

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 11th July 2007 at 1.00pm.

Members

Chairman - * Mr M J Scott

* Mr J F Atkinson	Cllr R Austin
* Mr V A Barker	* Cllr P Bedford
* Mr E Bettinson	* Cllr J Blaylock
* Cllr M Brookes	* Mr J G Casswell
* Mr K C Casswell	* Cllr G Curley
Cllr D R Dickinson	* Mr C A Fretwell
* D J Graves	* Mr W E Harborow
* Mr F W C Holmes	* Mr R Leggott
Mr E I Needham	* Mr J Pocklington
Mr A H Proctor	Cllr A Puttick
* Mr M E F Richardson	* Mr P Robinson
Cllr B Rush	Cllr B Russell
* Cllr J Rylatt	Mr C M Smith
* Mr R J Watts	Mr R Welberry
Mr A S Whitehead	* Mr G S Woodward
Mr J R Wray	

* Members Present

In attendance: Mr S M Hemmings (Chief Executive)
Mr M L Mitchell (Senior Engineer)
Mr S Brown (Senior Finance Officer)

Before commencement of the meeting the Chairman welcomed Cllr J Blaylock and Cllr G Curley, both representatives of Boston Borough Council, to their first Board Meeting.

344 HEAVY RAINFALL DURING JUNE AND EARLY JULY

The Chairman referred to the recent heavy rainfall and asked the Chief Executive and Senior Engineer to give reports on the incidents that had arisen during the last four weeks.

The Chief Executive informed the meeting that on Sunday 24th June 2007 there had been considerable damage to the Boards computer, telemetry, and telephone systems which had been caused by a lightning strike on the offices, and for a number of days all incoming telephone calls had been redirected to the Senior Engineer's mobile phone.

He reported further that the Pump Engineer, Colin Richards, had brought his own computer into the office in order to put into operation some part of the telemetry system. However the telemetry system was now working satisfactorily.

There had been a number of flooding incidents when some members of the staff and workforce had needed to attend during evening hours to pump water away, in particular at Woodside, Wyberton. He stated that the rainfall had caused very high flows in the Wyberton area which had required all three pumps to operate at Wyberton Marsh Pumping Station.

The Senior Engineer reported on the number of watercourses that had been cut in order to alleviate the high water in urban areas, and that two machines were continuing roding work.

The Chairman considered that the Board should now review its drain maintenance policy and possibly start cutting specific drains of certain sizes before mid July. He thanked all the staff for their help during very difficult circumstances. Mr Fretwell also congratulated the staff as did Mr Harborow who suggested that a letter of thanks should be sent to the workmen.

Discussion took place on the heavy rainfall and it was agreed that the drain maintenance policy should be reviewed at a future meeting.

345 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R Austin, Cllr D Dickinson, Mr E I Needham, Mr A H Proctor, Cllr A Puttick, Cllr B Rush, Cllr B Russell, Mr C M Smith, Mr R Welberry, Mr A S Whitehead and Mr J R Wray.

346 MINUTES OF LAST BOARD MEETING

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Board held on 21st February 2007, 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.

347 MATTERS ARISING

a) Inspection of EA Banks – Black Sluice Strategy – Minute No. 287a

The Chief Executive reported that the Environment Agency anticipated that the review of the Black Sluice Strategy would commence in 2008/09.

b) Fens Waterway Link – Minute No. 291a

The Chief Executive reported that he understood work would be starting shortly on the new lock on the downstream side of the southern gravity channel at Black Sluice Pumping Station to allow boats to access the South Forty Foot Drain from the Haven. It was due to be completed at the end of 2008.

Discussion took place on proposed structure and the water levels.

c) EA Precept – Minute No. 291c

The Chief Executive confirmed that a letter had been sent to the Environment Agency appealing against the Precept on the following grounds:-

- i) The calculation of the proportion each Board should pay is not transparent,
- ii) That the precept collected from IDB's is added to the national allocation from FDGIA and spent in the region according to national priorities. This in fact means that the money collected is added to the national pot, and not spent on issues in this region.

d) Pipeline Jetting – Minute No. 291d

The Chief Executive reported that a Jetting Tanker including specialist jetting heads would be ordered in the sum of £31,900.00.

