



MINUTES

For the Meeting of the **BOARD OF DIRECTORS** **THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE CAT FANCY**

Friday, 22 May 2020 by videoconference



Present: Mr John Hansson - Chairman
Mr Sean Farrell - (Vice-Chairman)

Dr Peter Collin	Mr Steve Crow
Mrs Hilary Dean	Ms Sarndra Devereux
Mrs Rosemary Fisher	Dr Gavin Eyres
Mr Thomas Goss	Mrs Shelagh Heavens
Mrs Catherine Kaye	Mrs Jen Lacey
Mrs Elaine Robinson	Mrs Lisa Robinson-Talboys
Ms Lyndsey Robinson	

BD3957 MEETING INTRODUCTION

1. **Apologies for absence.**

1.1 Apologies for absence were given on behalf of: Mrs Lynda Ashmore,
Mrs Heather McRae had not made contact. **INFO**

2. **Chairman's opening remarks**

2.1 The meeting began at 10.15am with the listed Board members and the Office Manager present.
The Chairman gave an apology for the confusion he had caused by suggesting the invitation of Mrs Chapman-Bear to future Board meetings for the finance section. **INFO**

BD3958 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1. **The Minutes of the Board meeting of 24 March 2020**

1.1 These had been circulated with corrections and most of the requested amendments had been made.
1.2 BD3949.2.2 detail of the objections to the amendments was deleted as these had been circulated with the agenda, but were not stated within the meeting.
1.3 BD3951.3.3 Additional wording was requested to emphasise that the Board and FC would be having combined meetings for the period of the Covid-19 crisis.
1.4 The minutes were then agreed.

Action: the April minutes published on the GCCF website **JL/RF**

2. **Matters arising from the previous minutes**

2.1 BD3949.2.2 The objections to the additions to the meeting minutes were stated:
'PC had not been able to be present at the two Council meetings prior to the request from the Birman BAC'.
'A vote had been taken at the end of discussion and it was agreed that no response should be made to any points or queries raised by the JRBAC on past events. It was to be a fresh start. A letter was to be sent to the JRBAC stating this (as at B3943.1.4) after being approved by the Chair & Vice-Chair.'
2.2 BD3949.2.7 The Vice-Chairman confirmed by exhibiting a copy of the complaint to IC that it was the JRBAC concerned, as the Cornish Rex BAC had ceased to exist as a separate entity. There should have been no separate communication to the CRBAC as decided in January (BD 3927.2).
2.3 BD3951.3.3 There was further discussion on what had been understood by combined meetings for Finance and the Board, and whether the Finance Meeting scheduled for 13.5.20 should have gone ahead without the Board being informed this was the intention. It was stressed that FC was a separate entity to the Board and also that it had been understood that any combined meetings would be temporary while restrictions were in place because of Covid-19. Also, that no FC meeting was scheduled now until September. The Vice-Chairman observed that Board members had made different interpretations and voting had lacked clarity, but as it had been the first meeting by video-conference this was not surprising, and pre-meeting discussion had taken place between the Officers to make improvements to avoid confusion in future. **INFO**

BD3959 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. **Unregistered interests declared for the business of this meeting**

1.1. A query was raised on possible conflict of interest because 'STAR pricing' was on the agenda.
1.2 LRT pointed out that she had no connection with Kopikatts. **INFO**

BD3960 FINANCE

1. **Draft minutes of the 13 May Finance Committee meeting**

1.1 There were no questions. **INFO**

2. **Management p&l accounts to 30 April 2020**

2.1 The profit and loss accounts to the end of April had been provided by the bookkeeper and circulated to all in advance of the meeting together with a summary sheet for March, April and the ytd in 2019 & 20, to enable like to like comparisons.
2.2 It was noted that the gross profit for April 2020 and for the year when compared with 2019 was showing an increase. Income had not suffered too badly and had been offset by considerably reduced expenditure.

