

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES

of the proceedings of a Meeting of the Board

At a Meeting of the Board held at the Offices of the Board on Wednesday
4th February 2009 at 2:30pm

Members

Chairman - * Mr M J Scott

* Mr J F Atkinson	* Cllr R Austin
* Mr V A Barker	* Cllr P Bedford
* Mr K C Casswell	* Cllr J Blaylock
* Mr J Fowler	* Cllr M Brookes
Mr F W C Holmes	* Cllr D Dickinson
* Mr R Leggott	Cllr A Puttick
* Mr P Robinson	* Cllr B Rush
* Mr R J Watts	* Cllr B Russell
Mr R Welberry	* Cllr J Rylatt
* Mr J R Wray	

* Member Present

In attendance: Mr S M Hemmings (Chief Executive)

550 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr B Russell, Cllr A Puttick, Mr R Welberry, Mr F W C Holmes, Cllr B Rush and Mr D Withnall (Finance Officer).

551 **MINUTES OF LAST BOARD MEETING**

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Board held on 5th November 2008, copies of which had been circulated, were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes should be received and adopted.

552 **MATTERS ARISING**

(a) **Azolla - Minute No 519(a)**

The Chief Executive stated that the Azolla weed was not dying off as quickly as hoped, and therefore there may be a need to consider a programme of spaying in May or June 2009 to prevent a reoccurrence. It was agreed that the Chief Executive should look into how this can be achieved.

(b) Wyberton Low Road - Minute No 519(b)

The Chief Executive stated that an arrangement had been made with EA to dispose of some of the soil used in the repair of wash banks at Kirton Marsh, but as yet it has not been transported.

553 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON 5TH NOVEMBER 2009

The Chairman presented the minutes of the meeting held on 5th November 2008, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes should be received and adopted.

554 MATTERS ARISING

(a) RSPB – Minute No 512

The Chief Executive reported that a further letter had been received from Mr Badley regarding their assessments. He informed members that he had met with Mr Badley and he had explained the Boards position.

555 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON 14TH JANUARY 2009

The Chairman presented the minutes of the last meeting held on 14th January 2009, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes should be received and adopted.

556 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Senior Engineers Vacancy - Minute No 531(a)

The Chief Executive recommended that Mr Ian Watts be appointed Technical Team Leader Engineering and he will be responsible for the design team. Mr Mick Johnson (Works Manager) and Mr Colin Richards (Pump Engineer) will in future report directly to the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive stated that he had asked Mr B Elliott to help to improve the way that the Engineering Department works. This was AGREED.

(b) National Fraud Initiative - Minute No 531(b)

The Chief Executive stated that he had responded to this request from the Audit Commission stating that the Board's staff at present time does not have sufficient resources to prepare the data for submission.

(c) Plant Replacement Fund - Minute No 536

The Chief Executive reported that the review of the operation of the plant account over the next five years had not been completed and would be presented at the next meeting.

(d) Letter from DEFRA - Minute No 538

The Chief Executive summarised the letter that had been received from Defra regarding the future role of Local Authorities in the management of flood risk. Defra have acted on the recommendation in the Pitt Review and have announced a new leadership role for local authorities to promote and organise all parties to work together and share information.

The letter outlines the responsibilities of local authorities as:-

- Build up their technical abilities
- Build partnerships with all relevant bodies
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessments are in place
- Understand the local flood risk from all sources
- Develop surface water management plans

Cllr Blaylock asked the Board if we could act as a consultative group and recharge to the local council. Mr Scott agreed that this was an avenue to be explored.

Mr Leggott stated that at the next Local Authority ADA Seminar for members on the 11th March 2009 Mr Wills would be attending the meeting and giving a presentation.

Cllr Austin cautioned the Board that Government have a tendency to initially fund new initiatives and then leave it up to the local council fund it in the future.

Mr Watts considered that it is essential that the Board should take the initiative in this matter.

557 ESTIMATES FOR REVENUE ACCOUNT, INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
2009/10 – Agenda Item 5

The Chairman stated that for a number of years the level of the Board's balances had been too high, and the Board had been producing estimates with an excess of expenditure over income. He reminded members that an appropriate level of balances was 25% of expenditure. The budget estimates for 2009/10 had been prepared in the same way.

