

Minutes of the meeting of the board of directors held at Paper Mill Lock office, Little Baddow at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday 27th May 2014.

Present: Roy Chandler (chairman), David Carrington, Colin Edmond, Neil Edwards, Jim Jenkins, Peter Martin and John Pomfret.

In Attendance: Graham Brown.

Minutes of Meetings

1. The minutes of the board meeting held on 3rd March 2014, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, including the edited minutes for publication, were approved as a true record of that meeting.

Health and Safety

2. (a) Graham Brown reported that there had not been any incidents with a Health & Safety impact since the previous meeting.
- (b) Neil Edwards reported that [an] insurance claim had been settled by insurers.
- (c) [Confidential item].
- (d) Roy Chandler and Graham Brown reported that further trees had come down along the Navigation during recent wet weather. Inspections for bank erosion still needed to take place at various sites along the navigation. The cost of repairs from the winter and spring storms was not yet known.
- (e) Colin Edmond reported that he had made enquires with [a contact] about land ownership [in an area], but he was unsure of present ownership. Enquiries would [continue].
- (f) Graham Brown reported that timber for the lock gate walkways had been purchased and the fibreglass non-slip surfaces had been ordered, but had yet to arrive. [The contractor] was ready to proceed with the work as soon as the surface boards arrived.
- (g) Graham Brown reported that Polden Engineering had refitted the second lock ladder at Hoe Mill, and had fitted gravity-close gates above both ladders.
- (h) Directors noted there were no changes to the Risk Register since the March meeting.
- (i) The board reviewed progress on the four vessels that had been giving cause for concern:

[Details omitted]

- (j) Graham Brown had circulated the updated draft Emergency Plan, the Flood Management Plan, and the Vegetation Management Plan to interested parties. The Environment Agency had responded that the Flood Management Plan was an excellent document, and had no comments. Essex & Suffolk Water had also responded favourably. [An organisation] had expressed concern that they had not been previously consulted, but it had been explained to the Trust that the copy sent was a consultation, and that they were invited to comment. Essex Wildlife Trust had yet to be sent a copy of the Vegetation Management Plan, but this would be done shortly.

- (k) An updated schedule of certification held at Head Office had been circulated with the agenda. The following points were noted:
 - (i) Updated certificates for the crane and lifting equipment had just been received.
 - (ii) [A volunteer's] First Aid certificate had expired. The board agreed that a first aid course should be booked for any current volunteers who were willing to attend.
- (l) [Confidential item].

Staffing and Management Arrangements

- 3. (a) Graham Brown reported that there were no particular staff matters to report, other than the appointment of Daniel Wilkie as a residential caretaker at Heybridge. [Detail omitted]
- (b) Roy Chandler reported that planning permission had been gained for an additional residential caretaker at Paper Mill, which would remain valid for up to three years to implement. [Detail omitted]
- (c) Roy Chandler and Graham Brown reported that there was an Essex WRG and Chelmsford IWA Branch work party planned for the weekend 7th & 8th June.
- (d) Neil Edwards reported that all of the updated Contracts of Employment had now been countersigned and received back at Head Office.

Finance

- 4. (a) The Annual Report and Financial Statements were noted and recommended for approval at the Annual General Meeting that was due to take place later that afternoon.
- (b) Income and expenditure reports for the three months to the end of March 2014 had been circulated with the agenda and were noted. [Detail omitted].
- (c) The board noted that the restricted fund balance was unchanged and that there were no cash flow issues.
- (d) Schedules showing outstanding debts and those boats without up-to-date mooring agreements, insurance certificates or Boat Safety Scheme certificates were tabled. There were no particular issues not covered elsewhere. [Detail omitted]
- (e) Roy Chandler reported that the Environment Agency had still not provided new leases for their equipment at Heybridge, Rushes and Ulting, despite continual chasing up.
- (f) Graham Brown was asked to speak to [an organisation] which had an agreement to take water, to see whether it intended to continue doing so.
- (g) Roy Chandler would draft a letter for Graham Brown to send to National Grid about the absence of lease payments.
- (h) Graham Brown would enquire the position with [a nearby business], where there had also previously been a lease, and where the company had expressed interest in using the waterway frontage again.

