



## MINUTES

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

Friday, 24 April 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	Mrs Maria Chapman-Beer ( for part of the meeting, by invitation)

#### **BD3948 MEETING INTRODUCTION**

- 1. Apologies for absence.**  
1.1 Apologies for absence were given on behalf of: Mrs Lynda Ashmore, and Mrs Heather McRae. CK & JL joined after the start. All had some technical problems. **INFO**
- 2. Chairman's opening remarks**  
2.1 The meeting began shortly after 10am with most Board members and the Office Manager present. **INFO**

#### **BD3949 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

- 1. The Minutes of the Board meeting of 4 March 2020**  
1.1 These had been circulated with corrections and some of the requested amendments had been made.  
1.2 BD3945.1.3 The list of clubs who could need dispensation on all/some of their returns was corrected.  
1.3 The Vice-Chair gave a reminder that the most up to date minute were version 4, as circulated on 23 April, and asked all to check this the was copy they had for reference. **INFO**
- 2. Proposed additions**  
2.1 There were two additions proposed that had each received an objection, so required a Board decision.  
The additions and the reasons for their non-inclusion were circulated with the paperwork for the meeting.  
2.2 HD proposed insertion at BD3942.5: 'PC had been giving updates of the scheme at Council that the Birman delegates should have been passing on'.  
2.3 The proposer called a vote and declared a majority in favour of the addition. The numbers of those approving, against and abstaining were not stated.  
2.4 HD proposed be inserted at BD3943.1: The responses were that a letter of resignation had been sent. The then BAC Secretary when offered help would not accept it.  
2.5 The Chair commented that the statement proposed to be included was not supported by evidence. HD offered to circulate her resignation as JRBAC Secretary, and comment rejecting advice from the person replacing her. This would be done following the meeting.  
**Action: information to be sent to the Board** **HD**  
2.6 It was observed that the minutes referred to the JRBAC in respect of the letter received, but did not make it clear that it was the whole BAC and not only the Cornish Rex BAC that was to be monitored. The Vice-Chair noted that there was some confusion as initially the complaint had been in respect of the CRBAC, but as the investigation had proceeded it was clear that responsibility was shared across the JRBAC.  
2.7 The Chair agreed that it was the JRBAC that should be monitored by PC and SD and 'JR' would be inserted at BD3943.1.3 to clarify this.  
2.8 Those present were asked if these additions were agreed and a majority confirmed this. JL and TG recorded objections. *(JL had arrived at the final comment on this item)*  
**Action: additions to be made and the March minutes published on the GCCF website** **JL/RF**
- 3. Matters arising from the previous minutes**  
3.1 None taken. **INFO**

#### **BD3950 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 1. Unregistered interests declared for the business of this meeting:** none **INFO**

#### **BD3951 FINANCE**

- 1. Draft minutes of the 18 March Finance Committee meeting**  
1.1 FC855: insurance cover for director liability.  
RF had circulated to the committee an extract from the policy that covered Directors' and Officers' liability, and it had been concluded that this should answer the concerns raised at the March Board meeting (BD3938.6)  
1.2 It was requested that the relevant extract from the policy was circulated so that the sentence quoted in the FC minutes could be read in context.  
**Action: email circulation to the Board of the relevant section** **RF**

1.3 FC856:3.3 GCCFI & VAT

Some concern was expressed on whether it was acceptable to split VAT costs between GCCF and GCCFI. It was confirmed that any future recommendation on GCCFI & VAT would be put to the Board for approval before action was taken, as FC did not take decisions on behalf of the Board.

1.4 However, it was reported that there had been no further conversation with GCCFI on the contract or any future price increases. All was on hold. The Chair observed that as the GCCF's current solicitor was now retiring all would need to be passed to the new legal adviser for an opinion.

1.5 He acknowledged that although the preferred legal practice had been chosen by the Board there had been no direct contact and acceptance of GCCF as a client.

**Action: liaison with the current solicitor on the hand over to the new.**

**JH**

2. **Management p&l accounts to 31 March 2020** (MCB now present, BD3952 completed)

2.1 The profit and loss accounts to the end of March had been provided by the bookkeeper and circulated to all in advance of the meeting and it was requested that these should continue to be circulated to the Board on a monthly basis as soon as they were finalised.

2.2 It was observed that the figures set in the budget for the month overestimated the income and this had been close to that expected, with the explanation that the budget was not tailored on a monthly basis to the seasonal variability of income. Comparison was usually made with the same period in the previous year.

**Action: summary sheet to show this information to be circulated for the next Board meeting**

**JL**

2.3 The OM reported that a good start to the year in the first two months had carried forward into March to ensure a profit in the first quarter. The YTD total was £15,137.04 whereas it has been £3123.73 for the same period in 2019.

2.4 Denise noted that registrations, transfers and imports were continuing, but she expected that although there was usually growth from April through the summer, there would be a decline in 2020 because of the pandemic. It was impossible at this point to predict the outcome because government restrictions and their impact on breeders continuing to breed were a complete unknown.

