

URR DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

Minutes of Board Meeting held at the Kings Arms Hotel, Castle Douglas on 6th February 2017

Present: R Bellamy (Chairman)
K Irving
K Gibson
W Levi-Marshall

W G N Gourlay (Clerk)

In Attendance: J Ribbens (Galloway Fisheries Trust)
G Kerr (Auchendolly Estate)

Observers R Smith
D Mulholland

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from D J Biggar and Miss J Graham. T C Florey was represented by G Kerr, his successor as factor of Auchendolly.

2. MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING OF 6th DECEMBER 2016

The Minutes together with the letter to proprietors from the Chairman were approved. No comments had been submitted on the terms of the Chairman's letter.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising that were not addressed elsewhere on the Agenda.

4. FINANCIAL REPORT

The draft accounts for the year to 30th November 2016 were submitted by the Clerk, approved and signed off by the Chairman. The Clerk reported that the debtors were being gathered in. As at 1st February 2017, the bank balance stood at £7,908.06.

The Clerk proposed that as there was no extraordinary expenditure proposed for 2017, the levy should revert to the equivalent of 45p in the £ calculated on the total rateable value in the current valuation roll. The Clerk would have to adjust the levy rate so that the total levy raised was the same as that in 2015. It was agreed to make that recommendation to the AGM.

5. 2017 CONSERVATION MEASURES

The Ministers' announcement that the governance of fishing was no longer to be interfered with was hot off the press. Nevertheless, it was recognised that the categorisation of rivers was still in place. The Board considered it still most important that they and the proprietors should be seen to be making active efforts to promote conservation measures. The Chairman produced the conservation plan and sent it to Jamie Ribbens for review but in the light of revisions by the Scottish Government, completion is on hold until the official template and guidance on the levels of risk is complete. In the context of CDAA and DAA and their forthcoming AGMs, it was agreed that the Angling Association representatives would recommend to their members' AGMs that the respective association rules should additionally adopt a limit of 2 salmon or grilse or 3 sea trout per angler per season to be kept.

6. MATTERS FOR REPORT

a) Dalbeattie Reservoir

There was still no date for removal of the pier and for subsequent refilling and restocking.

b) Information Card for Fish Identification

Robin Ade had agreed to use of his artwork. Jackie Graham and Will Marshall are to work to produce the leaflet.

c) Fishpal £100,000 Fund

These funds had been frittered away by the Scottish Government in paying Fishpal to rebuild their website. Associations are offered free pages on the web with Fishpal but no realistic marketing help.

d) Revaluation 2017

It is anticipated that the 2017 Revaluation of all non-domestic properties (including fisheries) will be completed by the Assessor's office shortly, with the revaluations to take effect from 1st April 2017. On the assumption that the revaluations of fisheries may be expected to be no higher, and perhaps lower, than those currently in force, the Board may have to look at its levy rate in the £ - however, it also needs to be borne in mind that owners are entitled to appeal against valuations, so the outcomes may not be clear for some time.

e) Details of Bailiffs

Fisheries Management Scotland had asked all DSFBs to provide details of Board appointed bailiffs. It was agreed that the Urr, in practical terms, had no bailiffs (albeit the two Angling Associations kept eyes and ears well tuned). One of the key aspects of the proposed new FMOs was a bailiffing resource.

7. AGM

Date had been fixed for 14th March. The Clerk is to find a replacement venue in Castle Douglas. Finlay Carson to be invited. Jamie Ribbens will speak.

8. BOARD NOMINATIONS

Noted resignation of Duncan Fergusson, and retirement of Thomas Florey whose place as representative of Auchendolly could be taken by Gordon Kerr. Sandy Craig does not attend so there are two vacancies to be filled among the Upper Proprietors. Nominations are required. The Clerk was instructed to approach Tony Graham.

9. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

None.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Equivalent date to 2016 viz Tuesday, 5th December 2017.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10pm.