- 2.3 Postage was an estimated figure as no cards had been sent out. There were around 3,000 waiting to go. Posting would begin the following week when Dennis returned to work. It was queried if a saving could be made if only certificates that were wanted were sent, but the OM reported the staff time in sorting these out, and the inevitable queries that would arise from customers, meant this was impractical.
- 2.4 The Vice Chairman had pointed out at the finance committee and at the board meeting that the GCCFI euro/sterling rates would vary on a daily basis and as such, the Euro rate for conversion on the day for inclusion in the P&L should be noted as sterling value at the current exchange rate and may vary, when the euro's are exchanged for sterling. Accordingly, this should be highlighted, and a note to that effect placed somewhere prominent on the spreadsheet to remind all of that fact.
- 2.5 There was a query on meeting expenses, but noted that an actual Board meeting had taken place in March.
- 2.6 The 2019 end of year accounts had been circulated on the previous day. It was agreed unanimously these should be discussed at the next meeting (29/6/20) and MCB should be asked to attend if available.

Action: 2019 accounts to be high on the June agenda

JL

3. Volume figures (core business)

- 3.1 The OM reported figures for 2020 were slightly up overall on the previous year (to 19 May), with prefix registrations doing particularly well.
- 3.2 There was anecdotal evidence that breeders were continuing to produce litters and did not have a problem finding new owners. The easing of lockdown had made travel for kitten collection easier for purchasers and there no longer seemed a difficulty in obtaining kitten vaccinations.
- 3.3 Therefore the outlook remained favourable.

INFO

4. Proposed pricing for STAR

- 4.1 A spreadsheet had been circulated to show pricing for an all-breed and breed show that included a 25% mark up as recommended by FC. The intention was that GCCF should provide a service, but consideration had to be given for the use staff time and a small profit for re-investment in the service.
- 4.2 The examples given had been based upon actual shows to obtain exhibit numbers with pricing to show the cost to GCCF of the basic and extended service, plus 25%. but it was pointed out that the figures given should be checked as they were not accurate for the shows stated.
- 4.3 Also, it was thought that comparisons with shows that had taken place at this point were invalid as the paperwork and show catalogues produced by GCCF would not necessarily be of an equivalent standard or tailored to the individual requests of the club concerned. Therefore any comparisons with a competitor were meaningless.
- 4.4 It was agreed that new figures should be provided that did not include general comparisons, although they could be based on an example. GE proposed that Chester & North Wales be used. A 20% and 25% mark up indication would be useful for assessment, plus the actual cost baseline shown.
- 4.5 They would need to show an approximation for bank card use, checked with the bookkeeper. Leanne's estimate provided to FC was costs were now about £60 for an AB show and £20 for a small breed show.
- 4.6 It was also asked that it be ascertained whether pricing was based on entirely in-house printing or whether some jobs, such as catalogues with spiral binding, had to be outsourced to Media Edge.
- 4.7 It was agreed that no decision would be taken on pricing until the information requested was available, including consideration of staff time
- 4.8 It was noted that if prices increased these would have to be passed on. Either they could be fixed for a year or note of variation would have to be included in the pricing policy.
- 4.9 It was confirmed that the service would not be launched until assurance was given that it could be operated without major problems.

Action: further information & costings as detailed to be requested from CTR & RS

SC/OM

5. Investment accounts update

- 5.1 Aldermore £76,062.96, with a fixed interest of 1.49% until March 2021.
Cambridge & Counties £144200.65, 95 day notice account with 1.49% interest (£70,00 transfer to be made to Redwood on 6 June.)
Redwood £10,015.18, 95 day notice account with 1.54% interest
- 5.2 There was confirmation that £1000 continued to be transferred into the Cambridge & Counties. This was savings towards hosting the 2021 WCC event, if it was able to go ahead.
- 5.3 It was agreed that care should be taken that the C&C did not exceed £85,000, and that a suitable unrelated bank should identified so that another deposit account could be opened when necessary.

INFO

6. Refund of show licences

1. The OM confirmed that all clubs with shows between 21 March & 31 May had been contacted to ask if they wanted a refund on their 2019-2020 show licence. None had requested a return or sent bank details.
2. FC had recommended to the Board that these clubs should be refunded and then repayment should be made on a quarterly basis to those who had licences for the 2020-2021 season as it was easier to keep financial records going forward.
3. The Board decided to that it should be left for the clubs to ask for repayment as it could be indicated on their 2021-22 licence applications that the fee had been paid for previous year.

