

Minutes of the meeting of the board of directors held at Paper Mill Lock, Little Baddow at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday 27th August 2015.

Present: Roy Chandler (chairman), David Carrington, Colin Edmond, Neil Edwards, Craig Holliday and John Pomfret.

In Attendance: None

Apologies for absence: Jim Jenkins, Peter Martin and Graham Brown (who would have been in attendance)

Introductions and Minutes of Meetings

1. (a) Roy Chandler welcomed Craig Holliday to his first meeting as a director.
- (b) The board expressed their wishes for a speedy recovery to Graham Brown, who was in hospital.
- (c) The minutes of the board meeting held on 4th June 2015, 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 other than a minor bump on one of the vans and a broken glass panel on the Avant tractor. [detail omitted].
- (b) Neil Edwards had prepared a list of Grade 'D', 'E' and 'F' assets, as part of the Navigation Management Report. Some of these assets were important navigation structures, but others were minor structures or 'nice to do' projects, such as missing clap gates or sheds in need of an overhaul. The board asked that some consideration be given to rating the Health & Safety implications and importance to maintaining through navigation on assets in these categories. The initial inspection of assets to compile the register had, of necessity, been carried out quickly, and a more careful review of important assets, such as lock gates, was needed. The top lock gates for Paper Mill were a case in point, and Roy Chandler reported that he had already briefed Hargreaves to provide a quote for their replacement. The lower gates at Hoe Mill were also identified as near the end of their working life.
- (c) The need for a rolling works schedule for the next 12 months was emphasised, especially to ensure that equipment, such as the dredger, could be scheduled for when it was going to be needed. A potential clash of demands for the dredger at both Ricketts Lock and Heybridge Sea Lock was noted. As had been previously identified, a more efficient use of assets and manpower was necessary to catch up on the maintenance backlog and this required more forward planning.
- (d) John Pomfret reported that Graham Brown had supplied a list of where hazardous substances were stored at each location, but he had not yet drawn up all the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health schedules and would try to do so in the next couple of weeks.

- (e) Roy Chandler reported that there was no progress on any further inspections for asbestos; the only likely buildings were the yacht stores, but these were owned by the individual leaseholders. .
- (f) The board noted that it was due to review the Risk Register at the December board meeting. All board members were asked to review the register well before that meeting and to pass comments to Neil Edwards in time for inclusion in the next agenda papers. The board noted that Method Statements and Risk Assessments must be individually prepared for all major works before they commence, along with evidence properly documenting that Construction Design & Management Regulations were being observed. Roy Chandler reported that a Top Risk Review being undertaken by IWA trustees and that Colin Graham of Finance Committee had written to him seeking comments.

Staff, Volunteer and Management Arrangements

- 3. (a) Roy Chandler reported that there had been no progress with appointing a residential caretaker to replace Sam Holden. Paper Mill was an increasing busy site, especially at weekends and it was felt that there needed to be a greater Essex Waterways presence on site. Graham Brown had passed to Roy Chandler a curriculum vitae from one potential applicant; but there was believed to be at least one other suitable candidate who had expressed interest. The board agreed that there was a need for more volunteers, e.g. a volunteer lockkeeper at Paper Mill. The existing and future vacancies could be better advertised on social media.
- (b) [Confidential item]
- (c) [Confidential item]
- (d) Roy Chandler reported that Graham Brown had commenced the recording of timesheets during the works at Ricketts Lock. Directors emphasised that each employee should keep their own recordings. Roy Chandler would check with Michael Cole to ensure that time sheets were being kept in Graham Brown's absence.

Finance

- 4. (a) Income and expenditure reports for the six months to the end of June 2015 had been circulated with the agenda and were noted. The only points of note were that the sale of willows was well ahead of budget and that utility costs at Heybridge were a little above budget. The board considered whether the rates charged for hard standing at Heybridge were high enough. Grant Everiss had created additional space through rearrangement of existing vessels, and the board agreed not to make any changes for the present.
- (b) A report from Toby Gomm, IWA's fundraising officer, which had been circulated with the agenda, was noted. The draft wording for the Social Impact Study was noted and felt to be along the right lines, but more work was needed. Neil Edwards would encourage Toby Gomm to telephone directors and interview them where more information was needed.
- (c) Roy Chandler and David Carrington reported that financial planning for the work programme for the 12 months ahead was in hand. Helen Elliott-Adams hoped to have the first draft of the budget available by mid September using figures supplied by David Carrington. The board agreed to budget [an amount] for salary increases, but that was without any commitment.
- (d) The board noted the aged debtors and non-compliance reports, which had been circulated with the agenda papers.

