



MINUTES

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

Friday, 17 July 2020 by videoconference



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

Dr Peter Collin	Mr Steve Crow
Mrs Hilary Dean	Ms Sandra Devereux
Mrs Rosemary Fisher	Dr Gavin Eyres
Mr Thomas Goss	Mrs Shelagh Heavens
Mrs Catherine Kaye	Mrs Jen Lacey
Mrs Heather McRae	Mrs Elaine Robinson
Mrs Lisa Robinson-Talboys	Ms Lyndsey Robinson
Mrs Maria Chapman-Beer (for BD3984 Finance)	

In attendance: The Office Manager, Denise Williams (OM)

BD3981 MEETING INTRODUCTION

- 1. Apologies for absence.**
 - 1.1 Apologies for absence were given on behalf of Mrs Lynda Ashmore who could not access the meeting.
- 2. Chairman's opening remarks**
 - 2.1 The meeting began at 11.10am with SD joining a few minutes later. The Chair welcomed all and noted there was a full agenda.
 - 2.2 It was requested that the meeting link should head the agenda in future.
 - 2.3 It was agreed that meeting paperwork would be posted out in advance now that staff were back in the Office.

Action: ensure meeting paperwork is on file with the Office in time for printing **JL**

BD3982 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS THE MEETING

- 1. The Minutes of the Board meeting of 19 June 2020**
 - 1.1 These had been circulated and amendments made. It was confirmed that version 3 was the final one, but the only difference from version 2 was that typographical errors had been corrected.
 - 1.2 The minutes were then agreed unanimously on the proposal of CK, 2nd by RF.

Action: the June minutes to be published on the GCCF website **JL/RF**
- 2. Matters arising from the previous minutes**

None taken. **INFO**

BD3983 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 1. Unregistered interests declared for the business of this meeting**
 - 1.1 There was discussion on the involvement of Board members in the electoral process. It was observed that the majority could be standing for election, or be related to someone who was, so that would leave no quorum for the decisions to be taken. However, as the elections were to be managed by an independent organisation, without any direct involvement from the Board or Office, it was agreed it was unnecessary for any present to stand aside from the decisions on the arrangements to be made.
 - 1.2 HD & SD declared they were Ragdoll BAC officers at the time (BD3989)
 - 1.3 The Chairman wished to record an objection that those connected with "Kopikatts" had not declared an interest in a request for reimbursement from a club for show expenses as they had received money for show services. It was pointed out that the payment had already been made by the club, rather than it being an outstanding amount, for the documentation presented, and that the business interest had been declared at the beginning of the year, so was not 'unregistered'.
 - 1.4 It was observed by a Board member that the Chairman was Chair of a Siamese Club mentioned on the dispensation list, which was included as meeting paperwork, and that if there was any vote to be taken on this he could have a casting vote, so there could be an interest. There was a need to be consistent.
 - 1.5 The Vice-Chair took a vote to move forward after this information was given, stating that the declarations, objections, and discussion were now on record. This was agreed with two abstentions (ER, LR). **INFO**

BD3984 FINANCE

(MCB joined the meeting by invitation)

- 1. GCCF limited - company account for 2019**
 - 1.1 The questions to Monahans from the last meeting, and additional queries on the information sent, had all been answered with the assistance of the bookkeeper, Leanne Penwell (LP).
 - 1.2 A corrected version of the Supreme accounts had been supplied that accorded with figures given in the main accounts.
 - 1.3 It was agreed that the accounts should be signed off by the Board and that they were ready to be circulated to delegates. This would be done electronically, with the exception of the the small number of delegates without an email address.

1.4 A vote of thanks, proposed by RF was recorded for LP who had been very helpful in supplying information to answer Board queries as soon as they were raised. It was felt that with this support it would be possible to answer any delegate questions once the accounts were published.

Action: the accounts to be sent to delegates with any other pre-electoral information to be circulated OM

2. Management p&l accounts to 30 June 2020

2.1 The profit and loss accounts to the end of June had been provided by the bookkeeper and circulated to all in advance of the meeting, together with a summary sheet for May, June and the ytd in 2019 & 2020, to enable quick reference like to like comparisons.

2.2 It was noted that the gross profit for the year when compared with 2019 was showing a considerable increase, £65,597.91 instead of £8,036.50. Income was now substantially up on the previous year and expenditure remained well below the usual rate.

2.3 The OM commented that it had been a good month because there had been a sharp rise in registrations, giving additional income, plus the continued reduction in expenditure. The computer programmer was still being paid in the previous year, but not in 2020, and there was a monthly benefit from the reduced bank charges.

2.4 A few questions had been asked prior to the meeting and LP had responded.

2.5 PC raised a concern on the rise in registration numbers as he thought that could be indicating an increase in new breeders who were intending to register and breed purely for profit without concern for welfare (kitten farming). One BSH club had received forty applications for membership, from people previously unknown who did not give positive answers when asked about why they wanted to own/breed.

2.6 It was agreed that this was a valid concern, but actions to be taken needed to be decided after a much more in depth discussion. People had never been excluded from the registration services when far more kittens were registered, and being new and/or not having English as a first language were not necessarily indicative of poor welfare outcomes for kittens bred.

Action: check to be made on what monitoring was possible for new breeders

OM

3. Volume figures (core business)

3.1 It was noticeable that registrations (prefix and non-prefix) were substantially increased over the first six months of 2020 when making a comparison with the previous three years.

3.2 The OM reported she had checked the July registration figures and it looked as if this increase had slowed.

3.3 She observed that applications for new prefixes were showing the same upward trend.

3.4 Transfers had improved on the previous year, but were still slightly lower than when the transfer incentive was in operation.

3.5 Imports figures were not quite as high as in 2019, but had shown a recent increase. It was thought that those who were bringing cats in from Europe would want to do this before the PETS passport was discontinued at the end of the year, so there could be further growth.

INFO

4. Statement of accounts balances

4.1 Aldermore	£76,159.22, with a fixed interest of 1.49% until March 2021.
Cambridge & Counties	£75,533.83, 95 day notice account with 1.49% interest
Redwood	£70,063.73, 95 day notice account with 1.54% interest
Lloyds (current)	£197,140.49
Lloyds (Supreme)	£1046.50
Lloyds (Euro)	€10,415.27

4.2 RF reported that she had received notice from Cambridge & Counties that the current rate of interest would not continue. It would fall to 1.25% on 8 September and 1.0% on 20 October. There was also a possibility that the existing account would be closed to new funds.

4.3 It was proposed by MCB that the existing deposit accounts should be topped up from the Lloyds current account to their maximum level, leaving some room for interest so that the maximum of £85,000 would not be exceeded. The Vice-Chair noted that it was important to reduce the amount in the current account significantly as there was the risk of a loss of £112,000.

Action: The bookkeeper to be informed

RF/OM

5. New account proposed

5.1 RF had circulated the information that the Shawbrook Bank and Monmouth Building Society were both offering easy access accounts yielding a 0.5% interest. Neither were linked to any of the existing banks used so up to £85,000 on deposit would be protected.

5.2 An alternative current account to be linked to the new deposit account was discussed, but neither new banks offered business current accounts and it was known that it was difficult to open new accounts. It was also thought that the risk of Lloyds failing was very small.

5.3 It was agreed that a new deposit account with the Monmouth BS should be opened.

Action: arrangements to open a new account

RF

6. Request from the Kernow CC for reimbursement of expenses following a cancelled show.

6.1 SH had circulated what was confirmed as the Kernow CC's show account. The club had been due to hold a show at the end of March which had been cancelled due to Covid-19.

6.2 The opening balance as at 1 January 2020 was given as £2439.44, and the closing after payments and refunds had been made was £2609.64. Given that the club had an additional £253.66 to spend on the next show held, thanks to some very generous donations (entry fees not reclaimed), plus a stock of show stationery, the Board agreed there was no loss to reimburse.

