



## North Cheshire Cruising Club

### Minutes of the Board meeting

held on Wednesday 20 September 2023 at 7.30 pm

Meeting held via Zoom

#### Present

John Fenton – Chairman  
Ruth Smith – Finance Director

Pam Russell – Membership Services Director  
Eric Roberts – Land & Water Space Director

#### Apologies

Lyndsay Hillman – Bar Director

#### Invited to join Meeting

Nigel and Heather Stanley

1. **Approval of June 2023 Minutes** - All approved

2. **Matters Arising** - None

#### 3. Chairmans Report

The only thing of note was the 80th Anniversary. After a stunted start and a change of chair person the preparations and events were decided on, The club unveiling of the plaque by Ian Spooner was to be commissioned by Chris Potter and running concurrently with this was the unveiling of the historic railway line dedicated to Willie Walker. On the day the separate events gelled very nicely together and all involved did a good job and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The Food from the Cinnamon Bear was very enjoyable. and the Jazz band were excellent which was commented on by a number of people. I think the club did a marvellous job and I'd like to personally thank all the members and others who participated to make it a truly memorable day. I think from the comments I have had back that the VIPs had a good time despite Brian Bowkers interference with one of the invited guests, which I will bring up in AOB.

#### 4. Company Secretary's Report

Pam Suggitt resigned – Heather Stanley Co-opted in

#### 5. Finance Director's Report

Information for end of year accounts is now with the accountants, I am still just waiting for John's Commodore fund report. I have drafted a Complaints and Disciplinary Policy which I am waiting John's amendments on before circulating to the Board for comments/approval. Our deal with British Gas for electricity is coming to an end so Bill Jewsbury has negotiated a new electricity deal through a company called Utility Bidder. John has approved this so I will be going ahead and setting it up.

Summary of large outgoings over summer:

- 80th afternoon tea £1120
- electric gates £4518.11
- ride on mower £2208.33 & push mower £200
- crane for slipway £550.00
- Stockport fencing £2847.13

Needed: dredger repair (approx £4000)

We have also restocked the bar and diesel.

Account balances as at Tuesday morning (19 Sept) - Current a/c = £7,670.30 / Savings a/c = £115,020.92

Account balances at 19 September 2022 - Current a/c: £11,208.96 / Savings a/c = £128,139.95

As you can see over the last year the club has spent substantially more than it has received in revenue and it is therefore important that we look at ways of increasing revenue. Lyndsay and I will be reviewing the bar prices this week and I would suggest that we do the same with regard to Wharf services including the slipway. I would suggest increasing prices for all services, which Eric is in agreement with. In addition I would suggest differentiating between members who contribute to the club and those who do not. We currently have a higher rate for new members (under 12 months) but I would suggest extending this to members who do not help out at the club. I realise that there is no obligation on non-moorers to do their "24 hrs helping out" but several do. Also, this may encourage more volunteering from non-moorers and may be better received than saying we are charging different rates for moorers and non-moorers? Will need some thought as to how and when we introduce this.

## **6. Land & Water Space Directors Report**

Compiled by Mike Robison on behalf of Eric Roberts – 18.09.23

The main focus of current activities has been to prepare for the very successful 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration which took place just over a week ago.

All areas of the arm were cleared and maintained to an acceptable level over the 2 work parties, this entailed strimming, grass cutting, general tidying and gardening to all areas. The areas around the slipway area were properly cleared and tidied by Nigel and his team on the 2<sup>nd</sup> work party whilst I was away on holiday, many thanks for their substantial efforts. We now need to continue with regular maintenance on these tasks to keep the arm in a tidy and acceptable condition.

The new mower is performing well apart from a few hiccups after just 4 hours of receiving it, but all is now well.

The Tonka dumper failed to start when needed to be used, we have since found out the fuel tank was full of water for some reason unknown (very concerning). We have repaired it, and I am happy to say it is now working well.

The Dredger has had some issues and needs a new set of controls, at an estimated cost in excess of £4000, it is however still usable at present following a repair, but this can only be anticipated as a temporary fix, and we should budget for the permanent repair as soon as feasible. We also had to have a blown hydraulic pipe repaired.

I have now set up a maintenance schedule for all the major equipment and I am in contact with Geoff Lamb regarding purchase of all maintenance parts required i.e., fuel, oil and air filters and associated parts. It is vital that we notify all members who use the equipment that they need to check fuel, oil, and water levels before starting any equipment as my checks revealed concerning shortfalls in the checking of levels. I.e., slipway tug had an empty brake fluid reservoir and hardly any water in the coolant tank, this has of course been remedied. The stacker truck remains unchecked at present but is next on the list as the final one to be done.