- (i) Roy Chandler explained that there had been an approach from the management company for the Springfield office building in respect of maintenance, but which Essex Waterways had been undertaking. [Detail omitted] The board suggested that a note should be placed in IWA's Bulletin to seek one or more volunteers with some professional expertise in property matters. Jim Jenkins suggested seeking assistance from local college as a work experience exercise; Peter Martin agreed to follow this up.
- (j) Roy Chandler reported that Maldon District Council had confirmed that Business Rate Relief would continue for a further 12 months. Neil Edwards would ask Christine Walsh to diarise for a review of the situation each March.
- (k) The board noted that there had been no progress with the installation of further electricity remote meter readers. There would be a new meter at Indigo Wharf for the new dinghy store. Graham Brown would chase up again with UK Power Networks and British Gas.
- (l) Graham Brown reported that the new system of monthly reports for canoe licence sales had been set up and was now in operation.
- (m) Graham Brown reported that the new Avant tractor was due to be delivered on 28th May. The store had been modified to accommodate the machine. Jim Jenkins suggested the tractor should be chained to the concrete ground floor of the building for security. Graham Brown would investigate the purchase of a tracker device. Neil Edwards would ask Jenny Black to send the V5 DVLA log book to Graham Brown so that he could get number plates made up. Avant would provide training at the time of delivery. Graham Brown would ensure there was a proper maintenance regime for the machine and that the Health & Safety and maintenance documentation recommended by Jenny Black was put in place.
- (n) Graham Brown reported that one set of the tracks on the mini digger had seized and required work, which was probably not worth the expense. The board agreed that the machine should be sold 'as is'. Graham Brown was asked to arrange [the] sale.

Future Income and Grant Applications

- 5. (a) The work that Essex Wildlife Trust planned to undertake above Little Baddow Lock was now due to start in September.
- (b) Roy Chandler reported that Essex Rivers Hub had received funding of about £18,000 related to the Catchment Plan and River Basin Management Plan, but it was uncertain whether Essex Waterways Ltd could benefit. Roy Chandler would maintain a watch.
- (c) Roy Chandler reported that there had not been any allocated moorings at Freshwater Crescent, but Hugh Turner had recently received a firm enquiry from a resident of the road, which would require a landing stage. Planning permission and Environment Agency consent would be needed, but before that was applied for the remains of the storm damage needed to be cleared.
- (d) [Confidential item]
- (e) Peter Martin suggested an application ought to be put together for Essex Community Foundation. Funding was also needed for a new weed cutter. Neil Edwards would ask Toby Gomm to get in touch with Roy Chandler to discuss.

