

TAY DISTRICT SALMON FISHERIES BOARD

MINUTES FROM VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING held 10am Thursday, 13th August 2020

Present: Iain McLaren (Convener), Simon Furniss, Steve Mannion, Bob Mason, Cllr. Andrew Parrott, Alastair Riddell, Allister Wallace

In Attendance: Dr. David Summers (Fisheries Director), Inga MacGillivray (Clerk to the Board)

1. **Apologies:** David Godfrey, David Brown, Jim Perrett, Claire Mercer Nairne, Alex Stewart, Tom Monaghan
2. **Declarations of Interest:** No interests were declared.
3. **Minutes of meeting held 18th June 2020:** Minutes had been circulated previously and were taken as read.

4. **Matters Arising**

Bird Predation

DS explained that the Marine Scotland contracted CEH report on stomach contents of piscivorous birds study was due later in the year, having been delayed by Covid. He also explained that the shooting season was now over, and that he would work on the bird scaring protocol in the near future.

ACTION: DS to progress bird scaring protocol.

Stocking Policy Update

DS asked SM to clarify the purpose of the Stocking Policy draft paper which SM had produced with help from CMN and BM. SM explained that the purpose of the paper was to show potential political allies that the Board was ahead of the game but stressed it was a draft document.

DS pointed out that the TGA had requested he defend enhancement stocking, and that the draft omitted this topic.

ACTION: DS to fully review and circulate Draft Stocking Policy paper.

FMS Meeting 25th June 2020

SM stated he had not been invited to the FMS Board meeting on 25th June but had attended an FMS members' meeting and had been so impressed he had recommended other Board members attend also. He now vindicated the Board decision to pay the FMS annual fee. The Convener expressed his pleasure at this endorsement.

5. **Financial Summary with decision to be made on invoicing 35%**

IMacG had previously circulated the financial papers and these were taken as read. ALL unanimously accepted the proposal to invoice out a further 35% to Proprietors, with a couple of Board members asking whether the figure should be slightly higher.

ACTION: IMacG to invoice out a further 35% to all proprietors wc 17/08/2020

6. Staffing Discussion

IMacG had previously circulated a staffing paper, which was taken as read.

There was some discussion surrounding the paper, with the following actions decided:

ACTION: DS to remain 3 days a week with regular reviews

ACTION: One Fisheries Officer to be offered early retirement

ACTION: All other staff to be unfurloughed from Monday, 17th August 2020.

IMacG asked if the other Board members should be consulted on the financial and staffing decision before finalising, to which the Board members present replied this would not be necessary as the majority of the Board (7 out of 13) were present.

7. Road Repairs

IMacG explained that the road repair issue required attention and had reached the stage where a Project Manager should be involved. ALL agreed. IMacG explained that the road works had already been scoped out.

ACTION: IMacG to contact 3 project managers regarding a tender for the position ASAP.

8. AOB:

SM Paper

SM had submitted a paper previously which was taken as read, and proposed 3 motions, namely to instruct the Clerk to the Board to raise the following matters with the Board's solicitors:

1. In respect of the Board's ownership of the hatchery apparatus and equipment
2. The Terms of the lease between the Board and TRT ensure that the assets of the Board and the hatchery remain the property of the Board
3. The actions of Messrs McLaren and Wallace in failing to represent the interests of the Board by their failure to consult the Board properly in the above matters and declare a conflict of interest.

An explanation of all points had been emailed to SM and the rest of the Board by the Clerk and was taken as read.

The Convener expressed his sadness that the issue had been taken further after explanations had been given to all SM points.

(AP left the meeting)

DS and IMacG again explained that the financial donations for the hatchery equipment had been charitable donations to TRT and had gone through the TRT's books and the assets were in the TRT's fixed asset register, as they would legally be required to be, having been bought by the TRT. The TRT had no issue with the assets being used by the Board. As to the Convener and AW, they had not acted improperly as their duty was to put the TRT first when sitting on TRT meetings.

After much discussion, the Convener suggested better communication between the two organisations would help matters, to which there was general agreement.

SM stated that he was willing to withdraw all motions if the Convener would allow a group of 3 named by SM as DG, AP and BM to look into the matter and report to the Board. Otherwise, he would consider his position on the Board.

The Convener reluctantly agreed to the request but stated he did not think it necessary as everything had been explained in full both in the email reply to SM paper and in the ensuing discussion. SM then withdrew his paper.

ACTION: SM to contact DG, AP and BM to see if they would be willing to look into the matter of the TRT assets and report to the Board should they be willing.

Stocking Paper

BM asked that DS pass his comments to SM on the Stocking Policy draft paper so this could be moved forward and agree who was to contact politicians, MSS and Scottish Government.

IMacL explained there had been a delay in the Government's stocking policy consultation, which DS explained further. SM added that he would like to see DS have greater freedom to stock wherever necessary. DS replied this had been explained in the previous policy, and that the draft stocking paper still did not address the issue of the TGA wanting to stock the main stem of the river.

The action is the same as item 4 under "Matters Arising".

Lyon Study

AR asked if DS could share the results of the Lyon DNA study which had run behind schedule.

DS replied that Eric Verspoor had already given a presentation at which AR was present, and that DS had some work to do on the report, which would be available by the end of the month.

AR asked if this would affect broodstock fishing, to which DS replied it would have no effect. If anything, the study showed a saturation of the Lyon salmon population and fine scale local population structuring, which would undermine any case for stocking in the main stem of the Lyon.

Stocking

SF stated he would like the Braan project forwarded, to which the Convener agreed.

Pitlochry Fish Counter

BM asked if SSE were doing anything about the fish counters, to which DS replied that there appeared to be fundamental issues with this generation of counter but the software developer had ceased its involvement in this market. SSE would have to find an alternative.

Earn Netting

BM asked if the Board would be doing anything about the recent reports of salmon netting. DS replied one of the Fisheries Officers had monitored the situation. He pointed out that if they did not put salmon back then they would be breaking the law, and if caught, a prosecution would ensue.

The Convener stated that the situation had been exaggerated and it was of concern, but the Board staff were on the case.

Next Meeting Date

The attendees agreed the next meeting date should be 27th October 2020 and should be a Zoom meeting.

ACTION: IMacG to inform Board of next meeting date

SM proposed a vote of thanks to the Convener

The meeting was closed.