6.3 A vote was taken that the club would be informed of this conclusion. This was agreed by a majority, LR abstained.

Action: letter to the Kernow CC to explain they were not disadvantaged

OM

(MCB left the meeting, 12.10pm approx)

1. **Agria news**
 - 1.1 The Chair had nothing new to report. The next video conference meeting was planned for 22.7.20
 - 1.2 SC reported a telephone conversation with Sarah White of Agria. She had wanted suggestions for keeping in touch with breeders during the period when there could be no shows. They had discussed some ideas which SW would be referring to Agria's marketing department. INFO

2. **IT report**
 - 2.1 SC reported that Ian Macro (IM) had finished the work on reprogramming the interface between Infusionsoft and Phoenix and had tested it with satisfactory results. It would be released when the next updates to the system were made.
 - 2.2 It was queried whether it would then be possible to personalise emails that were sent to club officials so that the names of the clubs could be inserted. It had been noted from the circulation of the resolutions information that this was particularly important when someone represented more than one club.
 - 2.3 It was thought additional mail merge software could be needed and/or the staff could need further IS training. It would be discussed at the next meeting with IM on 21.7.20.

Action: to refer the need for a mail merge program to IM SC

 - 2.4 It was noted that the draft manual for STAR had been recirculated as had been directed the previous month. To date there had been one additional comment from a show manager.

Action: to keep pushing for responses SC

3. **Inclusion of GCCF Council/Club/BAC relevant business updates in profile options**
 - 3.1 PC commented that those who took official positions for clubs and other committees should not be able to opt out of receiving GCCF information that was relevant to those groups. He suggested that reference to this sort of information should be included within the first line of the options given on the personal profile.
 - 3.2 It was commented that GCCF was entitled to contact those who had taken official responsibility. This was not a GDPR issue, though possibly contact could be by post if no email address was held.
 - 3.3 The OM mentioned that part of the problem was that the marketing profiles were set up after people had accounts so not all had accessed them and made choices. Also, that some people had adopted specialised club/BAC email addresses, which were ideal, but these would not sit alongside a personal email address, as at present it was one email per account.
 - 3.4 It was agreed that the issues should be put to IM so that he could suggest solutions.

Action: referral to IM to add to the first line or give alternatives that gave the same result OM

4. **Yearbook proposal**
 - 4.1 JH reported he had some prices for this based on a 94 page printed booklet (as the Supreme catalogue) 200 copies £1298.34, 300 £1800.15 and 400 £2468.20.
 - 4.2 The intention was to maintain contact with the Cat Fancy, and there could be a cover price to offset costs. It could also include advertising.
 - 4.3 SD volunteered to take responsibility for advertising as this had been her job with Our Cats. JH had thought of approaching Chris Stalker and as she and SD had worked together previously this seemed ideal.
 - 4.4 It was queried whether there would be enough content to fill the pages and JH was hopeful as various people had been approached who were willing to contribute, particularly judges and SMs. Georgina Anderson-Keeble had expressed a willingness to pull it together and edit.
 - 4.5 It was agreed there should be an announcement on FB to see what the interest was and then the page could be used to generate advertising and sales. £10 per copy was agreed as the sale price and pre-booking on adverts and sales could be taken via the Office on the condition payments were made at the time.

Action: liaison with potential contributors & helpers JH

1. **A report on the 2019 club & BAC returns**
 - 1.1 SH had circulated a report bringing the club returns situation up to date. After contact made on 26 June, only four remained that had made no contact. Two of these had delegate representation in 2019. Four others had sent nothing, but had indicated that they would be doing so within the next two months. Two had made payment and sent returns forms, but no account. They would be reminded. The OM reported that the replacements for the missing accounts of the Chocolate Point Siamese CC had just arrived
 - 1.2 Seven clubs (six with delegates) needed to send in examined copies of their accounts
 - 1.3 Ten clubs (five with delegates) had extensions, and with one exception those that had been reminded on 1 July had acknowledged that they were working towards completion
 - 1.4 There was discussion on whether missing show accounts (three clubs) should mean that a club should not have its delegate. It was clarified that as Byelaw 5 (3) stated club accounts, and although it could be argued that show accounts were part of a club's accounts they would not be considered as essential for delegate representation. However, they would be necessary for consideration of a future show licence application.
 - 1.5 This clarification was confirmed by a unanimous vote, as proposed by PC.

2. **Club with Queries**
 - 2.1 **Sphinx CA:** the bank problems remained unresolved
 - 2.2 **NWCC:** had paid for a delegate, but not named one, nor had they asked for dispensation to continue representation with low membership. It was agreed to wait for any further correspondence from the club.
 - 2.3 **West of Scotland & Scottish CC:** the 2018 show accounts had been signed off at the FC meeting on 25 June.

- 2.4 HM had now answered the questions and made the corrections required for the signing off of the 2019 accounts and had been given a series of actions.
- To get the accounts examined - it was agreed the previous examiner could be used
 - To send the finalised accounts to the clubs - to be that day, as corrections were now complete
 - Ensure the Treasurer of the SCC had all necessary subscription and membership detail as she had not yet received these, as the secretary either did not get them or had failed to pass them on
 - Send a further cheque for counter-signature to ensure the SCC had its share of the 2019 show profits
 - Take any show equipment owned by the WoS to Ian Thomson's home - to be done that weekend
- 2.5 It was reported that it was the intention of FC to ensure both clubs were supplied with the information they needed to complete returns by 31 August and have delegate representation if they so wished.
- 2.6 It was agreed unanimously that as the WoS had complied with the requirements set for reinstatement it should have active club status again. JH confirmed that he had received an email from Ian Thomson acknowledging receipt of the first cheques for the Scottish CC. It was therefore expected they would have been sent on, and that the 2019 show profit would be forwarded the following week.
- This action and those listed at 2.3 would complete action in respect of the two Scottish clubs.

Actions: the West of Scotland to be listed as active on Phoenix continued chasing of clubs with outstanding returns

**OM
OM/SH**

BD3987 PREPARATION FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS

1. Discussions with Civica - timelines for nomination & voting options

- 1.1 GE had contacted Civica who were happy to act for GCCF in managing the electoral process. They had previous experience of working with other animal groups. This would include:
- Setting up a website portal for the receipt of nominations
 - Checking with GCCF that the nominations were valid
 - Contacting nominees to collect their 200 word statements and a photograph (if wanted)
 - Contacting delegates with voting instructions (extra cost if letters were required)
 - Opening the vote for a two week period and sending a reminder halfway through to those who had not voted
 - Providing the result to the Board
- 1.2 For GCCF there had to be multiple votes as there were two Officer positions as well as vacancies on four committees to be filled. Civica had provided two options on how this could be carried out.
- Option 1** - a single election, using a system of transferable votes to adhere to the Byelaws. Delegates would be able to stand for as many committees as they wished, but their name would be withdrawn from lists if they gained a position which made them ineligible for other committees (as in Council). In total this process would take nine weeks
- Option 2** - consecutive votes (after the result was known for each, as in Council) over a ten week period. The total electoral process would last for seventeen weeks and each vote would count as a separate election thus increasing costs considerably.
- 1.3 The recommendation from Civica was that option one should be used and this would be £4750 + VAT if completely digital. Costs would increase by £2 for each letter sent, and significantly more if packs had to be sent. (The June and October Council meetings total costs would have been over £4000).
- 1.4 The start date was by choice, but GE suggested mid-August as the first two weeks were spent by Civica planning and constructing the website portal to operate the process.
- 1.5 Nominations would then open in September with two weeks for them to be sent in. Following closure there would be validation, and then the nomination statements from the candidates would be requested so that in weeks six and seven Civica could construct the webpages and election structure, ahead of the voting in the final two week period of the nine weeks (17 August to 19 October approximately).
- 1.6 There was discussion on how dispensation would be made for delegates whose clubs did not have the membership numbers required by the Byelaws (usually done in Council prior to the elections). It was noted that the list was scheduled to be published on 1 September in the resolutions with objections to be received by 28 September. As long as there were no objections then the delegates would take part in voting in the usual way. They could be nominated (and withdrawn if there were objections), but not make nominations as this would pre-empt their approval. Detail of these requirements would need to be given to delegates.
- 1.7 There was also a query on how much information should be sent by paper, and agreed that no delegate should be disenfranchised, but that requests for paperwork packs should be open only to those with no electronic option. It was agreed that quote should be obtained once the number were known
- 1.8 A vote was taken on which option was preferred. Option 1 was agreed unanimously.
- 1.9 GE was thanked for obtaining the information and making the presentation, and he thanked RF for setting up the contacts and providing the preparatory background.

