

Fernaig Community Trust

Minutes of Meeting 13th September 2022, Achmore Hall

Present: Georgie Grimson, Neil MacRae, Lizzie Bird, Martin Irving and Duncan Gibson

Apologies: Colin McAndrew and Roddy MacPherson

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| <p>1. Welcome & Apologies</p> <p>Lizzie welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies noted.</p> <p>The FCT were saddened by the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. We give thanks for her lifetime of service and send our heartfelt condolences to her family.</p> | |
| <p>2. Minutes of Meeting 9th August 2022</p> <p>Proposed by Neil, seconded by Duncan and unanimously agreed.</p> | |
| <p>3. Finance</p> <p>Georgie reported on monthly finances for August</p> <p>Income - £440 – (£145 office rents, Footpath Donation Box £35 £260 Allotment rents)</p> <p>Expenditure - £89.98 (fuel)</p> <p>Balance - £8,314.44</p> <p>Georgie confirmed the last of the allotment invoices had been sent and she has completed the business profile required by our Bank.</p> | |
| <p>4. Update on Office sale</p> <p>No update – As at our last meeting it was noted that the formal offer and drafted disposition will take a few months.</p> <p>With the Trust providing ground to rent for the existing tenants Duncan reported on prices for containers. Prices on containers were quoted at £3,950 plus £300 for delivery. All agreed this is costly. Lizzie suggested looking at sheds rather than containers but again prices would determine if tenants were interested.</p> | |
| <p>5. Land issues</p> <p>Colin Parsons joined the meeting.</p> <p><i>Portchullin Sign Post.</i></p> | |

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| <p>Martin had been contacted by Dave Biss regarding the fallen sign for the Portchullin footpath. This had been highlighted at the recent CC meeting who had said it was probably the responsibility of the FCT, but it is not. Colin Parsons said it may have been originally erected by 'Paths for All' as it is a right of way. It was agreed Lizzie will contact the Footpaths Officer for the HC to investigate further.</p> <p>Hay Field lease.</p> <p>Colin Parsons had sent an email to the FCT regarding his annual grazing mowing lease on the hay field. Colin has been using organic methods which cut but do not spray the dockens between cuts. This didn't really work so he had sprayed. Colin said he now had a plan to organically treat a quarter of the field each year to control the dockens. The quarter would be taped off, sprayed with 'Dockstar' and not grazed by horses and he would not be taking hay off (although Alex Townend will in 2023). This would mean Colin could have hay from the area in four years' time which is close to organic standards. The annual quartering of the field would incidentally give some opportunity for comparison and assessment of the effectiveness of the treatment although the four quarters would not be evenly affected. Colin also was planning to request a five-year lease.</p> <p>The meeting noted that nearly every year when Colin's annual hay field lease had been renewed that he had been asked to control the spread of dockens which impact on other adjacent fields. Colin McAndrew had responded to Colin's emails, copied to the Board, saying 'it may be an elegant solution to you but would respectfully ask you to rethink and treat the whole field now. To leave areas untreated on a rota basis does not make any practical sense where an infestation of dockens is concerned.' Colin McAndrew also added that Colin would not be granted anything other than an annual lease as normal on the hay field and that the Trust would decline a request for even an annual lease so the Trust could deal with the field then take over its management.</p> <p>There then followed a discussion during which it was noted that Colin McAndrew had offered that the Trust would cover the costs of spraying the rest of the field now as it did not make sense to just deal with a part of it. There were concerns about only treating a quarter of the field each year as it would take 5 years during which docken control was not guaranteed.</p> <p>With the Trust concerns but appreciating Colin's organic requirements, it was agreed by the Board that a quarter of the field (around half an acre) be taped off but that the rest of the field be spot sprayed with 'Dockstar'. Colin agreed and said that as money was not the issue he was happy to cover the costs.</p> <p>Field care obligations.</p> <p>Martin said that with rushes etc. on Trust land that all field lease holders should be made more aware of and obliged to deal with for the benefit of all.</p> | <p>Lizzie</p> |
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| <p>6. Duncan then requested that the following be minuted.</p> <p>After a Board member had sent an email, a local resident had entered Duncan’s house in a very aggressive manner and shouting at Duncan as a Trust Director in front of Angie and Ellie May. After the resident had left Duncan made a phone call to find out what was going on, but his call was cut short.</p> <p>The Trust felt that the email had been misconstrued by the resident, but it did not excuse what was deemed to be unacceptable and harassing behaviour towards a director in his own home.</p> <p>Duncan confirmed he had received an apology from the resident, but the Board were obviously extremely concerned. We are always prepared to listen to concerns and residents can attend our meetings, but it was also noted that other residents have been approached and given incomplete or misconstrued information on various issues recently.</p> | |
| <p>7. Footpaths</p> <p>The kissing gate has been delivered to the Fank and is awaiting installation.</p> <p>It was noted that there has been excessive dog excrement has been left on the path, some even in the dog bags and not put in the bin supplied by the Trust and emptied by HC.</p> | |
| <p>8. Allotments</p> <p><i>Improving entrance to allotments</i></p> <p>Duncan has sourced material at £11.80 per ton x 18 which will be required. Delivery is £70. All agreed to cost and Duncan will order and confirm when he can carry out the work.</p> <p><i>Water supply to allotments</i></p> <p>Duncan still investigating best methods.</p> | <p><i>Duncan</i></p> <p><i>Duncan</i></p> |
| <p>9. Any other business</p> <p>We had received an invitation to the Lochalsh Community Action Plan launch to be held on 24th September in Dornie Hall. It was felt that it quite short notice (email was dated yesterday 12th September) but left to anyone who wants to attend going.</p> | |

Date of next meeting:

11th October 7.30pm, Achmore Hall