

Minutes of a Council Meeting of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

Held at the Wolverhampton Boat Club at 10.45am on Saturday 13th June 2015

Present: Mike Rodd (Chair), , Peter Fellows, David Fletcher, Phil Goulding, Paul Howland, Stephen Peters, Mark Tizard, Geoffrey Rogerson, Trevor Rogers; Members: David Lowe (CBOA Chair) and Frank and Helen Spragg.

1) **Apologies for absence:** Richard Carpenter

2) **Minutes of last meeting**

i) Minutes 25th April approved unanimously. Actions are complete unless recorded below or updated in agenda.

ii) Matters Arising and actions:

2.(ii) 2(ii): Dredging – No progress on getting a list of regional CRT contacts for dredging. Vicky Taylor is in charge. Mark will chase again. MT

2.(ii) 11(iii) Ombudsman committee has been researched by Alan Richards. It is clear that users have been dropped from the oversight committee. We will send a letter to CRT recording our dismay. MR

3.(iii) K&A moorings trial. This has finished in disarray. CRT are promising a report in July. We will await this before further action. Then Geoffrey will report. GR

4.(ii) Next CRT with the National Boating Organisations meeting is on 6 July. Only two items, enforcement and winter moorings. Mark will attend. MT

5.(i) Facebook site no report , Richard to follow up. RC

5.(ii)RCR no action, but nothing expected now. After their fire, they are in disarray. It is generally accepted that anybody can get discount if they ask. Chair reported on another approach below.

5.(v) We have no candidate for London rep. We are getting some feedback. All

10.(ii) Peter advised that ALSC will only claim royalty for paid-for articles. As we do not pay for articles, this system is not appropriate for us. Issue closed.

11.(iii) Wolverhampton BC has been booked for AGM on 14 November RC

3) **Policy Discussions: Matters requiring agreement and action from this meeting**

i). Issues arising from new CC requirements and enforcement thereof
It is apparent that CRT have started action for a wider group of boaters than proposed in Phase 1 (750 doing less than 5kms). As a result there is a major hiatus over evidence of movement and reports of boaters getting strange and inconsistent responses from CRT. CRT are not saying what is acceptable evidence of movement, and they are confused by boats turning round. CRT are overwhelmed by boaters asking for sighting records and quoting 40 days to respond due to database compatibility problems. Yet a boater under scrutiny has only 42 days to correct movement behaviour.

Mark suggested that first notice of insufficient movement should include CRT sighting record. Council agree

Council agree that a range of 25 miles is not enough, but a reasonable starting point for CRT to enforce in the current phase. CRT allow CCing on the Lee or Montgomery and this is indicative of what CRT view is an acceptable range.

The HRA has become an issue again. A boater has taken a case to the CoA saying that loss of his boat after a S.8 case is against his rights under the HRA. It is reported that Housing Associations can evict people without impact of HRA. CRT are claiming this

too, but on other issues, they have said that they do not want to be considered as a housing association. Inconsistency is noted. Our legal advice says that availability of alternative moorings is a significant factor. What else can the boater do?

Proportionality is also important for the HRA. Is it proportional that a boater loses his boat because he does not move enough? The meaning of the 95 act is that ultimately yes and it is proportional. We watch the case with interest. It is rumoured that CRT have stopped other S.8 cases pending this. CRT will report on this in July and we have no need to take action at this time. Mark will report in due course.

MT

Ian Rogers is distancing himself from all this and is reported to have said that he did not join for this and he needs a Head of Boating to handle it!

ii). Volunteer mooring rangers.

Volunteers are now taking sightings on selected 48 hr visitor moorings and routinely initiating £25 service charges (not fine!) The locations are Foxton, Stoke Bruerne, Thrupp, 13 sites on the K&A, and at Upton on Seven. The charge is initiated when a boater is sighted on the 4th day. Council has concerns over the issue of fairness and integrity of the volunteers. It is noted that if a boater goes to court, the volunteer will be questioned as to character and reasons for being a volunteer on this activity. This may well result in embarrassment for CRT. It is noted that this is all in conflict with Sally Ash's intent not to collect the charges, but dissuade boaters from overstaying. No action noted at this time.

iii). Winter moorings

It is reported that CRT considering abandoning all WMs because there declared illegal presumably under the planning laws. Their use of RMPs last winter has upset some local authorities because there was no control exercised over the location of boaters. It appears that the LAs are getting together to exert pressure. Stephen advise that 28 days is an important period in planning law for temporary use. Council reiterated support for VMs in the old style of fixed location, and tolerance of residential status. Use of 25% of VMs for WM is a long standing agreement. WMs are a good income for CRT and enables boaters both resident and non resident to get a low cost mooring during the stoppage period. Mark will take views to next CRT meeting.

MT

iv). CRT Terms and Conditions.

CRT have not replied to our submission. Council are not satisfied with this and still wish to take this further and get current legal advice. It was agreed that we press CRT for a written reply and get this before starting our work. Mike will chase up.

MR

v). Report from Roving Canal Traders Association

Paul reported on the confrontation with CRT over withdrawal of 4 days trading moorings at Stoke Bruerne Foxton and Thrupp without discussion and stating that RCTA agreed. After complaining, CRT agreed to meeting but behaviour of Phil Spencer was not good. CRT saying that there have been too many complaints, and there is a breach of law. Phil Spencer has been handling it, and not done well, but he is leaving. Mike Grimes has taken over and a further meeting is to be held on 2 July with a promised new approach.