e) Plant Replacement Fund – Minute No. 291h

The Chief Executive reported on the following items of plant:-

- i) The JCB 22 tonne Long Reach excavator was due to be delivered later in July.
- ii) Five height limiters had been fitted on excavators at a cost of £20,781.
- iii) Further to the discussions on the purchase of a replacement loader with a working platform, the Chief Executive stated that he now considered the way forward would be to purchase a trailer mounted access platform for the sum of £13,875. He informed members that a similar access platform would be demonstrated during the inspection later in the afternoon.
- iv) Agreed to purchase a 150mm diameter portable pump at a cost of £16,095.
- v) The new trailer had been ordered from Chieftain Trailers and this would be delivered in a few weeks time.

f) Members Trip to Holland – Minute No. 291j

The Chief Executive reported on the recent Members trip to Holland where they visited museums, a restored windmill, and two Drainage Boards.

g) Reconstitution of the Board – Minute No. 293

The Chairman reported on the recent ballot that had taken place in electoral district B and a list of the recommended first Board was shown to the Members.

Mr Richardson pointed out that he thought there was a lack of communication in the way the members were chosen for electoral district D and in his opinion this did not comply with what was minuted in November 2006. Mr Scott referred to the Land Drainage Act 1991 which states that a member is automatically excluded if he does not attend a meeting for six months.

The Chairman took the opportunity of thanking the long standing members for their services, in particular to Mr Harborow who had been on the Board for 39 years and for a number of those years had been Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee. He also hoped that the outgoing members would still be prepared to be involved in the running of the Board and sit on future Works Committees.

348 MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 21st February 2007

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Executive Committee held on 21st February 2007, 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.

349 MINUTES OF SOUTHERN WORKS COMMITTEE – 28th February 2007

The Chairman of the Committee, Mr R J Watts, presented the Minutes of the Southern Works Meeting held on 28th February 2007, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes be received and adopted.

350 MATTERS ARISING

a) Purchase of Land at Six House Bank – Minute No. 304a

The Chief Executive reported that Lincolnshire County Council had informed the Board that an additional payment of £2,000 would be required to finance a surrender payment to the tenant of the land. It was AGREED that the Board should continue with the negotiations to purchase this land.

b) Improvement Scheme, Drain 24/01 in Rippingale Fen – Minute No. 305

This work has now been completed apart from the spreading of spoil which will take place after the harvest.

c) Six House Bank – Dovehirm Drain Relocation – Minute No. 306

The Chief Executive reported that negotiations were continuing with Pinchbeck Parish Council on the purchase of a strip of land at Six House Bank so that a further length of drain immediately north of Black Hole Drove could be relocated.

d) Giving up Board Watercourses – Minute No. 308

It was RESOLVED that the following lengths of watercourses should be given up:-

<u>Watercourse</u>	<u>Length</u>
16-09	177 metres
22-22	380 metres
22-23	417 metres
25-24 part	202 metres
28-29	869 metres
22-26 part	337 metres
02-29	100 metres

Mr Fretwell was not happy with the wording in the last paragraph of Minute No 308, and it was agreed that this should be altered to read "With regard to drain 22-25, the committee was unhappy with the proposal." The Senior Engineer said this drain had now been surveyed and further recommendations would be made to the Committee.

e) IDB Review – Minute No. 309

The Chief Executive referred to Minute No. 309 and reported that £10,000 had been received by ADA from DEFRA for work on producing an Asset Management System.

351 MINUTES OF NORTHERN WORKS COMMITTEE – 7th March 2007

The Chairman of the Committee, Mr R Leggott, presented the Minutes of the Northern Works Meeting held on 7th March 2007, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes be received and adopted.

352 MATTERS ARISING

a) Access alongside Watercourse 5/10 at Wyberton – Minute No. 312b

The Chief Executive reported that the Agreement was being finalised by the Board's Solicitor at the present time.

b) Giving up of Board's Watercourses – Minute No. 313

It was RESOLVED that the following lengths of watercourses should be given up:-

<u>Watercourse</u>	<u>Length</u>
04-41	238 metres
13-03	1802 metres
10-18	347 metres
06-32	51 metres
11-15	251 metres
14-07	162 metres
06-19	86 metres
06-03	813 metres
06-02	267 metres

The Senior Engineer recommended that the following drains should not be given up at present:-

- i) Watercourse 4-57, alongside Steyning Lane, Swineshead
- ii) Watercourse 08-01, Ewerby Fen

He also showed a plan of Watercourse 06-03 and recommended that 230 metres alongside the Commissioners Track be retained and the remainder given up. All AGREED.

353 MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 16th May 2007

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Executive Committee held on 16th May 2007, 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.

354 MATTERS ARISING

a) IDB Review Implementation Plan – Minute No. 317

The Chief Executive referred to the comments on the Defra IDB Implementation Plan, copies of which had been circulated, and it was AGREED that this should be approved as the Board's response.

