

Subject: Beaulieu DSFB Board meeting  
Date: 08 December 2020  
Location: Video Conference  
Present: Jock Miller (JM); Frank Spencer-Nairn (FSN); Michael Spencer-Nairn (MSN); Neil Cameron (NC); Victoria Rotheroe (VR); Nick Jackson (NJ); Simon Lovat (SL); Ruth Watts (RW); Alastair Skinner (AS); Jim Braithwaite (JB); Alastair Campbell – Clerk (AC); Mary Bowman (MB)

## MINUTES

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ITEM	ACTION OWNER
<b>1.0 Apologies</b>	
1.1 Apologies were received from George Purdie.	
<b>2.0 Minutes of Board Meeting 23 September &amp; Matters Arising</b>	
2.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 23 September 2020 were approved.	
2.2 Matters arising from previous minutes:	<b>AC/MB</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2.1: Previous meeting minutes to be uploaded to BDFB website</li><li>4.2: RW confirmed she has engaged Greens of Haddington to carry out a health and safety audit when the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions allow</li><li>4.4: RW reported she has met with SSE and discussed the possibility of smolt studies in 2022. RW highlighted the need to give more thought to what type of information SSE would require in order to recognise potentially flawed areas and adjust operations, if required. Suggestions included studies on hydromorphology and sediment impact.</li><li>4.5: On enquiry, RW commented that Heisey balloon tagging is unethical and pit-tagging would be the preferable option for tagging smolts. It was acknowledged that smolt traps are expensive (AS noted in the region of £25k) but there may be options to hire or borrow. Fyke netting was also discussed as a potential option.</li></ul>	
<b>3.0 Co-option of Beaulieu Angling Club Representative</b>	
3.1 Jim Braithwaite (JB) attended the meeting, having been asked to replace Paul Pacey (PP) as the Beaulieu Angling Club (BAC) representative to the Board. JB introduced himself and gave his thanks to the Board and PP. All on the Board approved his co-option and passed on thanks and good wishes to PP.	
<b>4.0 Bailiff Recruitment Update</b>	
4.1 JM confirmed that the Board had employed Alastair Skinner (AS) as the new Bailiff and Fisheries officer and that he would start on the 11 <sup>th</sup> January 2021. AS was in attendance at the meeting, he introduced himself and noted he was looking forward to working with RW and getting to know those involved with the BDFB.	

4.2 JM noted that a representative from the River Glass Syndicate had been in touch asking if AS would also be covering the Glass (in respect of bailiffing duties) and cooperating with Addie and George Fraser. AS confirmed he would contact all involved parties going forwards and ensure they are understanding of and in agreement with his roles and responsibilities.

4.3 It was agreed that AS contact details should be distributed as soon as he has a work phone number and/or email address in place.

**AC/MB**

## **5.0 Register of Interests – Agenda Items**

5.1 The Clerk, JM & NJ made a declaration of their interests in the Lower River Beauuly Syndicate (as managing agent and committee members, respectively) in particular relation to item 11 on the meeting agenda (discussions on the works in Corff Buildings).

5.2 AC to send declaration form to JB for future meetings.

**AC**

5.3 No other specific declarations were made by those present in respect of the agenda items.

## **6.0 Review of 2020 Catches & Dam Counts**

6.1 AC noted he was still waiting on catch returns from some proprietors, in order to fully collate and compare numbers, though noted the lower river had fished particularly well during the 2020 season. VR and SL to chase catch returns. AC reported that the ongoing total was:

**VR, SL, JB**

- 841 salmon and grilse
- 569 finnock and sea trout

JB gave the totals for BAC as 2 salmon, 191 finnock and sea trout, and around 3 grilse, though noted he would seek to obtain final confirmation on these numbers.

6.2 AC provided the dam numbers for the year, to the end of November, as:

- Kilmorack: 3,403
- Aigas: 2,902
- Beannacharan: 169

AC emphasised that these were unvalidated numbers and should be considered as an absolute minimum. It was agreed the Beannacharan counter must still be faulty, and particularly must have been during September when fish were believed to be running.

6.3 RW noted she has an upcoming meeting with SSE to discuss her gaining access to the fish pass counter database. COVID and SSE willing, it is hoped that further validation can be achieved in summer 2021, using means of manually counting, such as a Go-Pro camera.

## **7.0 Financial Report Year to Date / 2021 Budget & Fishery Assessment**

7.1 Attendees had been issued the 2021 budget prior to the meeting. AC ran through major items on the budget and noted that cash flow and reserves were at a healthy level due to a delay in the recruitment process in 2020. AC confirmed the budgeted levy had risen to £1.12 per £1 of rateable value for 2021. AC offered the alternative option of the step-up to be spread over two years which would require some use of the Board's cash reserves. The

budget was approved in its present format by all present, with the proprietor levy for 2021 set at £1.12 per £1 RV.

- 7.2 NJ questioned whether funding would be available for pit-tagging. RW confirmed there could be a few potential options. It was agreed RW would have a separate discussion with NJ on the subject. **RW/NJ**
- 7.3 It was noted there may be potential additional (though likely small) amounts of funding from sources including invasives related work, NEPS and the new wind farm at Tomich. RW to make enquiries regarding the wind farm potential. **RW**
- 8.0 Senior Biologist's Report**
- 8.1 A copy of RW's report had been circulated prior to the meeting. RW ran through the detail of her work plan for the coming months, noting she has 21 operational matters and 6 major tasks she was dealing with at the time. RW confirmed she is enjoying her role and looking forward to AS joining the team.
- 8.2 JM confirmed RW had provisionally produced a paper on the Marine Scotland's (MS) Stocking Report and was to attend a meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> December. AC noted that MS are seeking input from all district fishery boards, as a consultation on Scotland-wide stocking policy is currently underway. RW to circulate her paper on completion. **RW**
- 9.0 2021 Conservation Policy & Salmon Conservation Regulations**
- 9.1 The 2020 Conservation Policy was circulated and discussed, with particular reference to the current grading (grade 1) and potential downgrading of the river, and the catch and release policy. It was agreed the current C&R policy should remain unchanged. The 2021 Conservation Policy was approved by all present.
- 9.2 RW/AC to highlight to MS that the dam counts have been less reliable in recent years, and to ensure this has been taken into account. **RW/AC**
- 10.0 Office Accommodation Update**
- 10.1 It was agreed this project requires prioritisation to move forward. NC noted the next stage is to instruct a survey of the full building, quoted at £1,000. This was approved by all present, NC to instruct. It was agreed that this survey is first required to produce a scope of works which can then be tendered for project management, there is also a requirement to come to a formal rent agreement with the Lower River Beaulieu Syndicate. **NC/AC**
- 11.0 Any Other Business**
- 11.1 JM noted that it would be of potential benefit for those present to become members of the Atlantic Salmon Trust. JM praised the Trust's work and membership benefits.
- 12.0 Date of next meeting**
- 12.1 It was agreed that the next Board meeting would be held on **30 March 2021** at 10am. **ALL / CLERK**