Action: the decision to be reported to Civica and further operational discussions with them

GE

2. Pre-election paperwork - delegate information & nomination forms

- 2.1 JL had produced these without knowing what Civica would put in place. As it was now known they would be organising the nomination process they would probably have standardised nomination forms.
- 2.2 It was agreed that GE would show Civica the type of form delegates were used to (once these had been finalised) and they could use the information as they wished to fit with their procedures.
- 2.3 GE was asked to check on what the normal process was if there should be a tied vote.
- 2.4 It was thought the role could be circulated to delegates with electoral information from the Office and/or be published on the Civica website. Changes required were:
- The use of 'Chair'
 - 200 words to be requested from the Chair and Vice-Chair candidates
 - Adjustment in the role description of the Chair to ensure a clean break was made from club committees, BACs, show commitments etc.
 - Clarify that experience as Chair applied to all committees and not just to having previously chaired GCCF.
 - Pages 3 & 4 of the Board information were not required

2.5 It was agreed that JL would make the amendments and circulate to the Board for approval before GE passed the information on to Civica.

**Actions: revision of role descriptions
continued liaison with Civica**

**JL
GE**

3. **Disciplinary Committee vacancy**

3.1 the IC/DC secretary had checked with members of the Disciplinary and Appeals committees to see if they were prepared to stay in post until June 2021. One DC member wished to stand down creating a vacancy.

3.2 After discussion it was agreed that the first reserve should be promoted to the vacancy and a vacancy for a reserve should be advertised.

**Actions: the reserve to be informed
Civica to be notified of the additional election
Preparation of a timeline for the elections**

**RS
GE
GE**

4. **A request for consideration of postal voting for future elections & Council business**

4.1 The request had been sent from the Chair of the Kernow CC. He thought it would be helpful to have postal voting in future as not all clubs could afford to have a delegate travelling to London.

4.2 This was noted. It was thought better consideration could be given after the experience of this election. **INFO**

BD3988 STAFF & OFFICE

1 **Report from the Office Manager**

1.1 Denise had prepared a report for the Board on an electronic only registration service. She had particular concerns about the loss of legitimacy and validation if breeders adapted designs and used their own paperwork. She felt standardisation was especially important as concerns had been raised about the growing numbers of backyard breeders, so it was important to be able to be definite about what had been produced by the Office to ensure GCCF's credibility.

1.2. She did not think printing and posting impacted greatly on cost, especially as there had been no increase since 2011. Therefore there would be no real financial benefit to the customer, and if there was no opportunity to send out the Agria booklets it could lead to loss of income via commission.

1.3. For those reasons she recommended not changing and a vote was taken to support this. There were 2 against.

2. **Staff & Office**

2.1 Leanne would be taking Mondays off as holiday until her children returned to school and came into the Office with flexibility allowed. All other staff were now working in the Office with health guidelines, and were happy have returned. Abi had made excellent progress. Dennis was up to date with registration card processing.

2.2 Rhian had holiday booked (27-31 July). It was planned to start the two new employees a week after her return. The training could be given maintaining 2m of social distancing.

2.3 The contactless entry keypads had been installed and were working well

2.4 Every effort was being made to catch up with email enquiries, but there was still some backlog. It probably would not be possible to restart the phone lines until the new employees had been trained.

2.5 It was agreed that the Board and FC meetings scheduled to take place in the autumn of 2020 at Conway Hall and the Kennel Club should be cancelled. 2021 meetings would be considered in September.

2.6 Following a request a summary of the numbers of each breed registered would be produced monthly.

2.7 Denise and the Office staff were thanked for keeping GCCF going through the very difficult times. **INFO**

BD3989 REGISTRATION, TRANSFERS & SOP ITEMS

(GE left the meeting, 2.15 approx)

1 **Amendments to the Ragdoll Registration Policy**

1.1 As requested rationales had been sent for the amendments made. There were also registration details and statistics from Langford to support withdrawing the option of active registration with genetic register overstepping for Ragdolls who were homo/heterozygous for HCM

20-21 1.2 The statistics showed the number of cats testing positive was falling gradually. The registration data indicated that currently a very small number of those tested positive were actually registered as active. The Ragdoll breeders could be commended for their choices in this respect and it was clear that the policy changes would not impact negatively to restrict the gene pool.

