

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE HELD ON

Wednesday 12th October 2005

7.30 PM

GC Members Present: Ken Smith, Bill Beattie, Andrew Murray, Jack Morrison, Tony Carter, Iona Anthony and Frank Connor

Other Members: Tony Dorrington

Johnstone Sub-Aqua Club: Cameron Philips, Graeme Forsyth, Brian Deveney, Tam Cowie, Stephanie Sommers, Andy Weir and Christina Stewart.

Apologies: Kevin and Diana Webb.

Ken Smith welcomed and introduced members of Johnstone Sub-aqua Club to the GC and asked them to comment on Mr Alan Pringle's request for a refund of ScotSAC membership dues.

Cameron Philips, Chairperson of Johnstone Branch stated that his club had in no way reneged in their responsibilities to Mr Alan Pringle as a potential club member. He had come along to their club at the last pool session of the season. As an alternative to this he was told that "confined" open water training could be arranged instead. When he was later contacted to arrange this Mr Pringle said he was unavailable due to holiday commitments. During this period he had not paid any branch fees to their club.

Graeme Forsyth of Johnstone Branch commented that Mr Pringle has since joined another diving organisation (PADI) and has a basic qualification after 4 dives.

Ken Smith mentioned that Mr Pringle bore no resentment towards The Scottish Sub-Aqua Club or Johnstone Branch. He added that the issue had generated considerable debate at the last GC meeting with GC members divided about whether a refund should be granted. Based on the information we had at that time the committee thought that a refund should be considered.

After a general discussion it was decided that in light of the additional information provided by Johnstone Branch, Mr Pringle should not receive a membership refund.

Ken Smith thanked Johnstone Branch for attending.

Previous Minutes: September 2005 GC minutes - Matters outstanding.

Jack Morrison reported that the "Affinity Guard" insurance policy proposal from Kelvin Smith, our brokers could be changed to "Business Guard" for director's liability insurance. It would be a seamless changeover should we incorporate and would be in fact cheaper.

Andrew Murray highlighted an error in the previous minutes, which stated that SSAC "had all positions on NDC filled except for 2 senior coaches". This is incorrect, as the NDO has appointed 2 senior coaches, and the position of National Coach is not filled.

Bill Beattie stated that he had amended this section of the minutes as per the NDO, Kevin Webb's instructions and as such they should remain as they are. GC members had been asked to only comment on the sections that were relevant to their remit.

Disclosure Checks for Instructors:

Tony Dorrington reported that we had currently 34 forms in the system, of these:

- 29 had been returned with the checks completed.
- 2 needing amendments.
- 2 still with the CRBS (Central Registers Body Scotland).
- 1 form missing.

He added that there was an update of Iona's article on Child Protection issues being produced for the "Scottish Diver" and the web-site. Frank Connor to receive a copy.

September 2005 GC minutes

Proposed: Jack Morrison.

Seconded: Tony Carter.

Scottish Diver Magazine Report:

Jack Morrison presented his detailed written report about the costs of producing Scottish Diver and how we deliver it to our members. Our current publishing arrangement is with "The Freetime Initiative" who produces 2000 magazines on a bi-monthly basis. The final cost per issue breaks down to about 50p to each member.

Other options for reducing costs include:

1. Producing our own Web Based Magazine. After the initial set up costs this would be a fairly low cost option, have potentially massive circulation through the Internet and would be attractive to advertisers i.e. dive centres. Weaknesses, not all members have access to a computer and some would be reluctant to go on a web-based address list for security reasons. Nevertheless it has future potential.
2. Start producing our own magazine again and cutting the number of issues from 6 to 4 per year. Initial set up costs in hardware, software and personnel training would be expensive. This could also be produced without advertising, one of the criticisms of the current magazine, however printing and postage costs alone could be up to 13K per year.
3. Find a new contract publisher. Alternative publishers including, First Press Publishing (Part of the Daily Record group), The Herald and The Milton Press had reservations about taking on our magazine with a circulation of 2000. They would only be interested if we paid for the marketing campaign to increase circulation. This would have to be significant for the magazine to be self-funding through advertising. Typically, Menzies distribution sells about 250 dive magazines a month in Scotland.

There then followed a general discussion about the future of the magazine.

Diver Coxswain – Boat Handling Course:

Tony Carter reported that this was being revised to the new syllabus.

Tony Carter also presented his reports on:

- Intellectual Assets & Property.
- Effects of the “Disabilities Discrimination Act 2005.
- A ScotSAC Mission Statement.

He asked the committee for some feed-back on his reports

Code of Conduct Policy:

Bill Beattie reported that ScotSAC needs a “Code of Conduct” policy. This would be applicable to all members, volunteers and staff. It is an essential document most amateur clubs have one. Our personnel consultant, who highlighted this omission, can put one together for us. It would be based on the principles of an employee handbook and would be customised to incorporate policies and club rules etc. The total cost for this would be £108.75 Ex VAT.

There was general agreement that this would be money well spent.

Marketing:

Andrew Murray presented his report that included a draft version of the development plan for review and discussion. Because of time constraints, Ken Smith asked the committee to review this and feedback comments to Andrew by early November.

Web-site “Have your Say” page:

Andrew Murray added that the “Have your Say” page on the web-site is proving popular with members. To improve its use he presented the text for the title page that explained how to use the page the type of questions it deals with.

After discussion and the addition of another paragraph it was passed for inclusion on the web-site.

Correspondence:

Various correspondences for the period - Scottish Marine National Parks, Sportscotland newsletter and SSA AGM details.

A. O. C. B.

- Marine National Parks Correspondence passed on to Iona Anthony

- Meeting with Sharon Macdonald (Sportscotland) scheduled for Week 43.
- Nomination forms for elections to have explanatory letter about potential changes.
- A draft version of the Sportscotland grant application is now ready.
- A professional meeting table and chairs was offered to the club for £1000.

Ken Smith added that he and Kevin Webb would be attending the “Dive Show” in Birmingham and BSAC’s Diving officer’s conference in London.

The meeting closed at 10.20pm.

Proposed Calendar of 2005 General Committee Meetings:

Start time 7.30pm

Weds 16th November

Weds 14th December