

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 8th November 2006 at 2.30pm.

Members

Chairman - * Mr M J Scott

Mr P H Ash	*	Mr R Leggott
* Cllr Mrs J M Ashton		Mr E I Needham
Mr J F Atkinson		Cllr Mrs A Parker
* 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)

244 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr P H Ash, Mr J F Atkinson, Mr E Bettinson, Mr J G Casswell, Cllr A Day, Mr E I Needham, Cllr Mrs A Parker, Mr J Pocklington, Mr M E F Richardson, Cllr J Rylatt, Cllr O Snell, and Mr A S Whitehead.

245 MINUTES OF LAST BOARD MEETING

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Board held on the 28th June 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.

246 MATTERS ARISING

a) Inspection of EA Banks – Minute No. 219b

The Chief Executive reported that the work on investigating breach locations on the South Forty Foot Drain and the Highland Carriers had been completed, and a reduction of the risk of flooding in a number of fens could be achieved by locally raising banks at some of these locations. However the EA did not have funds available for this at the present time. Work was continuing on establishing property levels in these fens to confirm the numbers of properties in each fen at risk of flooding.

b) Proposed Replacement of Silt Pit Lane Culvert, Wyberton Main Drain 6/4 – Minute No. 225b

The Senior Engineer confirmed that the contribution required from the Board toward the reconstruction of the culvert under Silt Pit Lane was £15,000. The increased costs were due to increased earth work, installation and pipe costs and because with the larger pipe size a water main needed to be diverted.

It was AGREED that the contribution of £15,000 should be paid.

c) Culvert Application – Drain 6/32, Battery Farm, Boston – Minute No. 225c

Cllr Fretwell noted that he had not attended the previous Board Meeting, and was concerned to learn that Forceshift Ltd had filled in the drain and asked if the appropriate pipes had been installed. The Senior Engineer responded that he was satisfied that the drain had been filled in correctly and pointed out that this drain was redundant and had now been given up.

d) Planning Application – Affordable Housing Scheme, Rookery Road, Bicker – Minute No. 225d

Arising from Minute No. 225d, the Senior Engineer reported that he had contacted the landowner to inform him of the Board's policy of a preference for open drains. However the landowner would only accept a piped drain and following consultation with the Chairman and Chairman of Northern Works it was agreed that this should be accepted. The developer has agreed to fund the installation of the pipeline and pay a commuted sum of £5,000 for the future maintenance of the pipe, and this length of pipe will become the Board's responsibility.

e) Development of Brochure – Minute No. 227c

The Chief Executive had prepared an information brochure in-house and it was agreed that £1,000 should be spent on the design of a suitable brochure for the Board.

f) Plant Purchases – Trailer and Jetting Tanker – Minute No. 231a

The Chief Executive reported that he believed guidelines on trailer and tractor legislation would soon be published and he hoped that these would be available before the Finance & General Purposes Meeting in January 2007 so that the proposed purchase of a trailer and a jetting tanker could be included with plant proposals for the next year.

247 MINUTES OF NORTHERN WORKS COMMITTEE – 11th October 2006 – Agenda item 4

The Chairman of the Committee, Mr R Leggott, presented the Minutes of the Northern Works Meeting held on 11th October 2006, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes be received and adopted.

248 MATTERS ARISING

a) Wyberton Marsh Catchment Study – Minute No. 243a

Discussion took place on this item and the Senior Engineer recommended that JBA should be asked to undertake some additional work to confirm the highest predicted water levels around the village of Wyberton. The question of whether the pump capacity at Wyberton Marsh Pumping Station at some time in the future was still being investigated.

b) Polluted Watercourse 6/37, Isaac Newton Estate, Boston – Minute No. 243e

The Senior Engineer reported that Consultants on behalf of Calders & Grandidge had carried out analysis of the polluted silt but as yet there had been no resolution on where and how the silt should be disposed.

c) Kirton Drain Cleansing, Watercourse 5/30 – Minute No. 243g

The Senior Engineer reported that he had spoken to some of the landowners with regard to the Board purchasing land adjacent to the drain and some were in principle willing to sell their land to the Board. It was AGREED that the Chairman of the Board be given powers to finalise purchases of these areas of land.

d) Urban Piped Watercourses – Minute No. 243h

The Chief Executive and Senior Engineer were asked to investigate the future responsibility for certain urban piped watercourses and to report further to a future meeting.

249 INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD REVIEW – Agenda item 5

The Chief Executive presented a report on the IDB Review, copies of which had been circulated, and discussion took place on the following aspects of the JBA review:-

- Accountability and Transparency
- Representation
- Communication
- Performance Management
- Environmental management and sustainability

He said that Defra would be sending a self assessment questionnaire to each Board asking a number of questions on these issues. He considered that this Board was already complying with most of the Defra recommendations.

250 RECONSTITUTION OF THE BOARD – Agenda item 6

The Chief Executive presented his report on the proposed reconstitution of the Board, copies of which had been circulated.

The Chairman mentioned that the JBA report had recommended Boards should look at the membership and this had prompted us to take action.

Following discussion it was AGREED that:-

- a) Only full Board Members should be empowered to cast votes at a Works or Environment Committee Meeting.
- b) With regard to the proposals for ballots to choose recommendations for first members of the Board, it was agreed that if two people have received the same number of votes that the Chairman should have the final casting vote, and if the Chairman is involved, the Vice-Chairman should have the casting vote.
- c) The four District Councils should be informed of the Board's proposals and the proposed representation before the local authority elections take place in May 2007.

It was RESOLVED that the Chief Executive should write to the Anglian (Northern) Regional Flood Defence Committee requesting that a formal scheme should be prepared for the reconstitution of the Board. This scheme would reduce the number of elected members to 11 and the number of appointed members to 10, but would retain the existing electoral districts.

251 DELEGATION OF POWERS OF ACTION – Agenda item 7

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

The Chairman suggested the following:-

- a) Minutes should be taken at the Executive Meetings which take place before the Board and Finance & General Purposes Meetings and reported at future meetings.
- b) Under proposed delegated powers of Committees – that all decisions should be taken in consultation with the Chief Executive.
- c) Bourne Fen Farm Account – that the Executive Committee has powers to review the portfolio of securities.

Also it had been proposed that the Executive Committee approve salary levels for members of staff, however it was AGREED that the Finance Committee should review the Chief Executive, Senior Engineer and Senior Finance Officer's salaries.

Cllr Kirkman was concerned with the wording of approving works up to a certain value and that there was only one Works Committee Meeting per year. Mr Leggott pointed out that extra Meetings could be held if they were necessary.

It was AGREED that this item should be discussed again at the next Board Meeting.

252 ENGINEER'S REPORT ON NORTHERN WORKS – Agenda item 8a

The Senior Engineer presented his report on the Northern Works Area, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the report be received and adopted.

MATTERS ARISING:-

- a) South Kyme Pumping Station

Discussion took place on the relocation of the 11kv overhead electric supply and the Chief Executive would ascertain whether the electricity board should be carrying out this work at no cost of the Board.

b) Watercourse Mudding Programme 2006-2007

Discussion took place on the rate for compensation payment and it was RESOLVED that it should remain at £741 per hectare.

c) Irrigation Reservoir, Little Hale Fen

Arising from the report, the Senior Engineer was asked to contact the landowners along drain 10/18 to ascertain whether the Board should give up the total length of this length of drain.

d) Bye-Law Application, Home Farm, Little Hale Fen

In accordance with the Board's Bye-Law Policy which may permit an extension no closer than any existing structure it was AGREED that consent be given.

253 ENGINEER'S REPORT ON SOUTHERN WORKS AREA – Agenda item 8b

The Senior Engineer presented his report on the Southern Works Area, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the report be received and adopted.

MATTERS ARISING

a) Pinchbeck Fen Pumping Station

The Chief Executive explained how the accident to the pump had occurred and the method that had been used to repair the broken flange. He reported that the repairs had cost £8,000 and a claim would be made to our Insurance Company for this expenditure.

b) IDEA Community Open Space Project, Donington

Discussion took place on this and it was generally felt that this was a good project for the Board to be associated with.

c) Application to Culvert a Section of Dovehirm Drain at West Pinchbeck

Discussion took place on this and it was AGREED that Consent to culvert a section of Dovehirm Drain could be issued and the future responsibility of the pipe should be with the landowner.

It was AGREED that any future Consent for piping should include that the piping becomes the owner's responsibility unless we take a commuted sum for the piping works.

254 REPORT ON FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND RATING

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

He reported on the internal and external audit and the fees charged and said he had written to the Audit Commission for an explanation of why the fees will be increased next year.

He reported that the total drainage rates collected were now £851,000 which is 92.5% of the total due.

It was AGREED to write off the following four debts:-

- a) Acct No. 2469/Assess No. 13010095 - £363.04
- b) Acct No. 3360/Assess No. 19010095 - £342.77
- c) Acct No. 3330/Assess No. 07010008 - £38.21
- d) Acct No. 3241/Assess No. 19010115 - £41.35

It was RESOLVED that the Report be received and accepted.

255 REPORT ON BLACK SLUICE STRATEGY, FENS WATERWAYS LINK AND BOSTON STRATEGY – Agenda item 10

The Chief Executive presented a report on the Boston Combined Strategy and Black Sluice Strategy, copies of which had been presented.

Discussion took place on this and concern was voiced about the possibility that pumps would be removed before alternative pumping arrangements had been made. It was AGREED that the Chief Executive should write to the Environment Agency and ask them to review the Black Sluice Strategy before they go ahead with any works at the Black Sluice Pumping Station.

256 REPORTS ON ADA MEETINGS – Agenda item 11

a) Lincolnshire Branch of ADA – 5th October 2006

The Chief Executive presented his report on the Lincolnshire ADA Branch Meeting held on Thursday 5th October 2006 at Black Sluice IDB offices.

The Report was received and accepted.

b) Lincolnshire Branch of ADA Environment Committee – 26th October 2006

The Chief Executive presented his report on the Lincolnshire Branch of ADA Environment Committee Meeting held on Thursday 26th October 2006 at Upper Witham IDB offices. The Report was received and accepted.

c) ADA Conference and AGM – 1st November 2006

The Chief Executive reported on the ADA Conference and AGM held on Wednesday 1st November 2006 at the New Connought Rooms in London.

He reported that it was the last Conference that was chaired by David Riddington who had been Chairman of ADA for 26 years. His successor had been confirmed as Henry Cater who presented David Riddington with two wine goblets.

He further reported that Sarah Steeds of Defra had presented a report on the Review of IDBs, Rob Cathcart of Natural England gave a presentation on biodiversity and conservation, and that Peter Kendle, president of NFU, was the after dinner speaker.

257 REPORTS – Agenda item 12

a) Rainfall

The rainfall figures at Swineshead and Black Hole Drove were presented from October 2005 to September 2006, copies of which had been circulated.

b) Schedule of Accounts

The members considered the Board's monthly accounts which included June 2006 – October 2006, copies of which had been circulated.

c) Schedule of Consents

Bye-Law, Culvert, and Development Contributions consents issued from June 2006 – November 2006 were presented, copies of which had been circulated.

258 DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2006 – Agenda item 13

The Chief Executive presented a list of suggested dates for Meetings to be held in 2007.

It was RESOLVED that the Meetings be held on the following dates:-

Finance and General Purposes	Wednesday 10 th January
Board	Wednesday 21 st February
Southern Works Inspection	Wednesday 28 th February
Northern Works Inspection	Wednesday 7 th March
Environment	Wednesday 16 th May
Board	Wednesday 11 th July
Board	Wednesday 7 th November

The Chairman suggested that instead of an Inspection immediately after the Board Meeting on 11th July, as had taken place in the past, there could be a two day trip to Holland organised in which Members could look at how Dutch Boards operate and some of the methods they have to deal with environmental issues. This was AGREED.

259 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.43pm