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. Colin Edmond updated the board on the works to prepare for the replacement of the caisson gate at Heybridge Sea Lock. The old gate had been due to be removed in mid-August, but that had been held up by the discovery of an unexpected pipe, and work had been deferred to mid-September. Colin Edmond would discuss with Essex and Suffolk Water's contractors the potential need to hire a crane at Ricketts Lock if the dredger had been called away from that site to Heybridge owing to this delay.
- (b) Roy Chandler reported that various repairs to Heybridge Lock House had been undertaken, whilst others, including window replacements, were planned. Insurers' loss adjustors had viewed the subsidence at the Lock House the previous day and had indicated that some works would be necessary. Their report was awaited.
- (c) The board noted that Grant Everiss would take the lead in preparation of the management plan for Heybridge Basin once the busy summer season had quietened down. He had already achieved some space saving on rearrangement or moorings and hard-standing.
- (d) Roy Chandler reported that a three-day planning inquiry concerning the Blackwater Timbers plot was due to take place at the end of September.
- (e) Roy Chandler gave the board an update on the works at Ricketts Lock and plans for Paper Mill. Some willow trees on the island at Paper Mill were dying and needed to be felled.
- (f) [Confidential item].
- (g) [Confidential item].
- (h) Roy Chandler reported that a little more work was needed on the car park at Sandford, but otherwise the facilities and car park improvement project there was complete.
- (i) Roy Chandler reported that the piling work at Smiths Yard was complete. Taylor Wimpey had paid the additional costs for piling work to remedy the inadequate foundations.
- (j) [Confidential item]
- (k) There had been an enquiry from the owners to seek permission to use the vessel *Vivanti* at Heybridge as a static holiday let. The board agreed to decline the proposal owing to 'strict planning controls and proximity to neighbouring residents'.
- (l) Directors expressed concern at the state of the top lock gates at Heybridge, which were a responsibility for Essex and Suffolk Water. Craig Holliday said he would investigate as to budget availability for refurbishment of the gates before complete replacement became necessary.
- (m) [Confidential item]
- (n) [Confidential item]
- (o) The board noted that the refurbishment of *Dredger* was now largely complete. There had been some teething troubles – one hydraulic pipe needed to be replaced, and the incident had raised an issue of the ease of turning the engine off. The boat had been inspected by Tony Pope, Boat

Safety Scheme Examiner, who had made some recommendations which would be followed up. Plant Risk Services had provided a lifting certificate valid for one year. Colin Edmond offered to oversee any snagging works needed.

- (p) Grant Everiss reported that quite a few of the electric points at Heybridge needed to be refurbished. Neil Edwards would ask Paula Smith to work out what fees could reasonably be charged (from 1st January 2016) towards the non-electric costs of supplying electricity to boaters.
- (q) John Pomfret reported that he not yet chased up the Environment Agency about the burn licence, but would do so shortly.
- (r) The board noted that a caravan had been purchased for staff welfare at projects along the Navigation. The caravan was currently in use for this purpose at Ricketts Lock.
- (s) The board asked Neil Edwards to arrange for Paula Smith to request evidence of public liability certificates from [three contractors].
- (t) [Confidential item]
- (u) The board noted that Michael Cole had mentioned that the Vauxhall Vivaro might need replacement before too long. There was a short discussion on the use of vehicles.

Management Plans for the Navigation

- 6. The board noted that there had been no progress on reviewing the Long Term Management Plan.

Other Business

- 7. (a) The board noted that mooring and other charges for 2016 needed to be set. The current Retail Price Index was 1.0% and the Consumer Price Index was 0.1%. After a short discussion, the board agreed not to increase mooring costs in 2016. Neil Edwards would advise Helen Elliott-Adams for budget purposes. Grant Everiss would be asked to put forward proposals for visitor mooring fees at Heybridge
- (b) [Confidential item]
- (c) [Confidential item]

Future Meetings

- 8. The next meeting would be held at 10.00 am on Tuesday 1st December (at Chesham).

No other business was transacted and the meeting closed at 3.20 p.m.