TAY DISTRICT SALMON FISHERIES BOARD

MINUTES FROM VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

9:30AM TUESDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2021

Present:	Toby Metcalfe (Convener) (TPM), David Godfrey (DG), Claire Mercer Nairne (CMN), John Nevin (JN), Jerry Saunders (JS), Nicola Thompson (NT), Bobby White (BW), Iain Wood (IW)
In Attendance:	Dr. David Summers (DS) (Fisheries Director), Inga MacGillivray (IMacG)(Clerk to the Board), Mike Brown (MB) (Operations Manager)

1. **Apologies**
   Apologies were received from Calum Innes(CI), Andrew Parrott(AP) and Nicki McIntyre (NMcI) (Nature Scot)

2. **Declaration of Interests**
   The Clerk intimated she had received two declarations with regard to JN painting IW's property. IW added that he had taken on management of East Haugh beat.

3. **Minutes of Meeting held 26th October 2021**
   The Minutes had been circulated previously and were taken as read. The Convener asked if there were any amendments to be made to the Minutes. There were no changes, and the Minutes were unanimously agreed to be a true and fair reflection of the meeting.

ACTION: IMacG to ensure Open Minutes from 26th October 2021 meeting on website

4. **Report on Matters Arising from Meeting held 26th October 2021**
   The report had been circulated previously and DS gave a brief summary of action points with the following actions noted:
   (JN entered the meeting)
   (BW entered meeting)

ACTION: TM to liaise with DS regarding Lunan water tree felling issue.
ACTION: DS to complete Lochay Fish Pass paper and circulate
ACTION: DS to produce piscivorous bird paper prior to Christmas
ACTION: DS/TM to reassemble Ericht Abstraction sub committee for meeting
ACTION: IMacG to ensure Calum McGregor (SEPA Representative) has all necessary meeting dates for 2022.

5. **Financial Report**

IMacG presented the financial situation which showed a bank balance of £323,857 to December 3rd 2021 and a net surplus of £77,861 during the year. She explained the main variances against budget and the forecast.

The Convener asked what Anne Woodcock costs had been. IMacG replied the costs were separated out and Anne's cost was £769 from August to November. The Convener explained Anne's working agreement with the Board and extended his thanks to Anne for all her hard work. He also thanked IW for facilitating the website development and the team who produced the content.

CMN offered to accommodate AW whenever she visited the Tay. The Convener thanked CMN for this and IMacG for her report.

The Convener asked whether there was anything to report on the annual figures for the AGM. IMacG replied that the 2019 loss was overstated due to an overcharge on depreciation in 2019 of £1,046 and that this had been highlighted to the proprietors for their approval at the AGM. She then ran through the loss of £50,202 for the 2020 figures, highlighting the main causes.

CMN enquired about debtors, and the Convener assured her this would be covered in the Closed section of the meeting.

6. **River Management Plan 2020/2021 Update**
7. **Plan of Additional Work Update**
8. **Director Report**

Due to the shortage of time, the Convener asked the Board if it would be acceptable for DS to highlight any major concerns regarding his River Management Plan update, Plan of Additional Work update and Director Report. ALL agreed this was an acceptable strategy.

DS replied there were no major areas of concern and he had sent out a short report a short time before which would provide details of any issues.

The Convener made everyone aware of the meeting arrangements for the AGM.

9. **Operations Manager Report**

MB stated that since the last meeting in October he and the team had been capturing broodstock but this had been hampered due to weather and unseasonably warm temperatures.

The Tilt had been particularly difficult due to high water levels. However, the Eden had proven better than prior years and 5 fish had been captured.

He advised that warm water temperatures had delayed spawning which was usually complete by this time. This had been mirrored in the hatchery, and stripping had been delayed and would normally have been complete at this time of year.

There had been no real enforcement issues in the preceding 2 months and the team had received 3 call outs. Clearing fish passages had been a priority since the stormy weather and a fish rescue was to be carried out within the week.