Action: records of repayments or transfer of fees for a new licence to be kept

OM

7. Director liability insurance

- 7.1 There were no additional questions to put to Gallaghers from individual directors.
- 7.2 It was noted from an advice leaflet circulated (Russell-Cooke, solicitors) that some policies excluded claims made by the company against the director and this was likely to exclude almost all possible claims.
- 7.3 It was agreed that it should be queried if this was relevant to the GCCF policy.

Action: contact and discussion with Gallaghers

RF

BD3961 BUSINESS ITEMS6

1. **Introduction to the new solicitors**
 - 1.1 The Chairman confirmed that the company was now a client of Royds, Withy, King. Ms Coate of Marshalls had now retired, after giving advice on amending the Byelaws in respect of the Covid-19 situation. She would continue to act for GCCF until the conclusion of the Small Claims case, but for this purpose only.
 - 1.2 A meeting had been arranged by Zoom with the new solicitors on 27.5.20. The current Officers, Office Manager and IC/DC Secretary would be present. **INFO**

2. **Business partners**
 - 2.1 Agria wanted to know what percentage of the total amount of GCCF annual income its commission formed. The OM had worked this out for 2019 as just under 15%
 - 2.2. The Board was concerned about the reason for the question, but considered withholding the information would serve no purpose as it would be in the public domain via publication of the accounts

Action: A response to be made to Agria **OM**

3. **IT report**
 - 3.1 The last meeting had been held on 5 May by Zoom. A few minor adjustment to the system were needed which would mean it would be offline, but only for a short time.
 - 3.2 Caroline had been working on pricing STAR (BD3960.4) and was now working through the more complex registration policies checking that they could be implemented on the system in accordance with BAC requirements. There would be liaison with the relevant BACs if necessary. **INFO**

4. **Infusionsoft performance report**
 - 4.1 Some complaints had been received that information sent on behalf of the Chairman (14.4.20) had not reached people whose details appeared to be correctly listed on Phoenix, with the appropriate tag to designate them as a club officer or delegate. These followed earlier reports from delegates who had not received paperwork. Therefore an attempt was made by JL & Becky to match club listings with an IS report of the email addresses contacted.
 - 4.2 It was found personnel from non-active clubs, and three individuals had been sent mail they should not have received. Also out of date personal details had been selected when the system update had been made.
 - 4.3 Some clubs officers and/or delegates had set their personal details to 'no mail' which had been respected, but electronic contact between clubs and the Office was necessary so it was a problem to be addressed.
 - 4.4 The complaints made were verified in a number of cases and this was of concern as it seemed as though people should be getting mail distributed electronically from the Office, but it was not reaching them.
 - 4.5 It would be necessary to send out ByeLaw change proposals and election information and voting paperwork so it was important that this was investigated to avoid disenfranchisement of clubs and delegates.
 - 4.6 There also needed to be a check that there had been no GDPR breach.

Actions: IM to be asked to examine the problem **OM**
ensure the distribution of Byelaw revision voting papers to all **JL/RS**

BD3962 CLUB & BAC MATTERS

1. **A report on the 2019 club & BAC returns**
 - 1.1 SH had prepared a report that gave the following information on the 158 member clubs (full & provisional)
 - 118 had made returns that were complete, or almost so, and paid their subscriptions
 - 5 were complete but needed their independent examination
 - 8 had requested extensions which had been granted
 - 5 more had sent partial returns
 - 4 had specific problems
 - 17 had made no contact, and there had been 1 late contact on 11/5/20.
 - 21 BACs had made returns, (5 not examined)
 - 1.2 Clubs had a responsibility to submit returns by 1 May, and it had been agreed in September 2019 (BD3891.1) that those who were late in 2019 would not be given any leeway in 2020, but lose their entitlement to a delegate and show licence. However, it was decided that given the unusual circumstances caused by the Covid-19 pandemic this would not be followed through.
 - 1.3 It was agreed that the deadline for all clubs to complete would be extended to 31 August. By this time all clubs would need to have presented examined accounts and paid the appropriate fee if they were entitled to a delegate. Clubs who did not complete returns would not be eligible for a show licence.
 - 1.4 This applied equally to the clubs who had as yet made no contact. It was thought if a list was circulated then Board members could assist with making contact if they knew club officers or committee members.