**INFO**

*(CK joined the meeting, but not present for BD3952 as this was taken before BD3951.2 to allow MCB to join)*

3. **Covid-19 forecast**

3.1 The bookkeeper had provided some estimations for April based on known expenses and income based on figures for the first part of the month.

3.2 It was concluded that at this point there were too many unknowns for it to be useful, and there would be no purpose in making changes to the 2020 budget until there was more information. The income levels for the next three months would be pertinent, and by July there could be plans in place for easing lockdown for business activity. It was agreed there should no meeting to revise the budget until the summer.

3.3 The suggestion that MCB should join the monthly Board meetings, to make a a combined FC/Board meeting for the finance section (BD3952.2) had been put to her as she joined the meeting and there was agreement for it.

**Action: monthly reporting to the Board for close monitoring of the financial situation**

**OM**

4. **Investment accounts update**

4.1 RF reported on the opening of a new investment account so that the Cambridge & Counties did not hold more than the maximum amount with protection guaranteed. £10,000 had been transferred into the Redwood from the current account and an additional £70,000 would be paid from Cambridge & Counties in June.

4.2 The account balances were reported circulated immediately after the meeting, as agreed.

Aldermore £75,969.92 with a fixed interest of 1.49% until March 2021.

Cambridge & Counties £143026.27, 95 day notice account with 1.49% interest  
(£70,00 transfer to be made to Redwood on 6 June.)

Redwood £10,002.53, 95 day notice account with 1.54% interest

4.3 The total in interest bearing accounts was almost £229,000. The Board would be informed of the amount in the Lloyds current account.

**Action: notification of current account figure**

**OM**

**BD3952 BUSINESS MATTERS**

*(taken after BD3951.1, as waiting for the arrival of MCB)*

1. **Changes to the 2020 Business Plan**

1.1 It was agreed that it would be impossible to meet any aims and targets for expansion during the current situation. At present there was no known time when business as usual would be resumed. It was expected that this would be many months, possibly over a year away.

1.2 The conclusion of the short discussion was that the Business Plan would be on hold for the foreseeable future. It could be looked at again as the lockdown was eased. It was stressed there was a need to monitor and monthly Board meetings were required. The Chair suggested they could be combined Board FC meetings as MCB would be the only additional person required to attend.

**INFO**

2. **Business partners**

2.1 There had been some liaison with Agria (Sarah White) on the sharing of website information concerning the welfare of cats during lockdown.

2.2. SC reported that Agria had revised its insurance conditions re the need for vaccinations to take account of the fact that there were currently difficulties in obtaining veterinary services.

**Action: Agria information to be on the GCCF website**

**RF**

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) were working from home, as was Leanne (bookkeeper).
- 1.2 Aby was working on club returns, and the others were kept busy dealing with emails into the info box. These covered registration queries, access problems, a few prefix and Breeder Scheme applications and general enquiries. Pdfs had now replaced registration cards as no printing was possible.
- 1.3 Denise commented that the staff who were working were satisfied with the current situation, but would like to be back at the Office for the social interaction. They had communicated via Zoom.
- 1.4 The OM was asked to pass on thanks to staff. It was also noted that if working from home looked as it was going to continue for months further thought would need to be given to their health and safety. It was possible that there would be the need to purchase new equipment.
- 1.5 Denise travelled weekly to the Office to do some work and collect post. She gave an assurance that she was happy to continue doing this as there was no physical contact on the journey or while she was there. Recorded delivery post was now put through the door.
- 1.6 The remaining member of staff (Dennis) was on furlough, and the claim to HMRC would be dated from the day of the Office closure.
- 1.7 Joan was now retired, and had been paid for her notice period - to 29 May 2020. It was noted that if Joan had not been paid in advance she could probably have been furloughed from the date the office closed until the end of her employment, which would have had a cost benefit to GCCF.

**Action: continued monitoring, with a request to the Board for any assistance when needed** **OM**  
(MCB left the meeting)

1. **A report on the 2019 club returns**

- 1.1 SH reported that she had received full or partial returns from 75 clubs. (The details of what each club had submitted had been circulated to Board members). She estimated this was about 52% of the total, so there were still a lot to come. It was possible that some clubs were experiencing difficulties, but also that as there was no Electoral Council Meeting, or any need to obtain a show licence yet, there was not the incentive as in previous years.
- 1.2 Some clubs had submitted accounts that were not examined. It was thought that an examination would need to be carried out before the accounts could be approved, but the deadline for this to be done would be extended. Those concerned would be advised to use the post, and/or to seek an alternative examiner if their regular person was unavailable.
- 1.3 It was confirmed that one club who had sent returns was missing from the master list, but cross checking between SH and the OM was carried out regularly and it would have been picked up. Denise confirmed that Shelagh would be given access to the master spreadsheet kept by the Office so that she could check off she had seen all returns received at Bridgwater.
- 1.4 Most clubs who had sent paperwork had paid (one overpaid), though some payment had yet to be confirmed and were probably to be checked off by the bookkeeper. However, there were payments received from clubs that had no accompanying accounts which would need further investigation.