1.3 There was comment in the rationale that even pet owners could distinguish between chocolate, lilac, seal and blue pointed cats. However, it was still mandatory in the registration policy for breeders to have to test cats for chocolate if they were to be registered active as chocolate or lilac. Although the Board had requested that there should be justification for this, no reply had been made on this point.

1.4 It was agreed that the BAC should be asked again to give an explanation for consideration to justify retaining this testing as it discriminated against breeders interested in breeding chocolate and lilac.

1.5 The letter was also to note that if no response was received then the Board would take it as acceptance of its recommendation for the removal this requirement from the registration policy based on the expert opinion of the judges present that it was unnecessary to have to test to identify these colours.

1.6. A vote was taken to confirm this course of action. It was agreed by a majority with 2 abstentions, SD, HD.

Action: letter to the Ragdoll BAC

JL

2. **An addition to the rule of what is not acceptable in prefixes (Section 1:11m).**

2.1 It was proposed that additional wording should be added to 11m 2.

Words bearing a close resemblance to an existing prefix (words within one letter or sounding the same are considered to bear a 'close resemblance') **and existing prefixes should not be followed by 'CAT/S' or any alternative spelling of 'CAT/S'.**

2.2 This was agreed unanimously and would be published on the GCCF website for 28 days to gain approval.

Action: website publication

JL/RF

BD3990 SHOW MATTERS

1. Future of the 20-21 show season

1.1 SH opened the discussion by suggesting that the 20-21 show season should be considered finished and there should be no GCCF licensed shows until June 2021 at the earliest. This had the advantage of making a clean break regardless of what was recommended in various parts of the UK over the coming weeks and months

1.2 It also had the advantage of allowing the 2020-21 show calendar to be carried forward to 2021-22. The only proviso that would need to be made would be a check that each club was entitled to a license having made the necessary returns, including an examined show account if a show was held in the previous season.

1.3 There was some support for this, but 1 January 2021 was proposed as an alternative given that it was known some show managers were discussing how to hold shows following social guidelines and successfully inviting judges.

1.4 However, given that there were further government announcements on venues opening and the possibility of indoor events being held in the autumn it was agreed the situation should be regularly reviewed. If shows became possible with social distancing and any other guidelines followed it was considered it had to be left to show management and club committees whether to go ahead or not.

1.5 It was agreed that there should be an announcement made to inform clubs and exhibitors.

- No shows before 31 October 2020

- Monthly reviews by the Board to consider if this date was acceptable by government information issued

- Allow shows to go ahead if allowed, taking local conditions into consideration

- Put back the date if not possible and review the following month

1.6. It was agreed that it should be stated that GCCF should not be responsible for any financial loss if arrangements were made for a show and it had to be cancelled for any reason.

1.7 GCCF could not plan the shows. This had to be done by show managers in conjunction with the venue team as each venue would have received detailed instructions for indoor events.

1.8 It was agreed each club would have to stick with its licensed show date until 31 May.

1.9 A vote was taken to confirm the contents of the announcement. A majority were in favour, one against.

Action: circulation of the announcement wording to the Board

JL

(GE returned during this discussion, 2.35 approx)

2. WCC Event

2.1 JH said he had no news of the World Cat Congress. There had been no tele/video conference meetings.

2.2 The arrangements for 2021 remained as they were early in the year. The venue and hotels were booked provisionally and some speakers had been contacted. All had then been put on hold.

INFO

3. Group to discuss guidelines for social distancing at shows

3.1 It was considered that as it was not yet definite that shows could go ahead discussions were premature. When they did liaison would have to be with the venue managements as each could have varying requirements (as 1.7) and it wasn't yet known what these would be. There would be too much reliance on guesswork.

3.2 Deferred until the next meeting.

Action: return to next agenda

JL

4. Non-recognised breeds information paper

4.1 LRT said it was not yet as she required. She would email further information.

4.2 Deferred until the next meeting.

Action: return to next agenda

JL

BD3991 HEALTH & WELFARE

1. Any further Covid-19 or general updates from the Canine & Feline Sector Group

1.1 SC reported that there had been some updated advice that had been added to the websites, but there had been no significant announcements and no meetings had taken place since the last Board meeting.

BD3992 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None taken

DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

FRIDAY, 21st August 2020 at 11 am by video-conference.

The meeting finished at 3.07 pm