

**NESS DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**

Held at Caley Thistle Football Ground on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012 at 2.10pm

**Present:**

Andrew Duncan: Ness Castle, Chairman (AD)  
Don Mackay: Highland Council, Mandate (DMcK)  
Nigel Fraser: Dochfour, Mandate (NF)  
Willie Armstrong: River Oich, Mandate (WA)  
Bob Morgan: River Gary, Mandate/Alternate (BM)  
Neil Cameron: Ness & Beaully Fisheries Trust (N&BFT), Co-option (NC)  
Graham MacKenzie: Co-Option (GMcK)  
Angus MacGruer: Co-Option (AMcG)  
Ryan Rutherford: Ness Side, Mandate (RR)  
Sandy Patience: Nettsman, Co Option (SP)

**In Attendance:**

Michael Martin: Chief Executive/Clerk (MM)  
Alastair Stephen: SSE(AS)  
Rachel Murray: Minutes Secretary

**Apologies:**

Ben Leyshon: SNH (BL)  
Paul Williamson: River Gary (PW)  
Annie Girvan: River Moriston, Mandate (AG)  
John MacColl: Head Bailiff (JMcC)  
Keith Williams: (N&BFT), (KW)

**1. Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012 at Caley Thistle Football Ground were approved and signed by the Chairman with the amendment of NC being moved from present to apologies.

**2. Actions:**

MM reported on the Actions from the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2012 as follows:

- 1 - 4.1            A meeting between the Bailiffs/Ghillies/Proprietors has not yet been organised.

- 1 - 15.3 Correspondence is in train on the arrangement of a rota for the release of freshets in the River Garry. AS requested that he is sent a copy of the rota when ready.
- 1 – 7.11 MM has spoken to Fishpal and is awaiting a quote for proprietors to advertise fishing on their website. MM advised he would chase Fishpal for a price. MM would then pass this onto all proprietors to ascertain if they would like to proceed.
- GM advised the Board that an alternative to this may be to advertise available fishing on the ASFB website. This could be done FOC and link to proprietors own websites. GM stated that this is not a vehicle to book fishing only to put information and contact details on.
- It was also stated that Fishpal will take a fee of around 10% from proprietors.
- It was asked if the ASFB website was kept up to date and GM advised that the responsibility of updating would be with the proprietors.
- It was noted that Fishpal and the ASFB websites are both useful tools however Fishpal could be time consuming.
- MM undertook to chase Fishpal and when he had received their quote write out to all proprietors with information on both Fishpal and the ASFB website.
- 1-8.2 It was agreed that as the agenda was already long and PW was absent the website would be put on the agenda for a later meeting.
- 4.8 MM advised that he had decided not to write to the Scottish Government re the Marine Harvest licence being granted.
- 4.12 MM advised that if the agenda permits a meeting with Eric Verspoor and all Board members to brief on the proposed Rivers & Loch institute could be included at the next Board.
- 4.13 MM advised that he had been in contact with Caley Marina regarding fishing on Loch Ness. MM had advised Caley Marina that out on the loch is not a problem however if they are around margin of loch and pulling a spinner they are likely to be challenged by the bailiffs. Caley Marina were happy to co-operate.
- 4.13 MM advised he is awaiting a response from Fish Legal on trout fishing rights.

- 4.13 MM advised he had been in correspondence with West Highland Fishing and they had agreed they would remove any reference to salmon fishing from their website. MM to check.
- 5.1 The Special Projects Fund will be addressed at a later Board when the agenda permits.
- 5.1 AS advised he would chase the SSE payment.
- 5.3 MM advised he has put to Glengarry Estate that they must provide proof of payment before this debt can be taken as cleared.
- 5.3 MM advised he is still trying to find the new owners of River Beaully and will continue to investigate.
- 6 MM advised his correspondence with CI Reiss is covered in the CEO report.
- 7 MM advised he would arrange a meeting with the Steering Group and Marine Harvest on his return from annual leave.
- 9 KW has circulated a list of action points to work from.
- 9 KW has issued a report on hatcheries from other areas.

