

INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

LOUGH ERNE BRANCH

Minutes of Committee Meeting at 1630 hours on Saturday 14 November 2015 held at Lough Erne Yacht Club Co Fermanagh

PRESENT

Jane Bell, Ken Bell, Alan Cousins, Jim Henning, Mike Kingston, Robert Navan, Mervyn Rolls, John Weir, Frank Woods

PROCEEDINGS

Branch Secretary, Frank Woods, explained the reason for this early meeting which was for a formation of opinion for the AGM to follow.

Chairman Ken Bell opened the meeting referring to the circulated letter regarding the future of the Branch. There have been no replies from anyone prepared to join the committee, but John Weir would be chairman, and Ken Bell and Frank Woods would continue on the committee. Robert Maitland had been asked by Frank Woods to join but could not be persuaded.

John Weir proposed that a lady be recruited to undertake the administration work, with payment from the Branch, and advised by committee members. Robert Navan advised that Noel Maitland may become a committee member, and Mike Kingston had been asked to remain.

Frank Woods stated he was not happy the Branch faced closure after 48 years, but as the officer's positions were not being filled, continuation was not possible. He proposed a resolution to invite existing officers to suspend their standing down in a caretaker's capacity. After a trial period, a meeting to be called of officer's and committee to proceed as decided. A remit advised by our chairman from some non-committee members is an accusation that the current officers and committee have not been up to the job of running the Branch. So an opportunity exists for them to step up and take the positions. If nobody comes forward then the Chairman would have to advise members of closure, and the Branch would go into suspension.

Jim Henning stated that IWAI membership provides friendship and co-operation north and south. Stating that the Boyle Branch find themselves in the same situation as Lough Erne, he has himself been trying for 5 years to end his chairmanship of Lagan Branch.

Regarding LEB funds returned to IWAI these would be ring fenced for possible future use. The question was posed as to what wrong is the Branch doing, except that members as a whole do not wish to involve themselves in committee work.

Our secretary had of late been updating the membership lists, and found 19 members not listed. Also a problem is that some listed members are not paying their subscriptions.

There are 120 members on the books but 20 cannot be contacted by e-mail - either they have moved or changed their e-mail addresses.

Robert Navan wants to keep the branch afloat, and if at the AGM some members came forward to assist he would be willing to be chairman. Who is going to be chairman for the AGM - Mike Kingston proposed that John Suitor should be asked.

Ken Bell stated that looking back 12 years, referred to past chairman such as Archie Birrell, and Frank Woods and Robert Navan discussed good members who are now aged over 80, so where do we now get officers and direction?

Robert pointed out there has to be a branch secretary to comply with IWAI rules and statutory regulation. If the branch went into suspension how would it restart? All potentials have to be paid up members and then co-opted on to the committee.

John Weir asked how many current committee members were willing to continue, to which replies from Robert Navan and Jim Henning were NO.

Frank Woods stated we may be able to put together a committee, but IWAI stipulate there must be a chairman, secretary, and treasurer. If we did go into suspension, procedure would necessitate a re-election.

Ken Bell asked if Neil Sutor joined the committee would we have enough to continue?

Alan Cousins and Frank Woods stated that we would have a caretaker committee, but no chairman. Canvassing would take place so John Weir asked if Mervyn Rolls would be chairman, but the answer was no, not possible.

Frank Woods wanted to know if the AGM would support a reduced branch committee, bypassing IWAI conditions, and Jim Henning advised that there has to a 21 day notification of proposals to change any conditions of IWAI.

John Weir proposed Mike Kingston as secretary, to which he answered no, but he would consider being chairman. Robert Navan said he would like more time to think about and discuss a caretaker committee, and the possibilities of such, with all holding temporary positions, and we should listen to the views of members at the AGM. It was agreed that the AGM should be informed of the difficulties., and we have to abide by the IWAI Articles of Association.

We then discussed the Christmas Walk, with options being Moira, Poyntzpass, and Brownlow House, Lurgan. To be held on Monday 28 December 2015.

The meeting ended at 17.35 hours. No date was fixed for our next meeting.