**Action: checks to be made** **OM/SH**

2. **Dispensation requests**

- 2.1 There had been a recent request from the Sphynx CA explaining difficulties with bank account access and the non-co-operation of the previous treasurer. SH observed that the problems had been ongoing since the previous summer and gave it as her opinion that more effort should have been made, but it was recognised that bank problems could cause long delays.
- 2.2 The club was compliant with ByeLaw 5(3) in that they had given notice of their difficulties in writing to the Board and could be given feedback/assistance.
- 2.3 It was thought that after the 1 May deadline for returns submission it would be possible to group the input from the clubs to ensure consistency of response, although allocation to a group could need some discussion of individual circumstances.
- 2.4 There would be those who had made partial returns, or who had sent complete but non-examined accounts, and payments, and others who had sent nothing, or very little, but who had informed the Board and given an explanation. The Board could give dispensation and extend the date for completion to the end of August, as in 2019.
- 2.5 There was no comment at this meeting on extensions or sanctions for those clubs who had supplied nothing to date, except to acknowledge those with difficulties due to Covid-19 still had the responsibility to inform the Board, directly (to SH) or via the Office.

**Action: continued compilation of the returns records** **OM/SH**

3. **Concerns with the NWCC accounts**

- 3.1 SH reported that she had recently received the paperwork for this club and was concerned because there seemed to be several inconsistencies when she compared with the information sent to that in the 2018 accounts. She had still to complete her analysis.
- 3.2 The Board agreed unanimously that the queries she had should be raised with the club's officers for a response.
- 3.3 It was understood from information supplied at a DC hearing the club had no AGM quorum and no elected committee (after that of 2019) therefore there were also concerns re some of the financial transactions made.
- 3.4 For 2020 payment had been made for capitation and a delegate, although the retention of a delegate would require dispensation.

**Action: contact with the relevant club officials on behalf of the Board** **SH**

- 3.5 There had been some scrutiny of the Club Returns page of GCCF Online during the checking of input from the NWCC. It had been noticed that the information given implied that many clubs had historic rights to retain a delegate in perpetuity, although this was a privilege of only the 8 clubs listed in Byelaw 3.
- 3.6 It had been reported to the IT staff and the OM gave an assurance that the problem would be found and corrected. (It had been ascertained that the NWCC input had been by post, not online).

**Action: Discussion of the problem with Ian Macro**

**OM**

**4. Concerns re clubs, membership numbers and shows in 2021**

- 4.1 It was recognised that All-Breed (Area) gained most of their annual membership via their show entry. Those with shows on a date after 14 March 2020 would not have that opportunity and so could have a very low membership figure for the 2021 returns and would require dispensation to retain delegates.
- 4.2 However, some of these clubs had decided to give free membership to those who were members the previous year.
- 4.3 The Board agreed that this was a matter for the clubs as long as 'free' was limited to those with 2019 membership. These clubs would have to pay their capitation at the usual rate, but with membership numbers static, would not require dispensation (unless needed in 2020).
- 4.4 SH commented that most clubs were financially secure and could survive a period without income as they would have little expenditure. Clubs with difficulties would need to inform the Board.
- 4.5 It was agreed that information on these issues should be sent to clubs, but after the next meeting when it would be discussed again to ensure all ramifications had been considered.

**Action: a return to the next agenda**

**JL**

- 4.6 Also noted was that club with shows later than 14 March would have paid for their 2019-20 show licences without being able to use them. It was discussed whether refunds should be paid or whether credit should be carried forward to when shows could take place one again. A compromise was proposed by LRT that clubs could have their licence fee refunded if they so wished, but would need to apply for it. This was agreed unanimously.

**Action: a notice to be on the website**

**RF/OM**

**BD3955 HEALTH & WELFARE**

**1. An update on the Covid-19 information on the website**

- 1.1 SC thanked the GCCF's Veterinary Officer, Sue Moreland for gathering advice and guidelines for posting on the Covid-19 page of the website to keep all information concerning cats as up to date as possible.
- 1.2 RF and JL had assisted by doing checks and reviews. It was important that GCCF guidance was appropriate and in line with the organisations responsible for official information.
- 1.3 SC believed the most important recent news was that breeders could take kittens to their new owner if rules for social distancing were observed. The advice given in this respect by the C&FSG, and the letter from Defra supporting it, were both available for breeders to print out via the website and GCCF FB page.
- 1.4 PC commented that he would give medical advice once again when there was no longer total lockdown and people could interact while respecting social distancing. This would depend on the medical and government instructions given at that time.

**BD3956 AOB & DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

1. It was agreed that people should be informed that the Board meeting had taken place. It would be announced via the website & FB and have a mention in the monthly newsletter.

**Action: brief meeting summary for information**

**RF**

2. It was reported that some clubs were running 'virtual' shows.

**FRIDAY, 22 May 2020, at 10.00am by video conference**

The meeting finished at 12.20pm