Action: circulation of club details **SH**

2. **Dispensation for clubs without sufficient numbers for delegate entitlement**
 - 2.1 All-breed clubs with less than 100 members and Breed/Specialist clubs with below 50 had to request Council for dispensation to continue delegate representation at the Electoral Meeting.
 - 2.2 As this would not take place it was agreed they would be published on the website at least four weeks prior to the agreed election date and be allowed to participate if no objections had been received.
 - 2.3 SH noted that there were a number of clubs who did not have the required membership numbers who seemed to assume they would be put forward for dispensation as they had paid the delegates fee. It was agreed they would all be on the list. **INFO**

3. **Club returns queries**
 - 3.1 The NWCC had responded to the queries raised by SH, but not given satisfactory answers to all.

- 3.2 In particular, it was stated how the £408 transferred from the show account to the general account had been spent, but it was not shown in the general account as membership income and so was missing, as it was money not accounted for.
- 3.3 It was agreed that SH would write again and request a further explanation. She read what she intended to send and this was approved.
- Action: letter to the NWCC** **SH**
- 3.4 The West of Scotland and Scottish CCs had sent correspondence and phoned to state they could not make returns until Heather McRae, show manager for a joint show in 2018 and for the Scottish in 2019 had sent the show accounts.
- 3.5 HM had told the Board in March (BD3945.1.4) that the West of Scotland accounts were prepared, although not sent to the club as there was no committee. At this point she was asked to send them to SH, but to date (10 weeks later) they had not been supplied and efforts to contact her via the Chair & Vice Chair had failed.
- 3.6 There was sympathy expressed for the clubs, and discussion on how the accounts could be obtained. SH proposed, that as friends of HM, SC and TG should mediate. This was agreed.
- Action: contact with HM** **SC/TG**
- 3.7 The Sphynx CA problems with their bank account were ongoing. **INFO**

4. **Application for Provisional Membership from the Ragdoll**

- 4.1 The club had applied in November and provided evidence of a membership base of 50 in March. At this time their club rules were not close enough to the GCCF generic rules for approval.
- 4.2 These had been amended and their membership was accepted as a starting figure. They would need to provide three club returns before Full Membership could be applied for (March 2023).

Action: the club to be informed and a notice put onto the website

JL/RF

5. **Carrying forward 2019 club membership for the 2020 returns**

- 5.1 Board members had considered this from the previous meeting and no problems were raised. Clubs unable to have a show and take membership in 2020 would be able to carry forward their 2019 members without subscriptions.
- 5.2 However, they would not be allowed to increase their membership numbers unless they could account for new members in the returns by showing additional subs paid.

Action: Clubs to be informed later in the year

OM

BD3963 PREPARATION FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS

1. **Feedback from clubs re the legal advice**

- 1.1 A spreadsheet had been prepared by the Office to list feedback from clubs for the Chair after he had circulated the advice received from the GCCF solicitor on how to amend the Byelaws without a meeting of Council.
- 1.2 The solicitor had advised this could be done via the Companies Act with the proposal being sent to Members (the Full Member Clubs) rather than delegates.
- 1.3 As there could not be an Electoral Meeting in June 2020 she had suggested the October meeting should be a Special General Meeting to include the elections, but if this couldn't be held there should be postal voting rather than any indefinite suspension of the electoral process.
- 1.4 About 35% of clubs had made a response (it had since been ascertained that the information wouldn't have reached all - BD3961.4). Of those who had received over 90% who had expressed an opinion were in favour of this pragmatic approach, and there had been no specific objections to it. A few clubs had given comment only and/or alternative solutions.
- 1.5 The Board agreed that one point from the advice needed clarification. Ms Coate had mentioned at item 16 in her letter both a 75% majority (of the vote) and '75% of all members'. It was wasn't clear if this meant that unless at least 75% of all members voted and were in favour then the vote was lost, or whether clubs who did not vote for any reason were discounted, as with abstentions at a Council meeting.

Action: clarification on the vote total, and what would happen if the required 75% was not achieved **JH**

2. **Club dispensations**

- 2.1 Clubs would be informed they had until 31st August to complete returns and pay subscriptions and fees if they wanted a delegate who was eligible to stand in the elections, make nominations and vote. This would be inclusive of all clubs who had not yet competed regardless of whether their return was partial or non-existent at present. (BD3962.1.2)
- 2.2 Dispensation for delegate representation would be by website publication. (BD3962.2) **INFO**

3. **Template letter and Byelaw change proposal from Sara Coate for adaptation**

- 3.1 The solicitor had supplied the Board with a covering letter for the resolution into which dates, and officers and committees to be included in the electoral process could be inserted. The ByeLaw provisions to amend BL 9A, Meetings of Council would need to match.
- 3.2 It was observed that 'temporary provisions for Covid-19 2020' should note that these could be extended if so advised by HM Government.
- 3.3 It was also thought that it should be indicated that Full Member clubs eligible to vote were those whose Full Membership existed in the 2019-20 period, rather than from June 2020, and noted that nominations should be made by 'an eligible delegate' as was standard practice (4b) rather than require a seconder.
- 3.4 After some preliminary discussion of the amendments required there was focus on the possibility of the October meeting being possible, as there was little point making provision for it if in all probability it would not. From general opinion, and informed advice from PC, it was concluded that large meetings in London would not be possible, and even if they were, many delegates would not want to make the journey. There was considerable risk of disenfranchisement for clubs at a distance from the capital.

(LRT left the meeting, 12.50pm approx)

3.5 It was therefore agreed to move straight to electronic/postal voting. The advantages would be that all eligible delegates would have the opportunity to vote and it would be quicker, as arrangements could be made for the electoral process to be carried out in October rather than wait until November.

Action: redraft of letter and BL change to reflect this & circulation to the Board

JL

4. **Logistics of the vote**

4.1 It was agreed in the course of the discussion that the elections need not include DC or AC. These two committees (and their reserves) would be asked if all were prepared to stay in post. However, if there were vacancies due to members standing down they would have to be filled.

RS

Action: contact with DC & AC members and reserves to check they were happy to continue until June 2021.

4.2 Elections would be necessary for the Officers, 5 Board Members, 5 Finance Committee and 2 IC members, with two reserves required for each committee. The elections for each could not take place simultaneously as those standing as Officers could stand for the Board if unsuccessful, and those not elected as Officers or to Board could stand for IC.

4.3 There would also have to be a decision taken for the eventuality of tied voting.

4.4 It was agreed the Electoral Reform Society should be consulted to see if services were available & at what cost.

Action: contact with the ERS

RF/OM

BD3964

STAFF & OFFICE

1 **Report from the Office Manager**

1.1 The OM had circulated her report in advance of the meeting. She and three members of staff (Becky, Rhian and Aby) had continued working from home, as did Leanne (bookkeeper). They were all well occupied and RF had assisted with the INFO box mail. Aby had been working on club returns, but this task would be completed soon and she would assist the others.

1.2 There had been further Zoom meetings so they could catch up with and support each other.

1.3 Dennis's third furlough block of three weeks was completed and the OM reported she had made the preparations for his return to work. She would also be present in the Office and distancing and PPE had been assessed and were in place.

1.4 There were almost 3,000 registration cards to print and send and this would be Dennis's task. The phones would not be switched on yet.

1.5 Denise had three people to interview to replace Joan and Tamsin when this was possible.

INFO

2. **Report from the webinar on mitigating risk on return to work**

2.1 RF had been unable to access this, but the OM had joined successfully.

2.2 Denise reported much of the advice had concerned much larger companies than GCCF, but she had found the advice on risk assessment extremely useful and had already used it.

INFO

(SH left the meeting, 1.15pm approx)

BD3965

REGISTRATION, TRANSFERS & SOP ITEMS

1 **Minor changes to the Siberian Registration Policy**

1.1 The changes made were clarifications relating to imports and the move to the supplementary register for cats who had been successful in exhibition with critique classes.

1.2 There had also been some slight restructuring.

1.3 These amendments were agreed unanimously.

2. **Revisions to the British Longhair Registration & Breeding Policies**

2.1 The Breeding Policy had had minor corrections signed off and the VO had helped with additional wording re HCM and blood groups.

2.2 The Board had required only one minor change which had been made, but the registrar had noted omissions in the table of colours and patterns and had made other suggestions where wording had been missed or was outdated. The Board supported her recommendations.

2.3 JL reported that policies had already been returned to the Breeder Group, and it was agreed that if they were satisfied with the input the application for Championship Status was complete.

2.4 CK commented on the use SH variants allowed for the breed when what had been the BSH variant was now the BLH. It was noted there could be comment on this when the application was published.

3. **SOP amendments for the Oriental Bicolour**

3.1 GEMS code updates had been made throughout.

3.2 The major changes were to the pattern descriptions in respect of the white markings for 01, 02 and 03. There was some thought that their application would not come readily to judges. However, if the OJBAC monitored and there were concerns, then they would have to be addressed.

3.3. Therefore the amended SOP was approved.

Actions: The BACs for 1,2, & 3 to be informed.

JL

It was agreed that the documents would be displayed for four weeks on the GCCF website for comment.

Any queries would be fed back to the Board & BAC. If there were no objections (or when objections were dealt with) then the application & amended registration policies & SOP would be considered approved. It was impossible to be sure when the next live Council meeting would take place.

3.4 Request for a change of the registered name after a cat has been shown

deferred

BD3966 SHOW MATTERS

1. **To establish a working group to consider possible changes to the show format with financial viability**
 - 1.1 It was thought there was insufficient time to discuss this at this meeting, and that there was no probability of shows happening soon anyway.
 - 1.2 Concern was expressed for financial viability. *deferred*

2. **Request for a show date change from the LH, SLH & AB club**
 - 2.1 The Longhair, SLH & AB CC had asked for a change of show date from 23rd January 2021 to Sunday 24 January 2021 if the show could go ahead. There was no other show on this date so it was agreed.
 - 2.2 There had been a query on the completion of the club's 2019 show account before consideration of the date change. Its treasurer had confirmed there had been no show (but not stated it on the returns) and in doing so made remarks that were bordering on libellous about a previous show manager.
Action: an official reprimand to be sent for the disrespectful comment **JH**

3. **Dispensation request from Anna McEntee to become an AB show manager**
 - 3.1 Mrs McEntee had two certificates from AB shows, but her third and fourth shows (April 2020) had been cancelled because of COVID-19. She had completed some of the work involved and had asked if she could send a certificate detailing this to count as her third.
 - 3.2 This was not agreed.
Action: Mrs McEntee to be informed of the decision **Office**

BD3967 HEALTH & WELFARE

1. **VAC Meeting report**
 - 1.1 SC reported that he and JL had attended the annual VAC meeting by teleconference on 14 May.
 - 1.2 Topics had been fairly wide ranging with particular reference to possible COVID-19 transmission between people and cats with studies ongoing. It had also been confirmed that FIP is now a treatable disease, but at present the cost of the drugs did not make it affordable for most people.
 - 1.3 Dr Moreland had put a lot of work into sourcing and making accessible megestrol acetate for oestrus control. She was prepared to give information if necessary to obtain a prescription to breeders' vets.
 - 1.4 HCM remained an ongoing matter for discussion, particularly in breeds where there was late onset.
 - 1.5 The VAC had agreed to hold shorter quarterly meetings by video or teleconference in preference to travelling.
 - 1.6 There was comment following the report that veterinary fees had increased during lockdown and would probably be ongoing, with a knock on effect to insurance policies. Unfortunately, it was something breeders would have to prepare for. **INFO**

2. **Additional vet proposed to join the VAC**
 - 2.1 Louise Marsh's CV had been circulated, and it had been agreed she should be invited to join the VAC to replace Lorraine Allen who had sadly died the previous year.
Action: Dr Moreland to be informed so she could make the invitation **JL**

3. **An update on the Covid-19 information on the website**
 - 3.1 There had been a recent update from Defra via the C&FSG. The relaxation on travel restrictions allowed purchasers to collect puppies and kittens from breeders (in England). This had been put onto the GCCF website to inform breeders.
 - 3.2 SC reported that the next C&FSG meeting was 12 June by via video-conference.
 - 3.3 The Chair thanked SC, RF and Sue Moreland for the gathering information and posting it regularly onto the GCCF website and FB page. It was much appreciated. **INFO**

BD3968 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

FRIDAY, 19th June, at 11.00am by video-conference

The meeting finished at 2.00pm