

Minutes of the Meeting of the East Harling Internal Drainage Board held on Tuesday 10th February 2009 at The Pines, Connaught Road, Attleborough, Norfolk at 8.30am.

Present: **Mr D Stammers (Chairman)** **Mr J Cracknell**
 Mr C D Wright (Clerk) **Mr P Lee**
 Mr J Salter **Mr J Askew**
 Mr R Thornton **Mr P Drake**
 Mr A Bingham (Engineer) **Mr A Southgate**

Mr J Evans (Attleborough Town Council)
 Mr R de Beer (Quidenham Estate)

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mr C Hainsworth, Mr A Southgate, Mr R Kemp, Mr J Askew and Mr J Nelstrop.
2. Minutes of the meeting of the 25th September 2008, having been previously circulated, was proposed by Mr Lee and seconded by Mr R de Beer that they be approved and carried unanimously.
3. **Matters arising**
 - a) **Developments within the Board**

Bovis Homes have made an application at Leys Lane for Residential Development. Mr Bingham is commenting on it and is in discussion with the Developers. The Developers will have to pay a commuted sum payment based on the amount of impermeable area if permission is granted. It was noted that Breckland Council are proposing 4,000 new houses in Attleborough but they have not been in contact with the Board.
 - b) **Extension of the Board**

The Survey has been sent to Mrs Illman and nothing has been heard. A neighbour is also objecting and has been sent a copy of the Survey. Mr Bingham suggested proceeding on the other areas and dealing with Leys Lane in due course.
 - c) **Banham and Kenninghall Fens and Quidenham Mere.**

No money has been allocated for 2009/10 although the Environment Agency have said to Mr Bingham that we may get some funding in 2009/10. Mr Lee said some flooding had occurred higher up outside the Board where there may be an obstruction. Mr Lee and Mr De Beer agreed to look at it. Mr de Beer commented that water was getting away from the Mere as a result of the works that had been done.
 - d) **Enmainment of the Thet**

This is still being talked about by the Environment Agency. Mr Bingham thought there was a possibility of something happening this year. The problem is if the Thet is too high then the water cannot get away and there is a back up in the streams that cannot discharge into the Thet.

e) **Sub-catchment areas**

Mr Wright informed the meeting that there had been various meetings which had been attended by both himself and Mr Nelstrop to discuss this. Currently, we were in negotiations with the Ely Group of Drainage Boards and the Downham Group of Drainage Boards, to form some management group over our catchment area. A draft Deed had been produced by the Norfolk & Suffolk Rivers Sub-Catchment Area and it was hoped that an arrangement of this type might be acceptable to the Government. However, DEFRA was still indicating that they were looking for full amalgamation of the Boards in sub-catchment areas. The negotiations would continue and representation at all meetings would continue.

4. Conservation issues

Work had been carried out at Quidenham Mere SSSI and permission granted by Natural England. Work is being carried out at Cranberry Rough and consent has been given. Conservation is being observed whilst the work is carried out.

5. Board Member Reports

Mr P Lee

There is a tree in the river near Overa Cottages and then it is clear to the outfall from the sewerage works, then there are four trees in the river. Mr Stammers said he believed Mr O'Malley was working there at the moment. It is then clear to the exit of the Mere and then there is another tree.

Mr T Thornton

There are lots of small trees across the watercourse although they are not holding up the water at the present time. The problem is access, otherwise there is not too much of a problem.

Mr J Salter

The stream needs trimming through his area.

Mr P Drake

Mr Drake said he had not been able to go through the woods as the Chapman's were reluctant during the shooting season. However, he will go through shortly and report to Mr Bingham.

Mr J Cracknell

The work has been done and all is working very well.

Mr A Southgate

The streams are OK. The Environment Agency cut the willow on the Thet tributary.

Mr D Stammers

An area through Richard Johnson's land needs looking at and there is a possible need for a digger. The work behind Larling Church has been completed.

6. Election of Officers

Chairman. Mr Stammers proposed by Mr P Drake and seconded by Mr R Thornton and carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman. Mr A Southgate proposed by Mr R Thornton and seconded by Mr J Evans and carried unanimously.

7. Approval of payment of accounts

After consideration of the accounts paid, it was proposed by Mr Cracknell and seconded by Mr Drake that they be approved and it was carried unanimously.

8. Financial position of the Board

The Clerk went through the position on the current year and what was likely to happen through to the end of the year. He went through the budget for next year. The write-off of assessments below £5.00 and arrears was discussed and it was proposed by Mr Lee and seconded by Mr Thornton that the accounts below £5.00 be written off and it was carried unanimously.

The position of the Capital Account was discussed and whether the funds should be moved. It was agreed to approach Clydesdale Bank on the position of £250,000.00 deposit and then discuss at the next meeting. It was also agreed to look at Treasurers Deposit for monthly deposits.

9. Wages and salaries

It was proposed by Mr Salter and seconded by Mr Evans in view of the current economic climate that there was no review of salaries for the current year. It was agreed that the Clerk and Engineers fees would remain as the previous year. It was agreed that the Chairman's expenses would be the same as the previous year. This was all proposed by Mr Drake and seconded by Mr Salter and carried unanimously.

10. Fixing the Rate

After discussion and consideration of the fact that there will be a need this year, if the Rates were kept the same to eat into the Capital Account. It was agreed that the Capital Account was there to be eaten into over a period of 25-30 years. As this had not happened so far, and the Capital Account was only increasing, then there was no reason to avoid eating into the Capital Account this year. It was therefore proposed by Mr Lee and seconded by Mr Cracknell and carried unanimously, that the Rate remained the same for the year 2009/10.

11. Advertising the Rate

It was proposed by Mr De Beer and seconded by Mr Drake and carried unanimously, that the Rate be advertised. It was proposed by Mr Lee and seconded by Mr Thornton and carried unanimously, that the Special Levy be raised on Breckland Council.

12. Any Other Business

i) Computerisation

It was agreed to defer the cost of computerisation until it was certain how the Board would continue in relation to consortia/amalgamation/sub-catchment area.

ii) Website

It was confirmed that the website was up to date.

iii) Old Buckenham Weir

John Fernihaugh has complained about the weir at Old Buckenham. The position was explained by Mr Bingham and it was agreed that in principle, the Board would not do anything as the weir was outside the Board's maintained area and in any event, was not believed to be the cause of the problem.

iv) It was agreed to investigate the possibility of Board member visits with a trip to be arranged sometime later in the year.

- v) It was agreed that a meeting had to take place in June or July to approve the accounts for the year ended the 31st March 2009 to comply with current audit regulations and then there would be a further meeting in September.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting.