



MENDIP FARMERS HUNT COMMITTEE
MINUTES FOR THE MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 22 JUNE 2020

Present:

Richard Brice (RB)	Tom Ireland (TI)	Sheila Petherbridge (SP)
Brian Clothier (BC)	Sally Laurie (SL)	George Pullen (GP)
Stuart Clothier (SC)	Poppy Martin (PM)	Tim Pullen (TP)
Duncan Green (DG)	Tom Osborne (TO)	Corinne Townend (CT)
Mike Heal (MH)	W Payne (WP)	Rob Uphill (RU)

Apologies:

Nigel Doman (ND)	Roger Lyons (RL)	Mike Shepperd (MS)
	I Saunders (IS)	John Wedmore (JW)

Action

1.0 MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING

1.1 Minutes from previous meeting adopted. Proposed by WB and 2nd SL.

2.0 OBITUARIES

2.1 Margaret Wilson and Pete Watts.

3.0 MATTERS ARISING

3.1 TP brought The Constitution to the Committees' attention and the fact that five of its' members had completed their four years and should technically have retired. TP informed the Committee that Venetia Kenney-Herbert had resigned and RU was made Estates Officer in the past so is now an Officer. Therefore the remaining three being MS, TO & SC could be co-opted. Proposed by DG and 2nd PM. Majority in favour.

3.2 TP also made clear that The Constitution states that any person who has been an Officer cannot be a Committee member the following year; ergo TP informed the Committee that Claire Dunn had stood down in good faith.

4.0 TREASURER'S REPORT

4.1 TI reported that the Hunt had lost £10k last year with £45k donated by the Supporters' Club and £10k by Fallen Stock.

4.2 Reported that we have budgeted for a loss of £20k this year. SC asked if anything had been budgeted for loan repayments. TI reported that no amount was budgeted for loan repayments. TP confirmed that he had emailed all those who were lenders, in the autumn and had not received any responses.

4.3 TI reported that subs had been received from a few. Encouraged the Committee to ask foot followers to pay their subscription.

4.4 Ran through budget for the season. TI emphasised that electricity is much lower than this time last year due to a large credit on the account.



- 4.5 Noted that new huntsman Mathew is very cost conscious.
- 4.6 £5k in bank account now which TI reported should get the Hunt through a month or two. However, we will then rely on being able to fundraise. If we are able to use the £8k in the savings account, we would likely have enough money to get to the Cubbing season.
- 4.7 RB reported that P2P Committee had not had a meeting since the cancellation of the P2P. He reported that there is currently £30k in the P2P bank account. Currently awaiting an insurance claim for £5k. In meantime RB will put to P2P Committee request to make donation to £5k immediately. RB
- 4.8 SC queried whether any money was to be budgeted for loan repayments this year. TI confirmed that nothing had been budgeted further to point 4.2.
- 4.9 SC questioned budgeted expenses for 'Vet & Med'. Noted that £3k in budget, yet £1k already paid. GP reported that costs so far were down to pups, microchips and one injury. The fact that less horses are being run this year should make a difference. TP commented that there is also a second amount of £3k budgeted for hounds. SC commented that it might be useful to see the last three years of actuals for comparison. TI commented that they are pretty similar albeit conceded that the figures were optimistic. TI to double check budgeted amount against previous years as a sense check. TI
- 4.10 Reported that £1k had been budgeted for income from livery. TP commented that there would be at least one livery likely.
- 4.11 Discussed hound numbers. GP reported that we are 6½ couples lighter since the end of last season. In the current pack there are approximately 2 - 3 couples of older hounds which won't make it past cubbing. Total of 40 couples including pups. GP reported that we aim to have pack of 35 couples for the main season.
- 4.12 Further to 4.9 and 4.11, BC queried if we should continue to breed if we cannot afford the upkeep. Posed idea of reducing pack to say 32½ couples and drafting in if required. GP commented that you have to keep the young coming in as the really decent hounds are ageing. TP reiterated that 2 – 3 couples of best hounds will likely be out of action in the coming months. BC queried number of hounds being kept from a business point of view. He called for review of hound numbers and costings. GP to look into. GP
- 4.13 Further to point 4.12, RB asked if Kent took hounds with him. TP reported that he did not. BC asked if any huntsman could take hounds on departure. TP explained that a clause had been put in Mathew's employment contract to state that hounds, puppies and drafts are the property of the Hunt. Also stated that the same would go for any future huntsman and any outgoing huntsman would need express permission from the Committee to take hounds.
- 5.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**
- 5.1 Reported that the Hunt starts the season in poor financial state due to cancellation of the last week's hunting, P2P, Glastonbury Festival and fundraising events. Stated that job this year is make the budget balance.
- 5.2 TP suggested to Committee that they should consider using the £8k within the savings account to get us through to the start of the season. BC queried how many people were still owed money. TP confirmed seven people were still owed. Amount yet to be repaid stands at £23k.
- 5.3 Further to 5.2, DG proposed that £8k used and 2nd WP. Majority in favour.
- 5.4 GP reported that hoping to get the Hound Sponsorship Programme up



and running shortly. A conservative figure of £1,250 has been entered into budget, equating to £25 per hound.

- 5.5 Further to point 5.3, RU queried what people got for their money with hound sponsorship. GP explained that sponsors would receive a framed photo, the hound's breeding, updates and an invite to a pre-puppy show. RU queried whether it might be simpler to ask people to sponsor a hound for £100.

Post meeting note: No action noted. Perhaps something for the Committee to mention to people as and when they see them.

- 5.6 SP asked what had happened to hound sponsorship last year. Money was taken at Puppy Show but nothing came of it. GP reported that money was safe and would be carried forward. SP, MH and SL all commented that they had paid sponsorship but had not had any contact. GP to speak with Twiga Drewett who was organising and ensure everyone is contacted. When PM sends out email re hound sponsorship she will encourage those who paid last year to make themselves known.

GP / PM

- 5.7 TP made a plea for the Committee to 'rally the troops'. Asked that we all make effort to ask those we come across to pay a foot sub of £100. TP commented that if you don't ask, you don't get and he had recently raised £1,100 by asking just two people. SL commented that many people not keen to pay yet, as don't know what will happen this season. TP agreed but made the point that he was targeting the older generation who had a larger disposable income.

All

- 5.8 Reported that Robbie Drewett is in the process of converting the possessory title of Bowery Bungalow to a full title. Currently, Rupert Firbank, Ken Osborne, Roger Lyons and James Drummond are listed on the title. This will be amended to the Trustees being RL and BC. DG proposed that a third Trustee is added to ensure there is always give a majority. SC suggested TO. Proposed by DG and 2nd SC. Majority in favour. TP to deal with paperwork.

TP

- 5.9 Further to 5.7, MH questioned if Trustees could sell without Committees' permission. TP stated that The Constitution is clear that that the Committee have to agree to anything.

- 5.10 BC raised question of giving out deals to various 'would be' subscribers. Agreed that any deals would be at Hon Sec's discretion but that PM should discuss with either of the Masters if she feels necessary. All agreed that it is a difficult balancing act and people do talk, therefore deals should only be considered on a case by case basis and usually only where the individual gives a lot back to the Hunt.

- 5.11 BC asked where Hunt sourced straw and haylage from. GP reported that Anthony Bown has provided it last season. Confirmed that Hunt do pay for it, but perhaps at a reduced rate. GP and CT reported that not yet sorted for this year. BC suggested we may be able to receive 'donations' from farmers in the area. CT to speak with BC when reviewing supply.

CT

6.0 SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 6.1 Header to be removed from next Committee meeting. To be included in AGM agendas only.

7.0 HUNT SUPPORTERS' CLUB

- 7.1 MH reported that AGM was brought forward but it clashed with Farmers' Meet and was delayed. It was later cancelled due to lockdown.

- 7.2 SP reported that Supporters' Club donated £37,049 last year, as opposed to the usual £20k. The increased amount was given in order that the Hunt



could start the season on £0 rather than at a deficit; other than the £500 in the account from Vicky Heal and the additional £10k that was to be paid in on 1 May.