355 MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT MEETING – 16th May 2007

In the absence of the Chairman of the Committee, Mr Wray, Mr Scott presented the Minutes of the Environment Meeting held on 16th May 2007, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes be received and adopted.

356 MATTERS ARISING

a) Board's Carbon Footprint – Minute No. 333

The Senior Engineer reported that he was intending to visit a RSPB site in Norfolk to view a number of small direct driven wind pumps.

It was AGREED that a further report should be given on this subject at a future meeting.

357 FINAL ACCOUNTS -YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2007 – Agenda item 5

The Senior Finance Officer presented the Revenue Account and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st March 2007, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Final Accounts for year ending 31st March 2007 should be received and accepted.

358 REPORT ON INTERNAL AUDIT AND SYSTEMS OF INTERNAL CONTROL AND TO SIGN STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE – Agenda item 6

The Senior Finance Officer presented a report on Internal Audit and Controls, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the report be received and adopted and that the Chairman and Chief Executive should sign the Statement of Assurance.

359 APPROVAL OF POLICIES – Agenda item 7

The Senior Finance Officer presented the following Policies, copies of which had been circulated:-

- i) Whistle Blowing
- ii) Members Code of Conduct
- iii) Staff Code of Conduct
- iv) Anti-Fraud and Corruption

He explained that it was a requirement of the Audit Commission that these Policies had be circulated to all members of the staff and Board Members and it was AGREED that after minor changes to the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, these should be accepted.

360 REPORT ON FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND RATING – Agenda item 8

The Senior Finance Officer presented his report on finance, administration and rating, copies of which had been circulated, and it was RESOLVED that the Report be received and accepted.

a) Drainage Rates – Assessment No. 30-2418-0/02010082

It was RESOLVED that the Board should withdraw the current valuation of this assessment on the grounds that the site is exempt from agricultural rating due to the site being business rated.

It was further RESOLVED that the charge levied for the present year should be withdrawn and written off.

361 LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH OF ADA AGM – Agenda item 9a

The Chief Executive presented the Minutes of the Lincolnshire Branch of ADA AGM held at The Grange and Links Hotel, Sutton-on-Sea on 26th April 2007, copies of which had been circulated.

362 LINCOLNSHIRE ADA BRANCH MEETING – Agenda item 9b

The Chief Executive presented the Minutes of the ADA Lincolnshire Branch Meeting held at The Bentley Hotel, South Hykeham, Lincoln, on 14th June 2007, copies of which had been circulated.

He reported that Stephen Williams, Regional Finance Manager, would soon be leaving his position with the Environment Agency, which could delay the resolution of the Board's appeal against the precept.

He informed members that the Branch had recommended that all Lincolnshire IDB's should agree to the charges to the discretionary policy proposed by Lincolnshire County Council Pensions.

363 APPLICATIONS TO RELAX BOARD'S BYE-LAWS – Agenda item 10

The Senior Engineer presented a report on applications to relax the Board's Bye-Laws, copies of which had been circulated.

a) Drifters Cottage, East Heckington – Watercourse 10/09

It was AGREED that the recommendation to relax Bye-Law No. 10 to allow a timber balcony supported on two brick columns to be constructed approximately 3 metres from the centre line of the Board's piped watercourse 10/09 should be approved.

b) The Horseshoes, Beck Bank, Gosberton Clough – Watercourse 22/27

It was AGREED that the recommendation to relax Bye-Law No. 10 to allow a brick and glass conservatory to be constructed approximately 7 metres from the brink of the Board's open watercourse 22/27 should be approved.

c) Industrial Units, off Marsh Lane, Boston – Watercourse 06/25

Discussion took place on this and a vote was held in which the majority AGREED with the recommendation to relax Bye-Law No. 10 to allow a row of industrial units to be constructed no closer than 6 metres from the Board's open watercourse 06/25.

364 REPORTS

a) Monthly Accounts

The Board's monthly accounts which included February 2007 – July 2007, copies of which had been circulated, were AGREED.

b) Schedule of Consents

Bye-Law, Culvert, Development Contribution and Tile Drainage Consents issued from February 2007 – July 2007 were presented, copies of which had been circulated.

c) Rainfall

The rainfall figures at Swineshead and Black Hole Drove were presented from July 2006 to June 2007, copies of which had been circulated.

365 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Fretwell explained that he was present at the meeting because the South Holland District Council had allowed him to remain a member until the reconstitution of the Board, even though he was no longer a Councillor. He added that he had enjoyed his years serving on the Board and thanked the members for their friendship.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 2.47pm.