The Convener expressed his pleasure at the successful Eden broodstock fishing and asked that this be communicated to David Farmer.

ACTION: DS/MB to inform Mr. Farmer of successful Eden broodstock fishing.

MB then alerted the Board to an erosion issue on the River Ericht that was undermining a building to which he had attended. DS expanded that SEPA had been in contact with him regarding the issue and that he advised them that work should not be undertaken during spawning season. But as it was felt that emergency repairs were required, DS had suggested MB identify a route to get the digger to the site without disturbing spawning habitat. The situation was ongoing but in hand.

JS enquired if MB and the team required any help in the hatchery due to COVID isolation issues, and MB thanked him and stated that the team were coping at present but the situation could soon change if another member of staff had to isolate.

10. **Health & Safety Report**
DS advised there had been no reportable incidents since the last meeting.

11. **Tay Rivers Trust Update**
Unfortunately, CI was unable to make the meeting and there was therefore no update.

12. **Lease of Hatchery Building from Tay Rivers Trust Update**
The Convener advised that the site had been valued by Smart & Co and he would catch up with CI to discuss as soon as practicable. He advised that the Board could not afford to be tied into an arrangement it could not get out of, especially with the risk of reduced stocking opportunities.

ACTION: The Convener to liaise with CI and report to Board.

13. **TRT/TDSFB Memorandum of Understanding Update**
The Convener updated that he had revised the original draft and sent to DS for comment. DS advised he thought it was fine but would have to read the annexes in detail.

ACTION: The Convener/DS to finalise MoU and send to CI.

14. **Marketing Update**
IMacG gave an update on the marketing activity in AW's absence, thanking IW, DS and AW for their input to the website. She advised that the Malloch Trophy would be adjudicated in January and had a few entries.

CMN advised she had put additional safety measures in place for Opening Day and favoured a ticket entry system to avoid overcrowding. She would release the invitations in the New Year and the event would follow the same format as prior years.

The Convener thanked CMN for her time and effort.

15. **Governance & Policies Update**
NT had sent an update to all Board members prior to the meeting which was taken as read.
NT explained that the Finance paper had been rewritten to form a procedures paper and thanked IW for his input.

She advised that she, DS and AW had met to discuss the Volunteer role and this was progressing.

16. **Catch & Release Flyer 2022**

The Convener explained he had received correspondence from the TGA which had set out some areas of concern along with some sensible comments. DS had prepared a response and they had tried to take the observations on board.

DS expanded that one of the main issues concerning the TGA was their feeling that fish were being killed in the Upper Tay and their wish for there to be mandatory Catch & Release in this area in autumn.

DS explained that the Board would have to bring in mandatory catch and release for the whole season and Marine Scotland might not support this as they had given the river Category 1 status. In any case, he explained that the statistics showed more instances of fish being killed on the Lower Tay.

The TGA had expressed concerns over the 2019 Board flyer section on worming and the use of multiple hooks on some spinning lures. DS had since clarified the worming wording on the 2022 flyer and asked that this be approved by the Board. He also added a recommendation to reduce the use of treble hooks in the flyer.

Another TGA area of concern was fish handling protocol. They had expressed their issue with the TDSFB retweeting photos of fish being handled incorrectly.

There followed some discussion surrounding treble hooks and worming before the Convener interjected stating the issues would obviously not be resolved in the meeting and suggested ALL feed their ideas to DS regarding the flyer.

ACTION: ALL to feed back their views on the flyer to DS.

17. **Ghillies Lunch 2022**

The Convener stated he would support meeting ghillies in person and suggested the Board consider 2-3 small events. CMN suggested using Meikleour after the Opening day event to catch up with the ghillies and the Convener asked if ALL were happy to consider smaller events with less people perhaps in an outdoor environment. ALL agreed this was a good idea.

ACTION: CMN/BW/IMacG to plan alternative ghillies lunch put proposal to Board for approval.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 8th February 2022 at 10am

End of Open Meeting Minutes