

## 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  
21 February 2007 at 2.30pm.

#### Members

Chairman - \* Mr M J Scott

* Cllr Mrs J M Ashton	* Mr R Leggott
* Mr J F Atkinson	* Mr E I Needham
* Mr V A Barker	Mr J Pocklington
* Cllr P Bedford	* Mr A H Proctor
* Mr E Bettinson	Mr M E F Richardson
* Cllr M Brookes	* Mr P Robinson
Cllr C Brotherton	Cllr J Rylatt
Mr J G Casswell	Mr C M Smith
* Mr K C Casswell	Cllr O Snell
Cllr A Day	* Mr R J Watts
Cllr D R Dickinson	* Mr R Welberry
Cllr C A Fretwell	Mr A S Whitehead
* Mr D J Graves	* Mr G S Woodward
* Mr W E Harborow	* Mr J R Wray
* Mr F W C Holmes	* Cllr H Wright
Cllr J A Kirkman	Cllr Mrs M K Wright

#### \* 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 reported that Mr P H Ash, who had been a Member since 1960, had sent a letter of resignation from the Board. He suggested sending Mr Ash a letter of appreciation and to invite him to the next Southern Works Inspection.

#### 285 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J G Casswell, Cllr A Day, Cllr D R Dickinson, Cllr C A Fretwell, Cllr J A Kirkman, Mr J Pocklington, Cllr J Rylatt, Mr C M Smith, Mr A S Whitehead and Cllr Mrs M K Wright.

#### 286 MINUTES OF LAST BOARD MEETING

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Board held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2006, 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.

287 MATTERS ARISING

a) Inspection of EA Banks – Black Sluice Strategy – Minute No. 246a

The Chief Executive reported that the Environment Agency had deferred for another year the planned review of the Black Sluice Strategy.

b) Proposed Replacement of Silt Pit Lane Culvert, Wyberton Main Drain 6/4 – Minute No. 246b

The Senior Engineer reported that work was now in progress and one section of piping had been completed. This location would be visited on the Northern Works Inspection.

c) Development of Brochure – Minute No. 246e

There had been no further work done on this.

d) Kirton Drain Cleansing, Watercourse 5/30 – Minute No. 248c

The Chief Executive reported that negotiations were still in progress between the Board and two landowners to purchase an area of land alongside the drain. The Senior Engineer reported that work was proceeding well and that all of the bushing work and 50% of the mudding work had been completed. This would be visited by the members on the Northern Works Inspection.

e) Internal Drainage Board Review – Minute No. 249

Arising from this Minute the Chief Executive reported that he was still awaiting information from Defra which would include a self assessment questionnaire for the Board to complete. He considered this would only pose a problem to smaller Boards.

f) South Kyme Pumping Station – Minute No. 252a

The Chief Executive had investigated the relocation of the 11kv overhead electric supply and considered it was reasonable for the Board to pay for this work as the cable crossed land that the Board owns.

g) Pinchbeck Fen Pumping Station – Minute No. 253a

The Chief Executive referred to the accident to the pump and reported that the cost of the repairs had been reclaimed from the Board's insurance company.

h) IDEA Community Open Space Project, Donington – Minute No. 253b

This location would be visited on the Southern Works Inspection.

288 MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 10<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2007

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Executive Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 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.

289 MATTERS ARISING

a) Staff Training and Appraisals

The Chief Executive reported that progress was being made by the Consultant with staff training and workshops, and that an appraisal system will be brought in for the staff and the workforce.

290 MINUTES OF FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 10<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2007

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 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.

291 MATTERS ARISING

a) Black Sluice Strategy/Fens Waterway Link – Minute No. 266a

The Chief Executive showed several pictures outlining the plans the Environment Agency were considering for the location of the new lock on the Haven side of the gravity sluice at Black Sluice Pumping Station. It was anticipated that the EA would be making a full planning application to Boston Borough Council for this new lock within the next two to three months.

Discussion took place on the summer and winter water levels in the South Forty Foot Drain and members considered that priority should always be given to drainage function above leisure activities.

b) Estimates for Revenue Account Expenditure for 2007/08 – Minute No. 267

The Chairman reported that the Finance Committee had considered the Estimates for Revenue Account Expenditure and had recommended the increase in the rate from 11.3p to 11.4p for 2007/08. This was AGREED.

c) EA Precept – Minute No. 267b

Arising from the Finance Committee Minutes, the Chief Executive reported that in October 2006 we were informed that there would be an increase of 10% in the EA Precept and because of this all Lincolnshire Drainage Boards had decided to make a formal appeal against this increase. The EA have now revised the figures and there will be a reduction of 2% on the Precept payment that the Board is required to pay for 2007/08.

