

Tyne Rowing Club

Special General Meeting

Held at the Club premises on 29 September 2011

**SGM draft
minutes from
29 Sep 2011**

Minutes - draft as at 17-10-11 for comment

Present: Simon Dobson (in the chair), Colin Percy (Secretary), Martin Colquhoun (Treasurer), John Goddard, David Herford (parent), other names (about 20) to follow.

1 Welcome and appointment of chair for meeting

Lindsay Miller proposed and it was agreed that Simon Dobson take the chair.

2 Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from John Bolter.

3 Accounts for year ending 31 August 2010

The Treasurer presented the accounts for 2009-10, which had been circulated in advance with agenda. Since the circulation these had been signed off by the Independent Examiner, who indicated no reason to question the accounts. Overall income had been £64,592 and expenditure £64,527, with excess of income over expenditure of £65.

Points he drew attention to included:

- regatta income down a bit
- coaching expenditure higher due to the new paid coach, but matched by income
- heat and light spend very low, due to credit being given on gas for previous overpayments (overall gas payments situation just resolved that day!)
- launch and towing costs up significantly
- rental income down a lot due to departure of Durham University BC

Overall, he said there were concerns about further loss of rental income, the increases in things like running of launches, grants for coaching running out and so on. The new committee would have to address these after the AGM.

Clarification was sought on race fees expenditure. It was suggested there should be a near equal income figure (allowing only for the club paying for national competitions). Committee members said that there was a now a system to ensure that all race fees were collected in. The accounts for 2009-10 perhaps hid this income, though it was likely it was not all had been collected in.

There was a query about collection of member subscriptions. The Treasurer said that efforts were made regularly to check payments, but it was not easy in all cases to link payments on bank statements to individual members. The meeting chair recommended that the committee renew efforts on this and collection of race fees. It was suggested that the club should explore again the possibility of using direct debits and the Treasurer said he would follow up.

In answer to a query, the Treasurer said that the item on disposal of fixed assets related to sale of a boat.

A motion to endorse the accounts was proposed by Lindsay Miller, seconded by John Mulholland and passed formally *nem con*. The meeting thanked the Treasurer for his work. It was proposed that Michael Harle continue as Independent Examiner of the accounts and this was agreed. The Secretary was asked to thank him for his work by letter.

4 Report on the likely receipt of a legacy

The Secretary said that the club was expecting to benefit from the estate of John Dalkin. It was taking the solicitors some time to resolve outstanding issues and there was no recent news on timing or the amount to be received. A figure of £100,000 had been mentioned in the past, but could not be confirmed.

There was discussion on use of the money, assuming it was of this order of magnitude. Although a vote was not taken, there seemed general agreement that the money should be used very largely on something lasting, probably 'bricks and mortar', to act as a permanent memorial to John. The family had not expressed any views to the club.

It was suggested that we use the money wherever possible to lever in or match other funds. One or two members present thought that we should not be too dogmatic about what we spent it on; it should not just sit in the bank for years waiting for a building scheme to emerge.

It was agreed the matter should be brought back to a further general meeting when the figure was known.

5 Report of work to date on developing proposals for physical development

The Secretary outlined the setting up of the club's Development Group under John Goddard and its work over the last year or two. A previous SGM on 23 September 2010 had considered a report on options and had endorsed in very general terms the recommended scheme, involving an extension eastwards and some refurbishment of the existing building.

Since the 2010 SGM, the Group had sought to bring down the cost of the scheme to something of the order of £300k rather than £500 (including all fitting out, fees and VAT). This involved reducing the floorspace and losing the modest ground floor boat storage area. The sketch floor plans circulated with the agenda for this SGM showed what was now proposed.

The outline costs before fees and VAT for the three main elements were:

Refurbishment of existing building	£35,000
New extension	£127,000
External works	£10,000.

Earlier in 2011 the committee has asked the group to progress the proposals by commissioning more detailed plans and accurate costs and obtaining planning permission. It was thought this would be needed to support funding applications from, amongst other, Sport England. This would have cost about £6,000 and would be met out of club general funds. The Group was moving toward getting three tenders for this design work when the committee (in September 2011) decided to freeze action pending the outcome of this SGM.

John said that he remained of the view that this was the best option to pursue, given the priorities set of increasing indoor training floorspace and enlarging changing facilities. It could be implemented with minimal disruption to ongoing activities, would give the club a much better and accessible public face and upgrade the essentially sound clubhouse boathouse. It would not increase boat storage by much, but the option of filling in the compound had been costed as an 'add-on'.

On the funding side, John said the possibilities had ben closing down. Newcastle City Council was unable to help on capital, likewise British Rowing. Sport England had at last launched its *Inspired Facilities* scheme. On the one hand this had turned out to be an un-bureaucratic and relatively simple scheme to apply to, but on the other was limited to £50k per club per funding round (approx two per year).

A member said that as external money was now very limited and thus a scheme costing £300k was unlikely to be funded, it did not seem worth spending £6k on more detailed designs and planning permission at this stage. Another member agreed that the tide did seem to have gone out since we started on this. Some members thought that boat storage was perhaps more of a priority than the committee and group had agreed, though the departure of Northumbria University had eased matters.

The merits of filling in the compound were discussed, either for storage or for some for of enclosed space for training and/or changing. If for storage, one member said, how about using some of the new boathouse for training?

A member said he had been looking at options for bridging over the old boathouse and providing upper floor indoor space but leaving the boat storage below in situ. He had obtained quotes for erecting simple steel frames and enclosing the upper floors. He had not costed fitting out, fees and planning, but thought the basic building envelope might be of the order of £50-60k. David Herford reminded the meeting that the total estimated building and fitting out cost (before fees and VAT) for the new extension was £127k.

It was suggested from the floor that given all the uncertainties, not least about the timing and amount of the legacy, then it would be best to put the whole matter into abeyance and to bring it back to another meeting when the legacy was clear - hopefully quite soon. As an addendum to this, another member said that this would give time for alternative schemes to be worked up properly by their proponents. Others said that spending the £6k on designs and planning would not be sensible right now.

John Goddard said that he respected the views of the meeting, but that if his Group could not progress the scheme now he felt it should be down to others to take things forward. He said he urged the club to carry on looking at sources of funding - there was still money around.

The chair for the meeting said in bringing this item to a close that he was sure the meeting would wish to thank, in particular, John Goddard, David Herford and David Fuller for their work in the Development Group. This was endorsed by the meeting. He said he sensed a lack of consensus on most issues and nervousness about spending £6k on fees and planning right now. He therefore recommended that the committee's stance of holding fire be endorsed and another general meeting convened when funding, in particular, was clearer. This was agreed.

A member said that it might be worth putting in for £50k under *Inspired Facilities*, given it did not need detailed designs and planning permission up front and did not need any match funding. It was agreed to recommend to committee that it put in an application for partial infill of the compound for training and/or changing facilities.