

NITH DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF QUALIFIED PROPRIETORS

HELD AT BLACKWOOD HATCHERY, AULDGIRTH, DUMFRIES

ON

14 APRIL 2023 AT 10AM

PRESENT

Percy Weatherall – Chairman
David Kempself – D&GAA
Peter Hutchison – Netting Representative
Nick Wright - Closeburn Castle Fishings
Peter Landale – Dalswinton Estate
Richard Gladwin - Blackwood
Thomas Florey – Angling Representative

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

James Hunter Paterson (Barjarg)
Melanie Hunter Paterson (Barjarg)

IN ATTENDANCE

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

APOLOGIES

Robbie Cowan – Caerlaverock Estate
Tom Brown – Drumburn
Anna Ferguson – BEL
Raymond Mundle – Angling Representative

The Chairman welcomed all present.

1. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF QUALIFIED PROPRIETORS & ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING 2022

The Chairman referred to the draft Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors held on 8th July 2022, which had been circulated. The Chairman asked for observations and objections. None having been received, the Chairman in face of silence, deemed the Minutes to be approved.

2. ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman referred to the Annual Report and asked for comments.

Richard Gladwin referred to the worth of fishings to the economy based upon figures as at year 2000. He expressed an opinion that these figures were now hopelessly out of date.

FD replied that the figure provided in 2000 had been calculated as a consequence of much detailed research having been done. Any report since then was based only upon a generic report of all catch statistic returns from fishings throughout Scotland. After discussion, it was agreed to leave reference to the value of fishings to the local economy out of future versions of the Annual Report.

Richard Gladwin referenced Catch Data on page 9 of the Report. 2013 Catches included net catches. FD replied that whilst this gave an inaccurate impression of the drop in Catch Statistic Returns since then, these figures were not used to define Catch Statistic Returns when preparing them for the River System as a whole. Thereafter, the Chairman asked for approval of the Annual Report and with no one dissenting. it was considered to be approved.

3. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Chairman referred to the Annual Accounts and to the Clerk's Notes thereon. He noted that the Accounts were in a healthy position. The Board continues to utilise income from Consultancy and that this in part was used to subsidise the Assessments paid by the Proprietors. The finances were in a very good position and the Board moves forward expecting continued strong revenue stream from Consultancy work. Peter Landale confirmed that other River Boards throughout Scotland are in the process of gathering consultancy income in one way or another.

The Accounts were unanimously approved.

4. MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Chairman referred to the matter to the Fishery Director.

The Fishery Director reminded those present that the Board had no Management Plan beyond that which had previously been prepared approximately ten years ago because it had been waiting for five years for Scottish Government (SG) to provide a template for the collation of information to provide a catchment wide Fishery Management Plan. SG had now very recently issued a template for completion. FD and FB had spent considerable time providing the information to be input via specialised software to the template and a new interactive plan was being prepared to take forward the management of the Catchment. The function of the template and the plan will be for others to see the aims of the Board and what it is doing to fulfil its Statutory duties. In addition, it may not be possible in the future to access grant aid without a Management Plan being in place. Peter Landale stated that the Catchment Plan was to be based on ongoing maintenance and update of it with a view to identifying what work could be done in the Catchment in the future.

FD reported that there would be an additional phase of work to be carried out later in the year to provide more information and input to the draft Catchment Management Plan.

5. A.O.C.B.

The Chairman reported that he had nothing else to raise. He asked for any other matters to be raised by those present. There being none, the meeting thereafter closed.