After discussion it was still agreed that the Board should appeal against the Precept on the principle that the calculations in arriving at the precept figure are not transparent.

d) Pipeline Jetting – Minute No. 267c

The Chief Executive reported that the Finance Committee had recommended the purchase of a jetting tanker. As the Senior Engineer and the Foreman were still working on the specifications for the tanker, he asked for approval from the Board that the final price to be agreed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. This was AGREED.

e) Security at Swineshead Depot – Minute No. 267d

The Chief Executive reported that he had received one quotation for a number of CCTV cameras to be fitted at the Depot in the sum of £3,000, and he was awaiting a second quotation before placing an order.

f) Bourne North Fen Farm Account – Minute No. 269

Arising from the Finance Minutes it had been discovered that the wrong amount had been included in this Report and that RIT Capital Partners cost price should have read £0.81 instead of £8.15. Therefore there was no need to revise these holdings.

g) Development Consent Fee Account – Minute No. 270

It was AGREED that the rate per acre should be increased to £13,000 in 2007/08 and the annual administration charge should be increased to £15,000, both with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007.

h) Plant Replacement Fund – Minute No. 271

The Chief Executive presented a further Report on Plant Purchases, copies of which had been circulated, and discussion took place on this Report:-

i) Purchase of 22 tonne Long Reach Excavator

It was AGREED to purchase a JCB at £89,530 less trade-in allowance of £25,000.

ii) Height Limiters on Excavators

It was AGREED to fit new electronic Prolec devices which allow the exact maximum height to be set up from the Excavator, at £3,500 for each machine.

iii) Purchase of Loader with Working Platform

The Chief Executive explained that since the Finance Committee meeting he had discussed the requirements with TRP of Sleaford who supplied Merlo loaders onto which working platforms could be fitted. He recommended that he continue to look into the options and report back to a future meeting of the Board.

iv) Purchase of New Trailer

The Chief Executive referred to the article that he had helped to write which the ADA Technical Committee had agreed should be placed in the ADA Gazette. This recommended that trailers operated by IDBs should be commercial type, and be plated. However the Upper Witham and Newark IDBs have stated that this is unworkable, and both of those Boards have agreed that they should operate with agricultural trailers in the future.

It was RESOLVED that this should be the interim policy of the Board, and that the proposed purchase of a new trailer should proceed.

i) Finance and Rating – Minute No. 272

The Senior Finance Officer reported that there is now £3,205.82 outstanding drainage rates on the court list and the Rating Officer had applied for Distress Warrants to recover these amounts.

j) Members Trip to Holland – Minute No. 276b

The Chief Executive reported he was planning a full itinerary for the study trip to Holland and that plane tickets and hotels had already been booked and invoices would soon be sent out to members.

292 DELEGATED POWERS OF ACTION – Agenda item 6

The Chief Executive presented his report on the scheme for delegation of powers of action, copies of which had been circulated, and explained that

the suggestions made at the November Board Meeting had been incorporated into this report.

Mr Scott referred to the approval of staff salaries and thought a much fuller presentation could be made at the Executive Committee Meeting for decisions and this would be reported fully in those Minutes.

It was RESOLVED that the report on delegated powers of action should be received and adopted.

293 RECONSTITUTION OF THE BOARD – Agenda item 7

The Chief Executive reported that he had received a letter from the Environment Agency stated that the Anglian (Northern) Regional Flood Defence Committee had approved the proposition that the Board could be reconstituted. He had also sent out letters to all agricultural members asking whether or not they wished to be considered for membership on the new Board. He presented a table which showed that in two Districts there were at present three members wishing to be considered for two places on the Board. Therefore it would be necessary to hold a ballot to decide who should be recommended to Defra for first members of the Board.

It was RESOLVED that ballot papers should be sent out to all agricultural members with a ballot for Electoral Districts B and E.

294 LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH OF ADA MEETING on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2007 – Agenda item 8

The Chief Executive reported on a Lincolnshire Branch of ADA Meeting held at the Petwood Hotel, Woodhall Spa on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2007.

He reported that David Whiles of the Environment Agency had given a presentation at this meeting on the Water Framework Directive. He had pointed out that all water bodies should have good ecological status by 2015, and that the EA estimate that 98.7% will fail the standards that are being set in the Directive.

The Chief Executive mentioned the ADA Business Plan and there was general approval for the proposal to increase subscriptions to provide additional income for the increased amount of work necessary, particularly to implement the IDB Review.