I have managed to resource (free of charge) a large quantity of used 8 x 4 feet 12mm ply sheets in very reasonable condition, I am bringing them to the arm and recommend using them to repair the roof between the 2 blue containers and the left-hand paint shed roof we can also line the paint shed internally with them. Both rooves to be then covered in roofing felt to ensure they remain leak free.

The 80<sup>th</sup> celebration gave me the opportunity to converse with Stewart Mills of C&RT and he confirmed he would forward me the telephone number of their engineering dept in this area with a view to borrowing a decent piling hammer which would be great if it is feasible to do so. I pushed a little harder also asking him if we could get the use of some much-needed mud boats for dredging purposes, he again confirmed he would look into this. Both of which may yield positive results for the arm.

We have obtained free of charge a good number of paving slabs (we still however need substantially more) and anticipate laying these along the towpath from the winding hole within the arm to the bridge and turfing/landscaping the unpaved areas.

We have dredged a number of areas around the arm recently to accommodate boats mooring on the arm.

With regards to voluntary work on the arm I wonder if it would be possible to consider some amendments to rules or terms and conditions to encourage non-Moorer's to participate in activity on the arm. They do obviously use the facilities at the club but bear no obligation to assist with the upkeep. May I suggest that we create a 3-stage membership i.e., mooring members, active members, and standard membership?

- Requiring members who do not moor in the arm to choose to be active members, committing to 12 hours work per annum or standard members who have no requirement to work but pay a higher members fee. Again, just a thought. Or
- charge a penalty as we do with inactive Moorers if they do not complete a set number of hours per annum.

This could have a marked effect on the upkeep and ensure that people volunteer for bar work, event work etc.

## **7. Membership Services Director's Report**

5 new members to be put forward for approval

- John Nelson – Gretel – 19ft - may want a mooring back in the arm Dave Hood to be advised and confirm once payment has been made for membership
- Martin Trueman – NB Taniwha – 45ft – may want a mooring needs to speak to Dave Hood
- Anthony Cole/Suzanne Aston – NB Banshee – 34ft – Anthony lives onboard, but his sister doesn't – currently moor at Lyme View
- Mike Duffy – NB Ventnor – 65ft – Moored at Furness Vale
- Heather Rowley – Associate Member

MR rang PR re NB Castaway (Kim Bellis) to see if Sparrowfinch could go on the slipway next year. PR to ring Kim and advise that they would have to pay full price as you can only pull out the boat that is registered on your membership. Maybe get their daughter to be come a member as NS advised that they were doing it up for family.

## **8. Premises Director's Report**

Martin Tattersall has resigned / Nigel Stanley has been co-opted in

- Ladies toilet – left hand toilet is loose. Bolts need replacing.
- Lightbulb in the main room in the club house has been changed
- Pat testing has been done – awaiting report and cost
- Stage – Martin showed NS how to put the stage away in the storage area and also how it goes out.
- PA System working.
- Martin changed the lightbulb in the cellar to LED. More lightbulbs to be changed over time.
- Craig – alarm was called out on 9<sup>th</sup> Sept as the alarm had gone off. Was reset. Craig was called out again the following week as the alarm board was blank. The power had been turned off in the kitchen. PR advised that this switched has now been covered with tape to ensure it doesn't get turned off again.
- NS to speak with Martin to get a list of dates for when contractors need bring in ie pat testing, fire, alarm, etc
- NS advised that he is compiling a list of work that needs doing to the Club house and will advise at the next meeting – maybe some could be done on the winter work parties.

## 9. Bar Director's Report

- Bar reopened the first weekend of September and has been fully restocked including draft
- The Poretta seems to be going down an absolute treat with the members!
- We had a very successful day/evening behind the bar for the 80<sup>th</sup> taking just under £600!
- Seen an increase of offers of support to cover the bar which is great, am hopeful this will continue throughout the rest of my time as Bar director. Have created a poster to go up around the club house for volunteers, have shared with Heather S who is going to add it to the website/FB page for us.
- Am keen to get on with the refurb/updating of the bar ASAP, it's in desperate need of a facelift
- Need to purchase a new ice machine and also look at a new double under the counter, glass fronted bottle/can fridge (the one near the kitchen door is on it's very last legs!). I'll get looking and share some quotes for the fridge when I get some. I assume I am ok to go ahead and purchase a ice machine without board approval as they aren't too expensive in the grand scheme of things.
- I have asked SB to ask her daughter for availability to do a quiz night, she has shown interest before and I think it will be good to mix it up and have different members organise things like this on our regular club nights.
- RS and I are meeting to do a review of the bar prices – the cost of draught and all stock has gone up as you all will know and we need to make sure our prices reflect that.
- As you all know we have the new sum up till which is amazing. We do seem to be having some slight teething issues in relation to cash payments. No matter who has worked the bar or cashed up, the physical cash taken in the till is always up compared to that showing in Sum Up. Sometimes just a few £'s but on a couple of occasions it's been around £20 and we can't work out why. We thought maybe not every cash sale was being run through but I was very particular about doing that on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sept but we are still up in the till. So, my proposal is that we consider operating a "cashless bar" for regular club nights & working parties.

