

TAY DISTRICT SALMON FISHERIES BOARD

Minutes of the Tay District Salmon Fisheries Board meeting held at the Kelt Reconditioning Unit and Hatchery, Almondbank on Tuesday, 7th October 2014.

Present: William Jack (Chairman)
John Wood
Stephen Mannion
Simon Furniss
Thomas Steuart Fotheringham

In Attendance: Dr. David Summers – Fisheries Director
Inga McGown - Clerk
Brian Roxburgh – SEPA
Alastair Duguid – SEPA
Pauline Silverman - SEPA

Apologies: William Jackson
Jack Coburn – P&KC
John Young
John Apthorp
David Brown
William Lindsay
Alastair Riddell
David Godfrey
Gavin Clark – SNH

SEPA Presentation:

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming the SEPA team, and invited them to make their presentation to the assembled Board.

Brian Roxburgh (SEPA) opened the presentation by explaining the recent developments regarding the River Garry, whereby SSE have formally withdrawn their application, which effectively gives SEPA increased authority to take things forward with a view to meeting the requirements of the European Water Framework Directive. The Board were assured that the Garry is now top priority, and BR committed to forming a plan of action as soon as possible, in conjunction with all appropriate parties.

BR went on to explain that much of the delay had been caused by lack of guidance, and this was now in hand.

Alastair Duguid (SEPA) then presented a slide show, which explained the methodology used in deciding flow rates. SEPA now have a much better understanding of what is required for the Garry, and are in a better position to take this forward.

The Chairman congratulated SEPA on their hard work, and after some discussion the SEPA team left the meeting.

The Chairman then thanked DS for his input into this issue, and the Board echoed his sentiments in recognition of all DS's hard work and input over the years.

ACTION: IMcG to send copy of Alastair Duguid's presentation to all Board members, with notes on discussion that took place, and convey Chairman's disappointment at level of attendance.

Declaration of Interests:

John Wood declared his interest as a trustee of the Atlantic Salmon Conservation Trust.

Minutes of Board Meeting of 12th August 2014:

JW asked that the Minutes be changed to reflect the following:

1. Fisheries Review section – Last paragraph to read the “The Kyle Trust are considering moving their netting rights to the Atlantic Salmon Conservation Trust”.
2. Buchanty Weir section – to read “It was agreed that any repairs required the cooperation of Abercairney/Glenalmond estates.

The Minutes were then taken as read, approved unanimously and once updated, will be signed by the Chairman.

ACTION: IMcG to execute changes to Minutes and circulate.

Matters Arising:

Smolt Tagging Project:

DS has been unable to draw up a proposal as yet, but has made progress by meeting John Armstrong and creating a realistic proposal. Furthermore, he is to meet with Iain McMyn in the next week to discuss the project further and ascertain the cost of Iain's consultancy. Iain used to work for the Kyle Board and has since been employed in a consultancy capacity on projects of this nature. JW requested that he be present at this meeting, to which DS agreed.

ACTION: DS to draw up a detailed costed proposal for the next Board meeting

Trackers on Bailiff Vehicles:

To be installed in next fortnight.

Building Works:

IMcG informed the Board that Cameron's services were no longer in use, and that ELES would complete the works in the agreed time on a comparable budget.

Fisheries Review:

Covered later in the meeting.

Horseshoe Weir:

ACTION: DS to see Ian Fullerton to discuss reparation.

Financial Report:

The Annual Statutory accounts are still with the auditor awaiting completion, and will be with us very shortly.

Cash Account to 6th August 2014:

As at 30th September 2014, the Accounts are showing an increase of £139,928, and the overall bank balance stands at £416,543, of which £100,000 is being invested to generate further income.

Income

The Assessment payments are 90% paid to date, with reminder letters having been sent out in August. Payments for 2012/3 are still being chased.

To date, rebates amounting to £1,507 have been paid to both the Crown Estate and the Finegand Estate. The forecast is showing £5k in total for the year, as there are still a few cases outstanding per the assessor.

The process to rent out our old offices is under way at present, with feedback being that this type of property will be difficult to market, but should attract an annual rental income of between £8,500 and £12,000.

Expenditure

Regarding salaries, we are still forecasting to make a £6k saving overall due to the delayed bailiff start date and the £2k government rebate.

Again, we have still not received a rent invoice from the Government, but this has been provided for in the statutory accounts.

To date, the Kelt Reconditioning Hatchery has cost £36,298, of which £17,403 is salary related. There is a full year saving of £12,215, which is mainly salary related as a biologist is not to be employed this financial year. The road repairs have come in roughly on budget.

The New Offices have cost £2,531 to date. Camerons are no longer contracted to finish the work, and instead the works will be completed by ELES who will commence on the 13th October at a cost of £5,160, which is reflected in the forecast.

Overall, the forecast is showing a £22k saving on budget, mainly due to the reduction in appeals figure of £18k, and the hatchery £12k, offset by spend on the new offices of almost £8k .

Health & Safety Report:

There were no Health & Safety issues to report since the last Board meeting.

SEPA presentation on Garry:

Covered at the start of the Board meeting.

Extraordinary General Meeting:

The Chairman asked for views on the extension from the assembled Board. There were no strong views either way, and it was decided that the proposals to be considered were:

1. To cease the extension entirely as of 2015.
2. To apply for a licence in order to keep the extension, with the caveat that all participating beats pay a percentage of gross profit to the Tay Foundation until the revaluation process in 2017.

There was some discussion surrounding shortening the season to 1st February, and the Board undertook to look into this, particularly the financial impact.

DS then circulated his paper on the season extension thus far, stating there were essentially two aspects to the argument for keeping the extension, being biological and commercial.

ACTION: DS to email Season extension data to all Board members.

The Chairman urged as many Board members as possible to attend the EGM on Monday, 17th November.

TSF left the meeting.

Fisheries Review Update:

DS stated that the report was due out this week, and there was nothing much to say on the subject until the report was circulated.

Salmon Netting Rights:

JW explained to the Board that, should the Boards be disbanded under the Fisheries Review, the netting rights owned by the Board could be appropriated by the Government, and perhaps the Board should look to safeguard these assets. Fishlegal have commented that should the Board disband, the assets should be apportioned to the proprietors.

He went on to state that other Boards were looking to transfer their netting rights to their Trust equivalents, or to the Atlantic Salmon Conservation Trust for safekeeping, and proposed that the Tay Board look to transferring their netting rights to the Tay Foundation. In principle, the Chairman and DS saw no reason why this could not be done, but the River Shee would need to be investigated, as it had been bought by the Board to prevent fishing, and this would need to be upheld.

It was agreed that the proposal would be considered pending investigation into the legal implications.

ACTION:IMcG/DS to investigate legal implications.

AOB:

Parr Stocking:

JW asked how the parr stocking experiment, now in its third year, was faring, to which DS replied it had been fascinating. DS had conducted some electrofishing, whereby it appeared that around 10% of the eyed ova and clipped parr that had been stocked in the Braan had survived, and there was a similar survival rate in Findowie and Lochay.

ACTION: DS to produce report over winter.

No Other Business was brought up and the Chairman closed the meeting.

Next Meeting: 9:30am Friday 12th December 2014 at the Birnam Arts & Conference Centre