Report from the Navigation Manager

6. (a) Graham Brown had circulated a paper to directors prior to meeting, providing an update on various projects along the Navigation. The board noted this and thanked Graham for the report.
- (b) Jim Jenkins reported that Essex & Suffolk Water had commissioned consulting engineers KGal, to start on the design for the replacement sliding gate at the Sea Lock. Design work was due to be completed by October 2014, for actual works to take place over the winter 2015/16. Both the lock top gates would need replacement or repairs and the cills repaired at the same time. In the meantime, the balance beams needed some plating or strapping to ensure they survived until then. [Detail omitted]
- (c) Graham Brown reported that work on the utility crossings near Beeleigh had started. Work was due to start in June for the Chelmsford sewerage pipeline. [Detail omitted].
- (d) Graham Brown reported [on progress for works required] at Hoe Mill.
- (e) Graham Brown reported that the Paper Mill north bank toilet block was now nearly complete, although there were a few finishing works and snagging. Electrical supplies to all parts of Paper Mill had been overhauled, including a new cable under the Navigation. New meters were in place, but needed commissioning so that boaters used the meters rather than the electrics from the toilet block on the island.
- (f) Roy Chandler reported that the work to move the car park gate at Paper Mill had been held up by Essex County Council, which appeared to have lost the new street works application despite having cashed the cheque for payment. The Council's approved contractors had to be appointed to undertake related highway work. Roy Chandler was chasing up.
- (g) Roy Chandler reported that Canon Piling had been appointed to start piling work for the Sandford toilet block and was due to start on 27th May. Paperwork was awaited.
- (h) Graham Brown reported that Wrights were behind schedule on taking out a number of willows [detail omitted].
- (i) Roy Chandler reported that Maldon District Council had dropped out of a meeting at short notice to discuss tree management in the District. A proposed tree management plan had been lodged with the Council and was going through their system, although technically the Council was out of time to object.
- (j) Roy Chandler reported that there was more funding from Chelmsford City Council for further towpath works in the Sandford area. The board noted that bridleways in the Maldon area had become overgrown and too narrow, and required attention.
- (k) [Confidential item]
- (l) Graham Brown reported that following repairs to one end of the roof at the lock house at Heybridge, there had been leakage at the other end, which would again require scaffolding to investigate and enable repairs. Crown Build had been contracted to do this work.
- (m) [Confidential item].

Update on Issues Discussed at Previous Meetings

7. (a) Roy Chandler reported that he was still awaiting solicitors for [a property] to respond on documenting [an] agreed settlement.

- (b) Roy Chandler reported that there had been no further developments on Sandford Mill or at Langford.
- (c) Graham Brown reported that there appeared to be no visible re-growth on the area of previous Japanese Knotweed. A check would be made on the neighbouring land that had been cleared at the same time as the work on the Navigation.
- (d) Roy Chandler reported that Strutt & Parker was in discussion about the A138 viaduct plans with the Highways Agency, [detail omitted].
- (e) Roy Chandler reported that the Waterfront planning application to Chelmsford City Council had been objected to by Health & Safety Executive because of past gas installations. The Council still wished to approve the application, and there had been negotiation with National Grid for gas infrastructure movements.
- (f) Graham Brown reported that solicitors were still dealing with [a legal matter].
- (g) Hugh Turner had reported that there was little activity on the Helmsman's Training Courses activity, largely owing to winter flooding.
- (h) Roy Chandler reported that the proposed development at Blackwater Timbers, Heybridge, had been refused planning permission, against officers' recommendations, largely as a consequence of [objections] from local residents. A planning appeal was expected.
- (i) Graham Brown reported that the management plan for the Heybridge yacht stores area had not yet been progressed.
- (j) John Pomfret had not yet reviewed the environmental permit requirements and would attend to this shortly.

Other Business

- 8. (a) Roy Chandler reported on a number of thefts from the Paper Mill moorings and car park, including a pick-up truck and tools owned by Sam Holden. The arrest of a local boater in connection with alleged petty thefts from at least one other vessel was reported; his boat was being removed from the Navigation on 28th May.
- (b) Roy Chandler reported there was to likely to be a development of about 900 houses in the Heybridge area, for which the flood relief option was likely to divert water directly into the tidal Blackwater, which was acceptable to EWL. There could be a need to reinstate flood gates at Beeleigh and to strengthen Beeleigh weir to cope with additional water pressures.
- (c) Roy Chandler reported that he was following a new Development Plan from Maldon District Council for the Heybridge and had been invited to a meeting that he could not attend. Colin Edmond and Graham Brown would attend instead.
- (d) Jim Jenkins reported that an Advisory Group meeting was planned for 10th June, but that both he and Graham Brown would be unable to attend. The board asked that the date be changed.

Future Meetings

- 9. (a) The next meeting would be held at 10.00 am on Friday 5th September at Paper Mill Lock. Colin Edmond offered his apologies for absence for that meeting.

(b) The date for the other 2014 meeting was Thursday 4th December (Chesham). John Pomfret offered his apologies for absence for that meeting.

No other business was transacted and the meeting closed at 3.40 p.m.