

Minutes of the meeting of the board of directors held at Island House, Moor Road, Chesham at 10.30 a.m. on Friday 4th December 2014.

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

Apologies for absence: John Pomfret, Peter Martin and Graham Brown (who would have been in attendance).

Minutes of Meetings

1. The minutes of the board meeting held on 5th September 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) Roy Chandler reported that there had not been any incidents with a Health & Safety impact since the previous meeting.
- (b) A written report had been circulated with the agenda updating on actions and matters arising. Information was still awaited on the COSHH requirements.
- (c) [Confidential item]

Staff, Volunteer and Management Arrangements

3. (a) Roy Chandler and Neil Edwards had drawn up a paper covering recommendations for salary increases for employees with effect from 1st January, which had been circulated, to board members only, prior to the meeting. The proposals were agreed. Roy would discuss with Graham. Neil Edwards was asked to prepare individual letters and updated contracts of employment for each employee, in January.
- (b) The board noted that there did not appear to be a job description for [a] role and asked that that Graham draft one.
- (c) [Confidential item].
- (d) [Confidential item]

Finance

4. (a) Income and expenditure reports for the nine months to the end of September 2014, along with a commentary, had been circulated with the agenda and were noted. Members commented that again a number of areas of income were a little below budget and some expenditure was a little higher than budget. David Carrington explained that [a] donation to the restricted fund within IWA related to the previous year, and was as a consequence of tax computations. David Carrington reported that there was about [an amount] in the restricted fund, and there was forecast to be [an amount] in cash at the year end, which gave a total of about [an amount] available for project expenditure.

- (b) A draft revenue budget (i.e. excluding capital costs) had been drawn up and circulated with the agenda papers. This showed a budgeted surplus of about [an amount], which when combined with the balance already available indicated a limit of about [an amount] was available for capital projects. The board approved the budget as circulated.
- (c) A report from Toby Gomm, IWA's fundraising officer, had been circulated with the agenda. There was no news from any of the applications for grant funding for the weed lifter yet. If funding did become available, it might be beneficial to purchase before the end of March to take advantage of tax allowances that were due to end then. A sponsored triathlon event, based on the navigation, was being arranged to take place on 20th September.
- (d) David Carrington had circulated a note to the board on Corporation Tax issues, which he had investigated along with Nick Parker of IWA's Finance Committee in consultation with the auditors. The conclusion was there were unlikely to be any tax liabilities for the company in the foreseeable future and therefore no need to make a provision. David Carrington reported that taking grants for capital purchases would complicate the bookkeeping but helped keep loan requirements within the limit set by Finance Committee.

Major Works and Other Matters of Report

- 5. (a) A comprehensive report on works and other management issues along the Navigation was provided as part of the Navigation Management Report that was attached to the agenda. Roy Chandler noted the need to get the building surveys and would consult the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors' web site to identify a local surveyor, the previous one having appeared to ceased trading. The application for planning permission for landing stage renewal at Freshwater Crescent had been declined; the board asked that Graham Brown follow this up with the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities. [items omitted] The planned one-week Canal Camp in February was noted.
- (b) Roy Chandler reported an approach from Maldon Golf Course to discharge flood water into the Navigation. This was agreed provided a suitable agreement was drawn up, with requirements for the Golf Course to obtain any necessary consents from the Environment Agency and only to discharge clean water.
- (c) Roy Chandler reported on quotes received for the piling work above Hoe Mill Lock. Crown Build [detail omitted] An alternative scenario of doing much of the work in-house had been investigated, and would require some capital expenditure to upgrade the dredger to carry a crane and generator. Colin Edmond reported that the dredger was currently in dry-dock undergoing previously agreed maintenance. . The board agreed (i) to ask Crown Build to undertake the piling work at Hoe Mill and (ii) to proceed with the proposed improvements to the dredger as outlined in the paper circulated with the agenda, and authorised Colin Edmond and Roy Chandler to progress the necessary works. Further expenditure on equipping the dredger would be agreed by the board by electronic means if needed prior to the next meeting. David Carrington highlighted the issues of ensuring sufficient capacity under the long-term loan, and cash availability for purchases.
- (d) Roy Chandler updated the board on the situation with the A138 viaduct replacement and the issue of Compulsory Purchase Notices by the Highways Agency, notwithstanding that we had previously agreed for arrangements by mutual consent. On enquiry, Roy Chandler had ascertained that the reason for the issue of the Compulsory Purchase Notices was that another landowner had yet to agree terms.
- (e) [Confidential item].

(f) [Confidential item]

Management Plans for the Navigation

6. (a) Neil Edwards had circulated an updated version of the Risk Register with top risks highlighted, which was noted by the board with a number of items discussed including carrying risk spill kits, and ensuring that proper safety gear was worn by employees and volunteers at all times. The risk of vessels sinking was considered to now be reduced following action taken on a number of vessels and this could be reflected in the register. The board noted that further work was needed to review many of the risks in greater detail.
- (b) [Confidential item]
- (c) [Confidential item]
- (d) David Carrington briefed the board on a discussion at IWA's Finance Committee on developing fund-raising initiatives, and the relevance of this to Essex Waterways.

Other Business

7. (a) Neil Edwards reported that insurers had agreed to pay out in respect of the damages to the gates at Hoe Mill caused by a lorry backing into them. This had, however, drawn to attention the need to consider carefully and in greater detail exactly what built assets we did and did not wish to insure. The assets survey would help inform this decision.
- (b) Roy Chandler reported a recent review on the arrangements for permitting memorial benches on Navigation property.
- (c) Roy Chandler advised the board that canoe licences were now available to purchase on line from IWA's shop website, and it was hoped that this would further improve revenue from this source.

Future Meetings

8. (a) The next meeting would be held at 10.00 am on Thursday 5th March (Paper Mill). Colin Edmond offered his apologies for absence for that meeting.
- (b) Dates for other meetings in 2015 were set as:
 - Monday 1st June (including AGM – at Paper Mill)
 - Thursday 27th August (at Paper Mill)
 - Tuesday 1st December (at Chesham).

No other business was transacted and the meeting closed at 2.30 p.m.