A plan which includes a Road Show to attend boat gatherings and centres of boat population was being conceived and will be presented for approval at the next Council Meeting.

On the subject of membership, which has remained static or fallen slightly in the past two years, it was agreed that our target would be 500 new members in a year (from a boat population of 31,000 not a ridiculous target).

RC will get a list of concessions that get NABO news from Melanie in response to a query raised by SP

10. AOB

- 1. Stickers. Graham Lambden pointed out that the clear ones did not read very well on windows .. RC will

- look at all promotional items and the contents of joining and renewal packs as part of his proposals
2. Continuous Cruising. Graham Lambden observed the meeting as a CC'er with a view to helping to advise Council in future from a position of experience.
  3. Handbook SS will look at the handbook with a view to a factual update. It was suggested that NABO policy which was last fully reviewed in 2004 might need re-addressing and this will be an item at a future Council Meeting. All Council members were asked to start their own review with a view to future suggestions and revisions.
  4. Reports Forum. There was a further brief discussion about the Waterways Reports Forum and how to get it adopted by all UG's and BW. The concept is not doubted but all agreed however that its management and promotion needs to be somehow a central reporting. DF indicated that he felt it an important part of his Chairmanship to get it properly accepted by all UG's to everyone's benefit.
  5. Store - RC to visit with SP and possible DF early in the New Year to sort out what is required to be kept and would be useful. Target would be to reduce and perhaps do away with a paid for storage - although some may be needed once promotional policy is finalised.
  6. Council again reiterated the heartfelt feelings of all with regard to Carole Sampson's efforts as Gen Sec for the past 5 years - a hard act to follow!

#### ACTION Points

The following are the key action points, however those underlined in the text above are also reminders of continued action.

- a. All to review and comment on Handbook
- b. SR to open dialogue with other organisations on Mooring Auctions
- c. HA to contact members who attended the AGM for feedback in general
- d. All to provide a short personal background

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm.

Date and time of the next full Council Meeting: Saturday 24th January 2009 at the Waggon and Horses at Oldbury time 10.45am.

Approved  
D. Fletcher  
24/1/09