The benefits being: Less cash errors being made / no need for cashing up at the end of the night / More people willing to volunteer if they don't have to handle cash. / Cash not having to be collected and cashed (currently done by Sheila). The caveat to this is to allow both cash AND card for club functions and events!

## 10. Director without Portfolio

No one currently in position due to the passing of Willie Walker

## 11. Commodore's Report

Laying up supper has been planned, and entertainment (Male Singer) booked. It will be an open sandwich as previous. We need to have 40 people booked on the event to cover costs. It has been suggested that a meal be done, but this would prove to be expensive. Program is being prepared for 2024 depending on C&RT stoppages.

## Any other Business

- **Cashless Bar** - *All this was a mixed opinion about a cashless bar. Some on a Friday night only use cash, so it may not work. Maybe try and encourage people to use their cards instead of cash. Its very simple just a swipe across the machine.*
- **New Fridge** - *John Fenton advised that it would be best to replace items as and when they needed changing.*
- **Commodores Report** - *Ruth Smith requested the report from John Fenton*
- **Disciplinary Report for Handbook** - *John Fenton to look at this and return back to Ruth Smith and the board*
- **Dredger** - *Eric Roberts was advised to get more quotes on the repair for the dredger, and look at it in the new year. It is useable at the moment, but carefully*

- **General debrief on 80th Celebration event Mary Sunley "networking" and BB incident - Heather Rowley did offer to meet with us for this, not sure if this has been arranged? Or maybe Mike could update us?**
- *John Fenton to call Heather Rowley to discuss and sort a date. Board only to be present at the meeting.*
- **Complaints - Heather Rowley against Pam and John Suggitt** - *John Fenton to call Heather Rowley and discuss further. Pam Suggitt has resigned and does not attend any meetings. If Heather Rowley wishes to pursue the complaint further then a board member not at the meeting could investigate – suggestions were Lyndsay Hillman or Mike Robison (as he is standing in for Eric).*
- **Dave Hood against Mike Hodgkinson** – *John Fenton advised the meeting that Dave Hood had sent 24 text messages to him that Dave had received from Mike harassing Dave about a mooring in the arm. Mike was offered a space but refused as it was next to the slipway. John will write to Mike Hodgkinson and advise Dave what he is doing. Letter to be sent to the board.*
- **What action to be taken against Brian Bowker (and Hazel?) following the incident on the Mary Sunley at the 80th event. We need them to remove their lawn mowers from the blue work shed as soon as possible as they are no use to us and are getting in the way of people trying to work in there** - *John Fenton to write to Brian and Hazel Bowker about trespassing on NCCC's grounds after he had been removed from the club. Letter to be hand delivered before their return from their holiday. John Fenton to include the above in the letter to Brian and Hazel Bowker – the telephone number for the gate will be removed and Hazel will only be allowed on NCCC property by prior appointment*
- **Mike Robison / Members Boat on hardstanding** - *Mike has advised that the boat is leaning and may cause damage to the wall if it falls. It has been chocked up but needs moving from the slipway area so we could bring more boats in on the slipway. - John Fenton to write to him advising that the boat is dangerous, that it has been sat there for over 5 years and no work has been undertaken and that he has 6 months to get the boat sorted. The boat needs to be moved from the slipway to hard standing at his expense. He will also be asked if he wants the boat, and if not the club will sell for scrap.*
- **Honorary Membership** - *It was agreed that Bob and Sheila Barlow would be given Honorary membership at the AGM. All agreed*
- **Tony Bowers (Member) has asked his we could promote a charity walk that Susie Torkington's daughter (Susie is the manager of New Mills Marina), and put a donation box on the bar on Friday 22 September when Tony will be running the bar. All agreed HS to let Tony know and promote on Social media and email.**
- **Bill Wilkinson – MacMillan Coffee Morning** – *normally the club send £50 direct to MacMillian. Pamela Russell asked if we could give the donation direct to Bill to go with the money that he has raised. All agreed.*
- **Future Meetings** – *Ruth asked if we could possibly alternative between face to face and Zoom. It was agreed to stay with Zoom.*

## **For Discussion at a Future Meeting**

- **Membership prices** – for discussion at a future meeting

## **12. Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 11 October – 7.30pm Start

Meeting details

Topic: Board meeting / Time: Oct 11, 2023 07:30 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5160114474?pwd=VVI0dWszY3JNOTdkSkFJMSS0OWFSUT09>

Meeting ID: 516 011 4474 / Passcode: if5ZQw

Meeting ended at 9.40pm

  
Chairman .....

8 Oct 23 – Scanned Signature into Minutes