PH

vi). G&S Bridge automation.

Council notes its support of the scheme and consultation process. David Lowe noted that the technology was based on the rail industry practice and it is sound. Phil continues to watch.

PG

4)

CRT Matters

i) Meeting with CRT and National Boating Associations. This will be on 6 July and items have been covered above. Mark will attend.

MT

- ii) Report on London situation.
BRG continues and it is apparent that CRT are using it as a sounding board. There is less strong representations and CRT are getting an easy ride. Simon Robbins is no longer attending. The NBTA team in London are quite balanced. The SE Partnership boaters group is now controlled by CRT, and with no obvious tie back to the Partnership. This is not the case in other areas eg NE. We are still in need of a rep for London area. **All**
- iii) Boater representative election for CRT Council.
CRT is calling for nominations now. No obvious candidate was identified around the table, and no great enthusiasm as it is now realised that Council members have little influence and the obligations are a conflict of interest with our combative representation. It was agreed that we would talk to other small organisations to put up a joint candidate from say RBOA, TBA and ourselves. **MR**
- iv) CRT NAG licencing.
Mark attended an interview last week. He is not inclined to accept nomination due to conflict of interest. CRT said that they had some younger candidates and they were encouraged to nominate them. **MT**
- 5) **Membership, promotion and marketing**
- i) Attracting new members
The rate of new members has dropped off now the urgency of the T&C issue has gone away. We must keep the issue live. It was noted that FB numbers continue to grow and Mark was thanked for his efforts. **All**
- ii) Planning for AGM
The venue is fixed now. Peter will put the notice into the July NN so that we are not caught out in September with late notice. Council members are asked to confirm to Mike re willingness to stand for Council next year. **PF All**
- iii) CBOA. David Lowe made welcome.
David introduced the CBOA and described the representation activities. There are about 100 members, and they are from coal boats and larger, with some coastal craft. They do not include the trading boat fleet. CBOA would be happy to support common objectives David was thanked for attending. Chairmen will keep in touch. **MR**
- 6) **EA Matters**
- i) The three representatives are doing well. The customer charter is under review at the moment.
- ii) Many EA activities are on hold at the moment whilst the new government makes up its mind what is to be done re the overall structure of EA and the navigation merge with CRT. Discussions with CRT are ongoing. EA enforcement is active.
- 7) **BSS Matters**
- i) Hire boat requirements.
Trevor reported on the Advisory meeting in June. The new hire boat requirements will go to consultation shortly. The Hire boat code still struggling to get AINA support in the same time frame and will go to consultation separately. This has no effect on private boaters. NT are threatening to leave AINA over the issue.
- ii) Risk assessment.
The BSS office and a subcommittee are looking at improvements to the risk assessment methodology as good industry practice. Trevor raised concerns about how long this will take. **TR/DF**
- 8) **Finances**
- i) Draft accounts

	A further draft has been issued by Helen for 2014/15 and the draft budget for accounts for the year. She will finalise and may need assistance to answer queries.	All
	ii) Current balances: Santander current account £1,984 Barclays current account £6,003 Barclays deposit account £8,758 Total £16,745.	
	Stephen advised that balance remains healthy. All bills have been paid to date. Nothing else to report.	
	iii) Auditor Mike and Helen met with member James Sterkl in the month to recruit him as our auditor. He was very thorough in questioning and Helen was similarly well prepared. His final decision is awaited. Council agree the nomination pending his agreement. If this does not work out it was agreed that we would for this year use the commercial auditor used by RBOA at a cost of around £400.	HH/SP
	iv) Association insurance Helen had obtained an alternative insurance quotation for us, based on the same scope and risk. The cost is reduced from £1119 to £650. The discussion was supportive, and the possibility was raised as to whether it was feasible to cancel the old policy and get some money back. Stephen will investigate.	SP
	v) Potential members insurance Helen had also enquired as to the possibility of having members insurance what would undercut the IWA scheme and offer RCR membership inclusive. We would offer this as a membership benefit. Council were supportive and asked for further details.	MR/HH
9)	Web matters i) The web site is running normally and back up are up to date. David has been deleting the exact dates of birth. Council proposed that all this data be deleted as we do not use it. Agreed. ii) There has been no progress on the web site upgrade. David will pick this up again now and complete the upgrade. iii) Facebook. Mark could use some help here.	DF DF All
10)	NABO News i) Articles so far for the July issue: BW Acts Stephen Market traders report on 2/4 days VM issue or item on one boat? Paul CRT welfare officer report via Mark? Ombudsman item Alan via Mike? BSS report Trevor. Evidence of location - Mark Membership issues David	PF All
11	ii) Peter reported that the cover printing was improved on the last issue AOB i) The previous RBOA chair, Jim Owen has asked to join us and has a view on his role in NABO. Council considered his history and voted on a proposal not to accept him. Motion - to decline membership to Jim Owen, proposed by Stephen, seconded by David. The discussion noted the observed behaviour seen in CRT meetings and on social media. All in favour. Mike will write to him. ii) The July council meeting will not be held. The next meeting of Council will be	MR

on 5 September, venue TBA, probably Wolverhampton again, if available.

DF 15/06/15

M J Green
5/9/2015