

NESS DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD
Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors
Minutes

Time: 14:00

Date: 17th December 2020

Location: via Zoom, online video conference

Present:

Michael Martin: Dochfour, Mandate (MM)
Angus MacGruer: River Oich, Proprietor (AM)
Bob Morgan: River Gary, Mandate/Alternate (BM)
Graham Mackenzie: Co-option, Ness District Anglers (GM)
Neil Cameron: Ness Castle Lodges, Mandate (NC)
Scott MacKenzie: Ness Side, Mandate (SM)

In Attendance:

April Conroy: Board Secretary (AC)
Chris Conroy: Chief Executive/Clerk (CC)
Alastair Stephen: SSE (AS)

Observing:

None

Apologies:

Andrew Adamson, Wildlands
Andrew Steel, SEPA
David Haas, Highland Council
Janet Campbell: The Highland Council, Mandate
Kenneth Knott, Forestry and Land Scotland
Nathan McLaughton, NatureScot
Paul Williamson: Lower Garry, Proprietor
Steven Gray: Moriston, Mandate

1. APOLOGIES

MM introduced the meeting as chair. CC noted apologies as above.

CC noted that, with the continued risk associated with COVID-19, this meeting was being held electronically using 'Zoom'. Invitations were sent to all Ness fishery proprietors, however the COVID-19 situation presented difficulties in terms of facilitating wider public participation and as such it had to be held in private.

The latest advice from Fisheries Management Scotland states that, should a board decide to hold a meeting electronically, public participation would not be possible under the current restrictions. As

such the board may elect to conduct the meeting in private, but must state the reason for this decision in the minute of the meeting.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

MM invited comment and approval of the minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors held on the 12th December 2019. CC noted that these minutes had previously been approved at the March 2020 board meeting, to allow them to be published as soon as possible after the meeting.

No comments were raised. Proposed by NC and seconded by GM.

3. MATTERS ARISING

MM invited any matters arising. None were raised.

4. 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

CC presented a draft copy of the Ness District Salmon Fishery Board 2020 Annual Report. He noted that a few minor corrections had been made since the draft was circulated, but with no material changes.

AS commented on the quality and scale of the information within the report and applauded CC for compiling it. MM encouraged board members, if they hadn't already done so, to set time aside to review the document.

The Annual report was approved. Proposed by NC and seconded by BM.

The decision on whether to print hard copies of the Annual Report this year was tabled. It costs c£1500 for 100 copies.

SM stated that he was against printing the report as it was not a good use of money. AS commented on the value of the printed copy considering the quality of the pictures and content. NC commented on the value of the printed copy, having it in your hands encourages you to read it.

AS asked whether there was a minimum run. NC commented that a smaller run may save some money but often it is the set-up that costs the most.

GM commented on the value of the print, especially for such a long read, but acknowledged that if funding is not available then it would have to be online only. AS stated, that SSE may be able to provide part-funding.

MM summarised that there was an appetite on balance for printed copies. CC was tasked with looking for quotes for a potential reduced run and gently ask past contributors whether they would be in a position to contribute this year.

5. ACCOUNTS TO YEAR ENDING 15 MAY 2019

MM invited approval of Account to year ending 15 May 2020. NC proposed approval and GM seconded.

MM reported that the Annual Public Meeting would be delayed due to COVID, and the board discussed when it would be appropriate to delay to, during COVID.

It will be reviewed at subsequent meetings, keeping in mind the statutory requirement to run it within the year. CC suggested that in Spring, the board should re-asses whether a virtual option is necessary.

AM suggested that the Annual Report be circulated to stakeholders in January.

6. AOCB

None were raised.

The meeting closed at **14:15**