Mr Leggott also spoke about items to be discussed by the ADA Executive on 8<sup>th</sup> March, and thought the title of the Business Plan should be "Water Level Management by Sound Drainage Practice". He also thought there should be a table showing benefits to the members.

The Chief Executive also reported that the next meeting of the ADA Lincolnshire Environment Committee had been arranged for Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2007 at Far Ings Nature Reserve and asked members to let him know if they wished to attend.

He also reported that the ADA Lincolnshire AGM is to be held at the Grange and Links Hotel at Sutton-on-Sea on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2007 where it would be possible to view sand being pumped onto the beaches as part of the Lincshore Scheme, and asked members to inform him if they wished to attend.

295 PRECEPT ARRANGEMENTS – Agenda item 9

Although this item had been discussed earlier, Mrs Ashton raised the issue of how the reduction in precept would affect the rate. Mr Scott reiterated that the rate was a sensible increase and the reduction in the precept level would not affect this greatly.

On a proposition by Mr K C Casswell, seconded by Cllr M Brookes, it was RESOLVED that the Board should appeal against the Precept on the grounds that the calculation was not fair or transparent.

296 NEW VALUATIONS – Agenda item 10

The Chief Executive presented a report on new valuations, copies of which had been circulated.

Reference Number	Description	Existing Valuation	Proposed Valuation
2274/38010031	Additional Glasshouses	£34,237	£43,771
3112/30010063	Additional Glasshouses	£67,330	£94,055
2798/12010135	Additional Glasshouses	£6,302	£7,319
3273/04010246	Additional Free Range Poultry Unit	£31,443	£34,821
3167/04010165	Additional Egg Production Unit	£5,541	£5,863

It was RESOLVED that the above new valuations should be accepted and become effective at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007.

297 REPORT ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – Agenda item 11

The Senior Finance Officer presented his report on finance and administration, copies of which had been circulated.

a) Authorisation for Court Attendance

It was RESOLVED that the Chief Executive or Senior Finance Officer should be authorised to attend Court and execute Distress Warrants for any debts owed to the Board.

b) District Audit Governance Report

The Board RESOLVED to receive and note the contents of the Governance Report.

Issues were discussed in connection with the 2005/06 external audit, particularly the delay in receiving the signed audit opinion, even though the Governance Report had raised no issues preventing this being sent. The Senior Finance Officer would take up these issues with District Audit.

c) Internal Audit Plan 2007 to 2008

The Internal Audit Plan was presented to members and the Chairman pointed out that should any members wish to see any items not covered already on the Plan, they could put these forward for inclusion.

It was RESOLVED to receive the Internal Audit Plan.

It was RESOLVED that the Report on Finance and Administration be received and adopted.

298 REPORTS – Agenda item 12

a) Rainfall

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

The Chief Executive pointed out that there was a discrepancy in the totals of Black Hole Drove figures which he would amend.

Arising from discussions at the Finance Meeting in January he had looked into the average figure and produced a slide for members to view. Mr Barker asked if the EA had a system of measuring and recording the flows from the highland areas into the Forty Foot system and the Chief Executive said he would investigate this.

b) Monthly Accounts

The members considered the Board's monthly account for January 2007, copies of which had been circulated.

c) Schedule of Consents

Bye-Law, Culvert and Development Contribution Consents issues since the Board Meeting in November 2006 were presented, copies of which had been circulated.

299 TO SEAL THE DRAINAGE RATES FOR 2007/08 – Agenda item 13

It was RESOLVED that the Chairman and Chief Executive be authorised to seal the Drainage Rates and Special Levies for the year 2007/08 as follows:-

<u>Rate in</u>	<u>Estimated Amount</u>	
a) <u>Drainage Rates</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>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 <sup>st</sup> April 1974.	5.70p )	£932,608.23 (51.343%)
Sub-District No. 2 – Being the remainder of the Internal Drainage District	11.40p )	
b) <u>Special Levies</u>		
Borough of Boston .....	£668,616.61	
South Holland District Council .....	£111,635.18	
North Kesteven District Council .....	£52,214.39	
South Kesteven District Council .....	<u>£51,345.60</u>	£883,811.78 (48.657%)

300 STAFF MATTERS – Agenda item 14

The Chairman reported that staff matters had been discussed at the Executive Committee earlier.

It was RESOLVED that these increases should be AGREED.

301 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Board Inspection 2007

The Chairman suggested that there should be an Inspection to take place after the Board Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2007 as this would be the last inspection for some members of the Board because of the Reconstitution.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.12pm.