(a) Bank Interest

The Chief Executive stated that the estimated income from interest had been significantly reduced. He had recently placed some of the Board's investments with Building Societies who are offering a better rate of interest than most banks at the present time.

(b) Drain Assett Improvements

The Chief Executive explained that the proposed work to line a section of piped drain at Drayton had been delayed, and this has lead to an under spend on this in 2008/09. An allowance has now been made to carry out the work in 2009/10.

(c) Pumping Station Improvements

The Chief Executive recommended that a weedscreen cleaner should be installed at Damford Pumping Station in 2009/10.

He commented on the planned expenditure at Swineshead Pumping Station in 2010/11 and 2011/12. He explained that he intended to explore the possibility of making an application for a Defra grant for this work. He stated that to be successful the benefits of the scheme would need to be demonstrated by utilising work being carried out on the catchment by JBA.

(d) Precepts

The Chief Executive reminded members that the Board, along with many Lincolnshire Boards had two years ago appealed against the precept. Since then discussions had been taking place with the Environment Agency to resolve the difficulties IDB's had with the calculation of the Precept.

At the present time both sides are exploring the possibility of a link between the length of EA watercourses that benefit each IDB and the amount of precept that each Board pays.

(e) Pipeline Jetting

The Chief Executive stated that work on pipeline jetting had not proceeded as quickly as anticipated which had resulted in an under spend on this item.

558 FIVE YEAR ESTIMATES AND BUDGET FORECAST OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE & BALANCES – Agenda Item 6

The Chairman explained how it was proposed to reduce balances over the next five years, whilst keeping rate increases to approximately 2.5%.

Cllr Austin informed the Board that Lincolnshire County Council had announced a 1.7% increase and asked the Board to consider passing on any savings to the rate papers.

Mr Barker voiced concerns that if the Board were not spending the full estimated figures on drain asset improvements then the Board were not keeping the assets in good order. The Chairman stated that the under spend was entirely due to the work at Drayton not proceeding.

The Chief Executive was asked to look into the reports on expenditure on electricity and pumping station maintenance.

559 BOURNE NORTH FEN FARM ACCOUNT – Agenda Item 7(a)

The Chief Executive reported to the Executive Committee on a revised revaluation of the account. The Chairman stated that with the current financial climate the account was proceeding at a satisfactory level, the preference shares if they recover and survive in the fullness of time.

560 DEVELOPMENT CONSENT FEE ACCOUNT – Agenda Item 7(b)

It was AGREED that the rate the Board charges to developers to discharge surface water into the Board's system should be increased to £42,705 per impermeable hectare (£17,282 per acre) for 2009/10. The single property fee should be increased to £630.

It was further AGREED to increase the charge for administration to £16,800.

The Chief Executive explained that the level of consent fees levied was likely to reduce in the next few years as more developers use SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) instead of making a full discharge into the watercourse.

561 PLANT REPLACEMENT FUND – Agenda Item 7(c)

Discussion took place on the recommendations that the Board should purchase a tracked excavator with an extendable dipper arm to replace the Atlas 1304 wheeled excavator.

The Chief Executive informed members that he had obtained quotations from Hitachi and Volvo, but JCB had not allowed for an extendable dipper arm.

Mr Barker enquired whether the Board should retain the Atlas excavator for certain jobs for which it was best suited. The Chief Executive responded that the Board had kept similar machines in the past and this had not been successful.

562 REPORT ON ENGINEERING WORK – Agenda Item 8

(a) Clay Dyke

The Chief Executive reported that the desilting work on the section adjacent to Fountain's glasshouses has been completed. The material has been loaded into dumpers and deposited in a field north of the glasshouses.

(b) Compensation Payments

It was AGREED that the rates for compensation for loss of cropping and loss of land should remain at the same level as 2008 for 2009.

(c) Relaxation of Bye Law

The Chief Executive reported to the Board a request for retrospective bye-law consent at Dovehurn House, West Pinchbeck. A slide presentation of the area involved; conservatory and decking are 3.6 metres away from the dyke. The Chief Executive recommended that the Board relax the bye-law with a deed of covenant put in place that if the Board should require to access that the conservatory be demolished at Mr Waters own cost. The cost of drawing up this agreement will be £250. The board RESOLVED to agree with the Chief Executives recommendation.