- 7.3 £10k was paid to Hunt on 1 May with a further £10k to be paid in October. An additional £5k has been put aside to buy a new horse, leaving £3k in the Supporters' Club account as working capital.
- 7.4 MH reported that as it stands there will be no money to donate to the Hunt in 2021/22. Queried whether the Supporters' Club had a future with no one yet having come forward to carry it on.
- 7.5 200 Club draw was drawn. 1st prize to Luke Stevens, 2nd prize to Mike Heal and 3rd prize to Greg Brice.

8.0 MASTERS' REPORT

- 8.1 GP gave update on Kennels. Reported that Mathew settled in and has taken Ellie under his wing. Kennels very presentable and runs like clockwork.
- 8.2 7 couples of puppies from 3 litters. 2½ couples already out for walking. Housewife is most recent to whelp and 3½ couples will be ready for walking soon.
- 8.3 SL asked whether Ellie was full time and whether there was enough to do for two full time employees. TP confirmed that there was plenty for them both to do, with Ellie helping exercise hounds, covering holiday and with the flesh round. *Post meeting note: SP checked tickets and Ellie has not yet done a flesh round.*
- 8.4 Reported that hound exercise on bikes started earlier in the month and mounted exercise would begin in July.
- 8.5 MH asked about whips for the season. Confirmed that amateur whips would be Harry Billing, Tom Brimble and Mike Stevens. MH said Harry interested in the hounds and commented that good Whip needed with Antis around. DG confirmed that he had spoken with Harry and DG to speak with Mathew re Harry getting to know the hounds.
- 8.6 SP asked about who would field master. Confirmed that CT would do the Levels. Jade Lazenby keen to do some meets; albeit noted that she is slightly reliant on Somervilles. Sarah Gould will also do a few. GP has ideas for a few others and will follow up.
- 8.7 SL commented that people are wondering whether or not we will be hunting this season. TP confirmed that MFHA positive. All agreed that publicity will be imperative. GP keen to have a series of BBQ's at Kennels to get people interested in the upcoming season.

DG

GP

9.0 FALLEN STOCK

- 9.1 SP reported that numbers were down last month. Perhaps combined due to change in landline number and the time of year.
- 9.2 Reported that there is one bad debtor who SP will continue to chase.
- 9.3 SP reported that Mathew settled in very well; never needs to be told twice and meets all deadlines.
- 9.4 DG queried whether farmers on Committee knew Hunt could now bring in over age animals. BC and SC were aware but were not aware that the landline had changed. DG requested that everyone lets farmers know as and when they see them.
- 9.5 Gave £10,053 to hunt last year. £3,500 went on repairs to lorry.

SP

All



10.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 SC queried what next step was if accounts did not look better further into the season. TI reported that there is no backup. TP stated that sale of Bowery Bungalow would be a last resort.

10.2 TI suggested that Hunt lorry quietly advertised on MFHA in case there is interest. No action discussed.

10.3 DG reported that he had looked at costings for various options in regards to transport, as follows:

1. Retain lorry

Basic cost for lorry with no issues is circa £2k a year, however, catalytic converter will need changing soon which will cost £1,700 - £2,300.

2. Buy two trailers

Could be converted to be use for Fallen Stock during week and hounds at on hunt days. Approx £5k for new trailer or £3,900 - £4,400 for second hand. 4wd truck would also be needed. Cost of Ford Ranger with 80k on clock approx. £9k

3. Buy one trailer and tow with flesh wagon

Relatively new idea. DG to cost up.

DG

SC queried whether we could have subscriber pick up hunt horses. GP commented that he did not think that would work. SC commented that we need to be conscientious and possibly may need to look at running like an amateur pack. To review at next meeting once DG reviewed costs.

DG commented that he is hoping that we will gain subscribers from the merging of the Weston & Banwell Harriers (W&BH) and West Somerset Vale (WSV). SC noted that we didn't pick any up additions last year. DG thinks message didn't get passed on.

DG posed the question as to whether we should sound out other hunts re amalgamation in preparation for worst case scenario. Need to plant seed now to prevent Hunt missing out if it comes down to it. TP commented that worth seeing what happens W&BH and WSV. PM commented that it would be too late at that point. All agreed that we should sound out Avon & Vale. TP to raise with Avon & Vale.

TP

11.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11.1 To be agreed.