### **3. Health & Safety.**

There were no Health & Safety issues to report.

### **4. CEO Report on Key Issues.**

The CEO's report was noted. The following points received further discussion.

- 3. It was noted that the response to the season extension had been poor with poor results and not a great deal of enthusiasm. It was agreed that a vote would be taken at the next Board as to whether or not to proceed with a season extension in 2013.
- 4. Eric Verspoor's report has been issued to all Board members.
- 5. Assessment letters have gone out to all proprietors. MM advised that interest charges on late payments had speeded up money being received last year and he will push hard to get all assessments in. It was noted the Board are comfortable in terms of provisions however

the cashflow is not great as the assessments were sent out late in the year.

6. MM advised that he has purchased a laptop and transferred all files onto the laptop. MM further advised that he tries to ensure all correspondence is electronic and therefore recorded electronically and backed up on an external hard drive.

MM asked the Board that all forward correspondence be sent to [ceo@ndsfb.org](mailto:ceo@ndsfb.org)

MM advised that in his absence on annual leave the laptop will be passed to RM who will deal with any incoming emails with back up from ARD.

AS asked if the large numbers of reports that have been produced over the years have been filed anywhere. MM advised that he has received all paper copies of files from Strutt and Parker and confirmation that Strutt and Parker no longer hold any files.

ARD asked AS to prepare a list of relevant documents / reports and submit to ARD/MM who will find.

DM suggested all important documents can be backed up on line and password protected. MM undertook to have this put in place.

MM further advised he had met with the local wildlife crime officer who was very helpful and volunteered to do a training day for bailiffs and ghillies to update on legislation and role of new procurator fiscal.

AS suggested the bailiffs and ghillies from Kyle, Cromarty Firth and Beaully should be invited to this training day.

MM undertook to arrange on his return from leave.

MM further advised that he had been carrying out the role of CEO for 2 years and that he wished to stand down from this role by the end of this financial year (15 May 2013). While MM thought that the role as it stand is only part time, the post holder needs to be available most of the time and his commitments make that impossible.

## **5. Finance Report**

ARD issued the latest accounts to November 2012. It was noted a loss of £437 had been recorded versus a budget loss of £2,500. Surplus will be recorded for the year as spending the special project fund is unlikely to happen.

AS asked if the accounts were assuming SSE have made their payment. ARD confirmed it was on the assumption that SSE would pay.

The cashflow was noted as sitting at circa £20K with around £8K of outstanding debt to be paid. This and also the invoices for cars being MOTed and IT costs would leave around £10K which is too low however the assessments that are outstanding equate to circa £100K and when they were all received the cashflow will be in a much better place.

## **6. Upper System Sub-committee Report & 7. Strategic Review**

These items were discussed, the minutes of which have been deemed to be private board business by the Chairman (ARD). The results of the discussions were subsequently implemented in the Strategic Review (see Technical Reports and Strategies Section of our website).

## **8. Bailiffs Report**

The Bailiffs Report was noted.

## **9. Biologist Report**

The Biologist Report was noted.

## **10. Efficacy of Salmon Stocking – River Ness**

The Efficacy of Salmon Stocking report was covered during discussion on the Strategy Report.

## **11. AOB**

SP tabled an issue and advised the Board that he had photographic evidence of dolphins eating young salmon. SP suggested a pinger system should be installed at the mouth of the river to prevent entry. ARD agreed to speak to the local dolphin agency to see if this issue could be resolved.

SP also tabled his concerns at the time spent by bailiffs on the nets and not on Loch Ness. MM advised he has been in touch with the bailiffs and reinforced the importance of not focusing too much time on nets and tried to discourage this as much as possible. MM suggested a separate meeting with MM and SP to discuss this matter further.

DM was advised the public meeting will be left until after the February Board meeting.

GM asked for an update on his disclosure form and MM asked RM to chase.

**With there being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 17.15**

**Next meeting is to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> March, time and venue TBC with an interim Board meeting to be held in February.**