

Watchet Boat Owners Association

Minutes of a Meeting on 9/9/2017
The Esplanade Club, The Esplanade, Watchet

Apologies: Chris Danby, Brian Rich, Richard Mott, Marion and Ken Avery, Mike Yuill, Cathy Yuill, Iain Lambert.

1 Minutes of meeting on 14th August 2017

The minutes were distributed, outlined, accepted and signed as all matters arising were covered by the Agenda

2 Officers Reports

Chairman: Bob Hitchings nothing

Secretary: Ray Ventura

Iain Lambert's WHM Marina Report.

"He stated he was aware of the 'justifiable level of dissatisfaction in the current state of the Marina and he was doing his best to rectify it'.

He explained that the parts for the dredger are only available through a third party in the USA. Some of the parts are not stock items and have to be manufactured. Some have a 6 week lead time. The parts delivery is delayed. He is doing his utmost to rectify the situation

He reported that Neil is now employed at Hinkley and he has been replaced with Matt who has been a marina manager for the last 28 years in the USA

The crane has been formally inspected and a slight intermittent fault found on the derrick brake which has now been replaced.

He gave his sincere apologies to the Committee and members for the current situation and reassured that the marina was doing all it could to get back on track."

Yard Management

He stated there was a proposal have John Fairman co-opted on to the Committee to assist with yard administration at the AGM. This cannot happen until there has been a full discussion with Brian Rich regarding his situation. The Committee was undertaking further investigation to ensure the appointment would not compromise the Association with regard to insurances etc. The proposal will be discussed at Committee and raised at the AGM to create a new position of Deputy Yard Officer.

Membership Secretary; Martin Stevens

Members

Fewer members were renewing this year. Membership now 60. He recommended a membership drive.

Finance

MS reported that the accounts are in good order and we can undertake all necessary tasks in the yard etc.

3 Berth Holder position on Committee

John Pearman pointed out the numbers of berth holders who are not members of WBOA. He referenced the recent 20% reduction for the visiting Welsh yachts and argued that WBOA should be able to negotiate a better rate on behalf of the members and other berth holders. He believed that there should be a strong voice representing all berth holders. He referred to the RYA Charter for good marina practice, that they had experience of representing yachtsmen around the county when marinas failed to deliver. He proposed approaching them for legal assistance and that there should be a Berth-holders section similar to the Rowing section in the WBOA who could argue with both the marina owner and the WSDC on their behalf

MS said he and Ray Ventura were that voice and spoke for the berth-holders at the Harbour Advisory Board and at the Council led Harbour Committee. BH asked for clarification of the proposal. JP said that for 9 years the berth holders had 'lacked the teeth to negotiate with the owner and council'

A prospective new member spoke stating he had berthed in the marina for 2 years and had not known WBOA existed until recently. He asked what financial incentive was there to join.

JP continued to argue for a legal approach through RYA. He wanted to seek legal advice. This he can do as the convention is that the first hour of a lawyer's time is free so that the solicitor or barrister may understand the case and negotiate what if anything may be undertaken on the client's behalf. Therefore he can gain basic information and estimate the potential cost.

BH said that he doubted the marina was in breach of its contract. RV confirmed that he had recently read the document and he could not nail a detail that proved it was.

Owen (WHM employee) left the meeting sensing that his presence might hamper discussion. He reminded members that the fob numbers sometimes had to be changed- as was the case during Summertime and therefore anyone needing more than one fob should contact him and anyone needing to change the number on their fob would have to visit him during open hours.

He confirmed early morning rounds of the Marina occur not necessarily everyday in calm weather. There was one on the morning of the 9th due to the heavy swell on the night of the 8th September. On this morning's round they had spotted some lines were in bad condition. These tended to be bell rope. He said the marina was selling rope at a double discount at present. He urged boatowners to check their lines as the Autumn storms are starting and to replace them if necessary.

He said that the Marina pushes WBOA and asked for more leaflets to be delivered to the marina for distribution. He asked that leaflets are updated with correct addresses, telephone numbers.

RV volunteered to write to both WHM owner and WSDC. This he was asked to do putting them on notice and putting pressure on the owner. RL recommended putting pressure rather on WSDC who were failing in their duty as Landlord rather than continue hammering the owner.

JP's recommendation for legal advice was not supported.

4 Update on Disability Hoist

MS has undertaken considerable research regarding a full disability hoist. He has yet to reach a conclusion to present to the members for approval. So far he had established the bridge needs resurfacing as it falls below current standards. When his research is complete MS intends to be able to make an application to Hinkley Point, to cover cost of what he decides is appropriate plus training costs, in the next funding round which begins in November to fund the hoist and bridge. He pointed out this necessitates funding with matched funds from WBOA and WHM.

5 Fishing nets

Inshore Fishing has come under new legislation. The staked fishing nets are considered dangerous and interfering potentially with boats. Therefore this kind of fishing is to be stopped. WSDC are responsible for ensuring Fishermen in the local area comply with the law and ancient fishing rights will be ignored.

6 Member offer to fit out shed

This generous offer has not been pursued.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.20 pm

