

TAY DISTRICT SALMON FISHERIES BOARD

Minutes of the Tay District Salmon Fisheries Board meeting held at the Hatchery, Almondbank on Tuesday, 14th April 2015.

Present: William Jack (Chairman)
Simon Furniss
David Godfrey
Claire Mercer Nairne
Alastair Riddell
Bob White
Iain McLaren
Gavin Clarke
Steve Mannion
David Brown
John Apthorp
John Wood

In Attendance: Dr. David Summers – Fisheries Director
Inga McGown - Clerk

Apologies: Jack Coburn
Eric Starke
Brian Roxburgh

Declaration of Interests:

There were no new declarations of interests.

Minutes of Board Meeting of February 2015:

The Minutes were taken as read, approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman. It was noted that Councillor Jack Coburn had retired and a new Council representative would be elected in May.

Matters Arising:

Board Representation:

GC stated that he would still be representing SNH and would do his best to attend meetings, but asked whether he should send a colleague should he be unable to attend, to which the Chairman replied it should be left to Gavin's discretion.

Horseshoe Weir:

This is still ongoing and will require further reparation.

ACTION: DS to see Ian Fullerton to discuss reparation.

Possible Rates Rebate:

Still awaiting update from the Assessor.

Website:

It was generally agreed that more should be done to update the Board's website. DG pointed out that BW should expand his role and perhaps post more on the Board's website. BW was agreeable to this but stated that he required more information from beats to post on the website.

ACTION: DS to forward BW access details to website to enable him to post directly.

ACTION: IMcG to ask proprietors on behalf of BW to give him more information regarding their beats at next mailing.

Fishpal:

ACTION: The Chairman/JW to have a discussion surrounding Fishpal payments.

Review of Board Priorities:

To be discussed later in the meeting.

Smolt Tagging Project:

To be discussed later in the meeting.

River Ericht Court Case Update:

DS explained to the Board that the case had been settled out of court prior to its hearing at the end of February. The settlement was for £6k, which was paid by our insurance company, for which we paid an excess of £500.

SF suggested the bailiffs use bodycams in their daily duties. The Chairman stated that the Board were in discussion with the TGA to further this issue, and DS added that this would not have resolved the Ericht court case.

Financial Report:

Cash Account to 7th April 2015:

As at 7th April 2015, the Accounts were showing a decrease of £68,579, which is perfectly normal at this time of year until the assessment payments begin to take effect. The overall bank balance stands at a healthy £227,688, of which £50,000 is being invested to generate further income.

Income

The Assessment invoices were sent out at the end of March and are beginning to generate income, £33,554 to date. There is £10,470.50 awaiting collection from 2014 assessments, which is being vigorously chased.

The Forecast is showing an additional £3,300 consultancy income against budget, due to consultancy work being carried out on behalf of SSE, and being invoiced at the end of March.

Expenditure

Training forecast is £4k above budget. Eight employees have now completed First Aid courses; a further three employees are embarking on an electrofishing course in May; and a fast water rescue course is planned for the future.

Vehicles costs at £9,376 mainly comprise £3k insurance costs, £3k fuel costs and £2.5k repairs.

We have still not received a rent invoice from the Government. We are now due to pay around £64k to the end of 2014, which has been provided for in the Statutory Accounts. We have budgeted to pay a further £18.5k for 2015, and again this will be provided for in the Statutory Accounts.

The Legal costs of £2,184 relate to the valuation of netting rights, which was carried out by CKD Galbraith.

To date, the Kelt Reconditioning Hatchery has cost £7,428, of which £6,355 is salary related.

Overall, the forecast is showing a slight deficit of £945 against budget, with the increased consultancy income being more than cancelled out by the increased training budget.

SF then asked whether the trackers had been effective, to which the reply was in the affirmative. They not only track where the bailiffs are working, but their hours also.

Health & Safety Report:

DS stated that there had been no health and safety issues reported since the last Board meeting.

Complaints:

This was to be discussed with Board members only once the official Board Meeting was finished.

Carcass Tagging:

DS explained the background surrounding the Government's consultation on carcass tagging. He then handed out the ASFB's draft paper which detailed their reply to the consultation. He explained that there was further information to come and that a decision needed to be made by the end of April 2015.

The Chairman stated that it was very difficult to comment, as there were very few details, but that the Board would be generally supportive of the protection of salmon.

There followed a lengthy discussion surrounding the topic, which included quota setting, effect on bookings, C&R, and administration, with all agreeing a sub-committee should be formed to formulate a response to the consultation. The Committee comprises DS, SF, CMN and IMacL, who agreed to work through the proposals and form a response on behalf of the Board, which they would then circulate for agreement prior to submitting.

ACTION: Carcass tagging sub-committee to meet and agree Board response.

Review of Board priorities:

DS explained that during the last meeting, the Board had considered lists of priorities which had been circulated, and this now required collation of views, and that perhaps a sub-committee should be formed to take this forward. He then asked for the Board's opinions.

SF thought the "wishlist" should be thinned down to make a short strategy, and AR thought the key strategic points should be then turned into operational plans. IMacL was impressed by the document and thought it well thought out with a breadth of options.

All agreed a sub-committee should be formed with the express aim of agreeing the Board's priorities. AR, IMacL, SM and JW volunteered, with DS chairing.

SF asked whether the sub-committee would be responsible for implementation also, to which the Chairman replied that this would be subject to a separate discussion.

ACTION: Board priorities sub-committee to meet and present their outcome at next Board meeting.

AOB:

Tweed Wild Fisheries Review:

DS had been asked by representatives from the River Tweed to gain views on forming a proprietorial group regarding the WFR. Some on the Tweed believe that proprietors are

vastly under-represented in most steering groups. DS had been asked to gather opinion from the Board as to whether anyone on the Tay would wish to join such a proprietorial-led group. After a short discussion, the Board believed it was very much up to the proprietors whether they wanted to join such a group, and that the Board should not be seen to be pushing them in any direction.

Garry Update:

DG enquired as to whether there was any news, to which DS replied that he had been informed by SEPA that the Garry couldn't be discussed until after the general election. He had been assured an announcement would be forthcoming, but had heard nothing in the last month.

Stormont Angling Club:

DB stated that SAC had been offered a stretch of the river for £1k pa, and was wondering whether the Board would want to take up the offer as a sanctuary if the SAC decided not to go ahead. There was some confusion as to whether it was single or double bank.

The Chairman replied that the Board would look into the matter and report back, once it had received full details.

ACTION: DB to obtain full details and report back to Board.

No Other Business was brought up and the Chairman closed the meeting.