

Minutes of the meeting of the board of directors held at Paper Mill Lock, Little Baddow at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday 1st December 2015.

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

In Attendance: Graham Brown (until item 8)

Apologies for absence: Jim Jenkins

Minutes of Meetings

1. The minutes of the board meeting held on 27th August 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. The board noted that there had not been a formal tree inspection along the length of the Navigation for some time, and that this needed to happen once a year. Craig Holliday offered to research the procedures that Essex & Suffolk had in place.
- (b) Peter Martin reported that he had made contact with the potential volunteer who might be able to assist with advice on asbestos and was following this up.
- (c) The board asked Graham Brown to investigate whether there were procedures in place for evacuating an injured person from an empty lock chamber during major maintenance work.
- (d) John Pomfret reported that he had some COSHH documents ready to send to Graham Brown and would do so shortly.
- (e) The board noted the list of D, E and F grade assets extracted from the Asset Register had been updated for works undertaken since the last meeting, but not for other assets that might have deteriorated in recent months. The board asked that this be addressed and that columns needed to be added to help prioritise the work, including importance in keeping the navigation open and Health & Safety implications.
- (f) The board reviewed the Risk Register. [Discussion omitted].

Staff, Volunteer and Management Arrangements

3. (a) Graham Brown reported that Lee Rowley had been appointed as residential caretaker at Paper Mill, and commenced duties on 1st December. Graham Brown would provide him with an induction on 2nd December.
- (b) [Confidential item].
- (c) Roy Chandler reported that timesheets to gain information on vehicle use and had been introduced for a short period, and these had provided some useful information. There had,

however, been some concerns with their completion by the staff concerned, and Roy Chandler had provided appropriate reassurances in this area.

- (d) The board noted that [a residential caretaker] was on long-term sick leave following a planned hospital operation. A doctor's certificate had been provided to Head Office.
- (e) The board noted and welcomed the appointment of a prospective (voluntary) volunteer co-ordinator at Heybridge.

Finance

- 4. (a) Income and expenditure reports for the nine months to the end of September 2015 had been circulated with the agenda and were noted. The main point to note was the additional unexpected income from increased sale of willows. David Carrington noted that it was intended to transfer some funds from the Restricted Fund with the Association to cover some of the capital works costs at Ricketts and Little Baddow locks this year, depending on cash flow requirements. The board discussed the potential need for the company to have a Reserves Policy as the Business plan allowed for full expenditure, including eventual full draw down of the Restricted Fund. David Carrington offered to draft a Reserves Policy and circulate it for comment and discussion at the next meeting.
- (b) The board considered the draft Business Plan, which David Carrington had prepared, and which was circulated with the agenda. The board welcomed the draft and approved the content in principle, subject to considering the implications in the cash flow schedule of holding a reserve, and the need for greater levels of fund-raising needed. The board agreed that the Business Plan should be circulated to IWA's Finance Committee to demonstrate the company's ability to repay the Long Term Loan, although the document would continue to be worked on and refined.
- (c) The board considered and approved the Budget for 2016, as attached to the agenda.
- (d) Grant Everiss had prepared a proposal for intermediate shorter-term mooring charges at Heybridge, which was circulated with the agenda. The board approved the proposal subject to the weekly charge continuing until long-term rates came into force, rather than having a separate monthly rate. The rates would be effective and come into force on 1st January. The new rates would be published on the web site.
- (e) Roy Chandler reported that the Vauxhall Vivaro had broken down and was considered beyond economic repair. A temporary vehicle had been hired in. Roy Chandler had reviewed the rates for outright purchase of a new or second hand vehicle or taking on a lease vehicle. The quotes for a four-year leased vehicle (contract hire) looked competitive provided the allowed mileage was not exceeded. The board authorised the disposal of the Vauxhall Vivaro and for Roy Chandler to conclude a contract hire arrangement for a replacement vehicle.
- (f) Following installation of new facilities at Sandford, the board approved upgrading the moorings rates on the non-towpath side to 'premium' rate. Moorings on the towpath side would be upgraded to 'standard' rate. There would also be some minor revisions concerning mooring locations for about three vessels at Heybridge to bring in consistency across the site.
- (g) The board noted the aged debtors and non-compliance reports, which had been circulated with the agenda papers. The board asked that the overdue debts be pursued via Small Claims Court or a debt collector.

Major Works and Other Matters of Report

5. 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. Amongst the points noted:
 - a) The gate replacements at Heybridge Sea Lock were now planned to take place over winter 2016/7. This would include new top gates.
 - b) Replacement of malfunctioning electrical bollards at Heybridge was in hand, thanks to volunteer Bob Barron.
 - c) Electricity supplied to boaters via meters was to be charged at the exact cost rate for electricity plus a separate 3p per unit charge for service costs. Electricity income needed to be carefully identified and monitored in future so that costs and income can be reviewed to ensure cost recovery. Neil Edwards would advise Christine Walsh and Paula Smith for purposes of issuing invoices and a note would be included in the next newsletter to boaters.
 - d) An enquiry had been received from [an organisation] for use of dredgings from the Long Pond for use on [at a property]. John Pomfret noted the requirement to analyse samples for contaminants if being used in a marine environment. Roy Chandler would respond to [the organisation].
 - e) Discussions with [a neighbouring landowner] have progressed to the stage of a lease being discussed.
 - f) The poor state of the brickwork upstream of the flood weir was noted and would be reported to Essex & Suffolk Water.
 - g) Prospective new property developments in the Springfield area were noted.
 - h) The situation with [a property] remained far from clear.
 - i) The new hiab on the dredger had not proved powerful enough to lift in dam boards at Little Baddow. A mechanical survey was needed so that works to remedy this could be put in place before the refurbishment work was due to take place at Paper Mill.
 - j) The Environment Agency's inspection for the company's burn licence was noted.

Management Plans for the Navigation

6. (a) The Long Term Management Plan had been discussed under the 'Finance' section.
 - (b) Roy Chandler, Neil Edwards and Graham Brown were due to visit Heybridge to discuss the proposed management plan for the area with Grant Everiss on 5th January 2016.

Other Business

7. A local authority consultation on possible development (5,000 houses) at Hammonds Farm, between the Navigation and the A12, near Chelmer Village, was noted. The proposals were thought likely to be rejected as the impact on the local landscape would be substantial. The board asked Roy Chandler to write to object to the proposals on the company's behalf

Future Meetings

8. The next meeting would be held at 10.00 am on Wednesday 9th March
Monday 6th June, Thursday 8th September and Thursday 1st December

[Graham Brown was asked to leave the meeting at this point so that the board could have a private session]

Staff Arrangements

9. (a) [Confidential discussion]

No other business was transacted and the meeting closed at 3.50 p.m.