

**NITH DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF QUALIFIED PROPRIETORS**

**HELD VIA ZOOM ,**

**ON**

**30 MARCH 2021 AT 10AM**

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**PRESENT**

Percy Weatherall – Chairman  
Robbie Cowan – Caerlaverock Estate  
Raymond Mundle – Dumfries & Galloway Angling Association  
Peter Hutchison – Douglas Hall Fisheries  
Nick Wright - Closeburn Castle Fishings  
Peter Landale – Dalswinton Estate  
Tom Brown – Netting Representative  
Tom Florey – Angling Representative  
Freya Grant – Buccleuch Estate

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE**

None

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Roderick Styles – Clerk  
James Henderson – Fishery Director (FD)  
Deborah Parke – Nith Catchment Fishery Trust (FB)

**APOLOGIES**

None

The Chairman welcomed all present.

The Clerk referred to the Agenda to be found within the Annual Report.

**1. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF QUALIFIED PROPRIETORS & ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING 2020**

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors and Annual Public Meeting from 2020 were approved.

**2. ANNUAL REPORT 2020**

The Chairman referred to the Annual Report.

Peter Landale raised observations on the layout of the Annual Report and suggested that a more user-friendly format could be applied. FD agreed. The Chairman suggested that the format of the Report could be reviewed in the year ahead.

The Chairman asked for approval of the contents of the Annual Report and it was approved unanimously.

### **3. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS**

The Chairman referred to the Annual Accounts and stated that the finances were sound. It had been agreed to refund £85,000 of consultancy income to Proprietors in rebate of their Assessments. Consultancy income continues to be strong. The Board had utilised its resources to fulfil the management of the river. The Board also continued to manage its resources prudently, taking into account the necessity to balance matters due to uncertain times.

Peter Hutchison asked why the cost of sales on page 4 were identical in both years. It was agreed that the Auditors should be asked to comment.

### **4. MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Board continues to operate its Plan which has not been updated and there have been no Government intervention in relation thereto.

FD advised on the intention to produce a Plan to match the proposed Scottish Government template. The Scottish Government have advised of the requirement to produce updated information for the creation of a Pressures Tool. Initially the values attributed to the fields to be filled in for the Pressures Tool were found to be too broad, new information was required by Marine Scotland in connection with its preparation, the deadline date for which had been 30 March with the information having been supplied. FD now awaited further advice from Scottish Government.

Peter Landale advised that Scottish Government had declared that salmon are now in crisis. Notwithstanding this they had failed to meet their deadline for review of the position by 1 April 2020 and then October 2020. A meeting had taken place the previous week and Scottish Government were now in Purdah as a consequence of the forthcoming elections. A new Environment Minister would be appointed after the election. FMS continued to try to push matters along in respect of the crisis status for salmon. In the meantime, Peter Landale's recommendations were for the Board to look at restoration matters and projects meantime. It is to be hoped that there will be progress on Government strategy by the Autumn.

The Chairman commented on the incompetent lack of direction from Government and related bodies. In the meantime, the Board will continue to manage per the previous Management Plan.

Peter Landale again, emphasises more focus on restoration as a major part of the management process.

Peter Hutchison commented that as regards the salmon strategy, the Board needed a baseline position from which to model matters for the future.

### **5. A.O.C.B.**

The Chairman asked for comments and there were none.

The meeting thereafter closed.