

MINUTES
of the Meeting of the
River Cree District Salmon Fishery Board
Held at The Belted Galloway, Newton Stewart
On Wednesday, 6th September 2017 at 5.30 p.m.

Present

(A) Board Members/Mandatories

Terence Flanagan - in the Chair
Murdo Crosbie
Jock Galloway
Jim Davidson
Gene Fryatt
Johnny Johnstone
Ian Service
Steve Smith

(B) Attendees

Billy McHarg (Treasurer)
Matthew Pumphrey (Clerk)

(1) Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Duncan Baillie, Jamie Hyslop and Jamie Ribbens.

(2) Minutes of the Meeting of 12th July 2017

These were approved without demur but subject to the deletion of two sentences under item 8 which had been included in error.

(3) Matters arising from Minutes of 12th July, 2017

The Clerk reported, again, that the beaver consultation had proved too much for both him and his secretary but he would have a final attempt at trying to locate the right button to push for submission of our views.

The Chairman confirmed that he had written to Dougal Evans following his resignation.

(4) Chairman's Report

The Chairman said that the fishing had continued to be very good in both July and August but there had been a slight decline in September. However subject to the month of September not being significantly poor he could report on a very good season.

He had tried to get in touch with Lord Grantchester but without success. He had sent various emails and hoped that something would transpire by the next meeting.

He had noted that in the Scottish Government Statement yesterday, 16 new Bills had been proposed but none on wild fisheries. It was not clear whether FMS would still be pressing for wild fishery reform.

(5) Treasurer's Report

Somewhat disappointingly only £4000 had been received out of a total of £14,000 but Mr McHarg was still hopeful that the majority of the rates would be paid by the end of the year. He mentioned that the Angling Association had appealed their assessment but given that they realised they would have to pay something by way of subscription they had already paid a proportion of the amount due. If the Angling Association was successful in having their rates reduced, this would make a difference to the income of the Board.

Mr McHarg said that the payments to GFT were up to date as at April 2017 but no payment had been made thereafter. He would now pay half the sum due to them (£2,250) and set up a standing order for the remainder commencing 17th October 2017. Likewise a standing order would be set up as from that date for RCHHT.

In answer to a query, Mr McHarg said that Jim Nichol's expenses would be paid, it having been already approved for payment.

Mr McHarg was happy to confirm that the Bank Account was now operational.

(6) GFT Report

An email report had been circulated by Jamie Ribbens and was taken as read.

Gene Fryatt confirmed the electro-fishing on the Palnure Burn had been done.

(7) RCHHT Report

Mr Murdo Crosbie circulated his Report at the meeting. The first item on this Report was rhododendron clearing. He said that seedlings and re-growth would still appear and required treatment. On Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam, work had been ongoing but unless it was continuously ongoing the presence of both Knotweed and Balsam would increase. He believed that the team had done good work but it would have to be kept up.

There ensued a considerable discussion about Japanese Knotweed on Doctor's pool and the Slaughterhouse pool. Steve Smith suggested that the Board could intervene on the grounds of doing something about the flooding but while there was sympathy for this view it was felt that it was premature for the Board to get involved and for the time being the situation should be monitored. This was agreed.

Mr Crosbie spoke about the information given under the head "hatchery" and also the removal of regeneration Sitka programme. Mr Crosbie mentioned that so far as the Forestry Commission were concerned, all necessary permissions had been granted. On the electro – fishing surveys it seemed that although some of the fish were smaller it was a far better survival year than previous years.

(8) River Management Plan

The sub-Committee appointed at the last meeting had agreed an amended work programme for the GFT via an exchange of emails. It was noted that all stocked sites were to be electro-fished each year, as hitherto. Since GFT would only be monitoring one third of the stocked sites each year, the other two thirds would be electro-fished by RCHHT. The Chairman had obtained a licence from Marine Scotland to permit Mr Crosbie to carry out the required electro-fishing in the coming weeks. There remained the question of the rolling programme of electro-fishing of the entire catchment which was meant to be completed every four years. It was noted that this had not been achieved; for example the Palnure Burn had not been monitored between 2011 and 2017. It was agreed accordingly that RCHHT should assist in carrying out the rolling programme of electro-fishing. The Board gave authority to the sub-Committee to agree the management plan on behalf of the Board on the basis of what had already been agreed and what had been agreed at this meeting.

Mr Flanagan mentioned that the Marine Scotland figures were now correct albeit they had not been in the first instance. He agreed that it was important to protect the Cree category 1 status.

(9) Stocking Policy.

A sub-Committee consisting of the Chairman, Murdo Crosbie and Jamie Ribbens was appointed with authority to agree the form of the stocking policy document. There was some discussion about what stocking, if any, should be done on the High Cree. This would be a matter to be considered by the sub-committee.

(10) Arrangements for Annual Public Meeting (APM) and Annual Meeting for Proprietors (AMP)

The Chairman considered it was not essential to advertise in the Galloway Gazette at great expense and accordingly the publication of the Notice which had to be at least 21 days before the AGM taking place would be on the Board's website and other websites/places where the public would be able to view it. It was noted that no other Galloway Boards advertised in the press.

The meetings for the APM and AMP would take place on 25th October 2017 @ 6.30pm at The Belted Galloway. The Clerk would send a draft of the 21 day Notice to the Chairman for approval.

(11) Any other business

There was an inconclusive discussion regarding whether the Doctor's Pool was filling in.

(12) Date of next meeting.

The date of the general meetings had been fixed for 25th October 2017. Another Board Meeting would have to be fixed at a later date and after discussion it was agreed that that later date might be in January 2018.

The meeting closed at 6.55 p.m.