(d) Pumping Station Maintenance

It was AGREED that the contract for the northern area should be awarded to Boston Borough Council for the sum of £4,868.00. The Chairman accepted the declarations of interest from Councillors.

The Chief Executive reported that he had requested quotations for the grass and forecourt maintenance contract for the pumping stations.

563 REPORT ON FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND RATING - Agenda Item 9

The Chief Executive presented the Finance Officer's report on Finance, Administration and Rating, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Report be received and adopted.

564 NEW VALUATIONS – Agenda Item 9

The Chief Executive recommended that the Board should approve the following new valuations:

Reference Number	Description	Existing Valuation	Proposed Valuation
2460/ 13010085	Nursery	£55,935	£120,829
2739/ 09010195 (2666)	Nursery	£6,243	£6,821

It was RESOLVED that the above new valuations should be accepted and become effective on 1st April 2009.

565 REPORTS

a) Rainfall

The rainfall figures at Swineshead and Black Hole Drove were presented for 2008, copies of which had been circulated.

b) Monthly Accounts

The Board's monthly accounts which included November 2008 – January 2009, copies of which had been circulated, were AGREED.

c) Schedule of Consents

Schedule of consents for Bye-Law Relaxations, Culvert Consents, Development Contributions and Tile Drainage Consents issued from November 2008 – January 2009 were presented, copies of which had been circulated.

566 PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR ELECTION OF THE NEW BOARD IN OCTOBER 2009 – Agenda Item 11

A list of proposed dates for the election order schedule was AGREED.

567 TO SEAL THE RATE FOR 2009/10 – Agenda Item 12

It was proposed by Mr Leggott and seconded by Cllr Dickinson and was RESOLVED that the Chairman and Chief Executive be authorised to seal the Drainage Rates and Special Levies for the year 2009/10 as follows:-

(a) Drainage Rates

	£	<u>Estimated Amount Drainage Rates Payable</u>
Sub-District No 1 being so much of the said Internal Drainage District as:		
Comprises the area of the Borough of Boston as constituted and in existence immediately before 1 st April 1974	6.0p	£974,507.64 (50.92%)
Sub-District No 2 – Being the remainder of the Internal Drainage District	12.0p	

(b) Special Levies

Borough of Boston	£709,724.64	
South Holland District Council	£118,050.00	
North Kesteven District Council	£56,458.92	
South Kesteven District Council	<u>£55,216.80</u>	
		£939,450.36 (49.08%)

568 DISCUSS CORRESPONDENCE WITH WITHAM FOURTH – Agenda Item 13

The Chairman stated that he had over the last three months written two letters to Mr J Grant, the Chairman of Witham Fourth District IDB, concerning the IDB Review Implementation. In these letters he had suggested that there should be some dialogue between the Boards on the advantages and disadvantages of the two Boards working closer together.

He explained that the Minister in his letter to all Board Chairman in 2008 had stated that all Sub Catchment Boards should be in place by 2013. There was, he considered, an opportunity to consider possible savings as the Chief Executive of Witham Fourth District IDB was due to retire later this year.

He was disappointed that Mr J Grant had not responded to these letters and Witham Fourth District IDB was recruiting a new Chief Executive.

A general discussion took place on the subject, when a number of members asked what the repercussions would be if the proposed amalgamation did not take place before 2013. There was also the view that further discussions should take place with Welland and Deepings IDB with regard to working closer together.

It was AGREED that the Chairman should continue to investigate all possibilities and savings to be made of working more closely with an adjoining Board.

569 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chief Executive announced the forthcoming Inspections for the Northern and Southern Works Committees as well as the Study Tour of the Po Valley, Italy. The Chief Executive recommended that we do not have a formal inspection in July with the Board meeting, the Board AGREED.

The Chief Executive made the Board aware of the forthcoming ADA Lincolnshire Branch meeting at Woodhall Spa on the 12th February. Mr Leggott stated that the local authority seminar is being held on Wednesday, 11th March in Peterborough would be very good programme. Mr Richard Wells is due to coming which would give us a good opportunity.

The Board would be present at the opening of the waterways link which will be officially opened by Lord Smith.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4:50pm.