

‘Fernaig Community Trust
Draft Minutes AGM, 13th December 2022
Achmore Hall, 7.30pm

Colin McAndrew welcomed all

Present : Colin McAndrew, Georgie Grimson, Lizzie Bird, Martin Irving, Duncan Gibson, Neil MacRae, Roddy MacPherson, Colin Parsons, Jackie Parsons, Jim Coomber, Annie Comber, Kate Bulloch, Callum Bulloch, Martin Fraser and Connor Fraser

1. **Apologies** Mary MacBeth, Phil Game and Jack Bird
2. **Adoption of minutes of AGM December 2021 & Directors’ Report & Financial Statement 2021**

Proposed by Martin Irving, seconded by Duncan Gibson and unanimously approved.

3. **Chair's report 2022**

The year began with a fresh round of national COVID restrictions which again curtailed face-to-face meetings but were designed to ensure the ongoing impact of the virus was as limited as possible. With COVID still a problem in the community, we took the decision early to again postpone the annual BBQ and open day. We very much hope to put that back on the calendar for 2023. Those of us who keep poultry had also to contend with keeping birds housed under cover, a government health requirement designed to limit the spread of avian flu. We now watch again carefully for signs of this year’s more serious outbreak though so far Scotland has not imposed a free-range ban.

I would like to pay tribute to the members of the Board for their commitment, diligence and integrity in all the Trust’s work, sometimes under challenging circumstances. The work of running the Trust goes on largely unseen, and grateful thanks to this group of dedicated volunteers for continuing to give their time and energy to make that happen.

For several months we debated and consulted on the offer by Forestry and Land Scotland to buy (back) the Old Forestry Office, having received a formal offer. This would never be an easy decision but was agreed to unanimously by the Board. We regret the disruption caused to a few having to vacate the building, but we sincerely believe that disposal is the right decision, and it will place the Trust in a secure financial position in future years. We plan to draw up a 3 year to 5 year plan for projects and improvements and will invite suggestions for inclusion in that plan. We understood the sale was likely to take some months to conclude, and this is proving to be the case. We also plan to retain a portion of the monies in a restricted account as a fund which can be applied for and

accessed by community members, especially young people, to support and promote their educational or training aspirations. We have instructed our solicitors to act for us and they have recently received a 'draft order' from FLS (the first stage of paperwork) for their consideration. When we next have more definite news that will be made known, though we still expect a conclusion to take several months more.

We also met with FLS and made clear our appreciation of their efforts with regard to issues with motorhomes, signage, litter etc and ongoing work in the Strome Woods. We agreed to revisit and update the Concordat agreement with the Trust.

We were approached by the Communities Housing Trust who are assessing future local housing needs. We informed them that we would be happy to support any developments that they, or others, might propose. While we would not wish to take on a financial commitment, we would always be approachable if a need for land was identified for housing.

This has been a busy year on the land with new tenants successfully applying for two advertised holdings which became vacant in the spring. Both have undertaken a great deal of restoration work and we wish them all success with their future plans and efforts. An open spring helped with lambing and although the summer weather was mixed, hay crops were won and overall the land is in good heart. There is always more to be done.

The Directors carried out a 'walkabout' of all the fields in June and this has given us a very good picture of repairs needed and possible improvements to make. All this information will feed into the proposed plan.

We uplifted the annual rents for the allotments, which had not been done for many years, and they still represent very good value for money at pence rather than pounds a week. There has been an increase in activity on the allotments with a further plot taken on. That means 5 more plots are being worked than a couple of years ago. The Board has agreed to improve the (muddy) access area and to provide a simple water supply, work to be carried out in the spring. The Board always welcomes any suggestions in respect of the allotments which have still to realise their full potential. It was a pretty good growing season, with fruit in particular producing abundant crops.

The footpaths remain a well-used community asset and popular for many all the year round. The footpath by the river was described as 'delightful' in a recent article on walking in the local 'Echo' magazine. It will be 5 years this spring since its completion, and on-going maintenance is routinely required. Many thanks to those who have given time for grass cutting and to the volunteers who contributed to a very successful work party in July cutting back vegetation – especially the fast-growing self-seeded alders which were becoming a problem on the top section. We have acquired the makings of a kissing gate to provide

stock-proof pedestrian access to the riverbank near the water gate and this will be installed for the spring.

So, all in all its been a busy and productive year for the Trust and I would just like to repeat my thanks to the Directors, and especially to our Treasurer, Georgie, for the demanding task of keeping finances in order, and to Lizzie for her careful duties as Company Secretary ensuring we comply with all regulatory requirements.

Colin McAndrew
13/12/2022

Proposed by Roddy MacPherson, seconded by Neil MacRae and unanimously approved.

4. Company Secretary's Report

I have fulfilled Co. Sec requirements and confirm we have fulfilled our legal and statutory obligations

Colin's report has covered our activities this year and it was good to get back to face to face meetings once again. I am sure you will realise that although a small Trust there is always a lot of work but we all appreciate the extra support we get when we ask, such as maintaining the footpath.

I would like to thank all my fellow Board Members for their work and fantastic support over the past year. In particular, and I think I speak for all the Board, we would really like to thank Colin for his chairing of the Board and, with hospital treatment and missing a couple of meetings, his advice and input during that time - we are really glad to see him back.

Lizzie Bird
13/12/2022

Proposed by Martin Irving, seconded by Duncan Gibson and unanimously approved.

5. Treasurer's Report

Georgie Grimson presented the draft income and expenditure accounts

Fernaig Community Trust Accounts			
1st September 2021 – 31st August 2022			
Bank Statements	OUT	IN	
96		100.00	
97	0.00	95.00	
98	98.70	100.00	
99	0.00	215.00	
100	0.00	635.08	
101	450.10	45.00	
102	30.00	245.00	<u>Balance B/F from 31 August 2021</u>
103	0.00	145.00	
104	490.54	561.69	Current Account 6062.58
105	159.42	285.00	
106	0.00	556.20	
107	357.00	145.00	
108	157.37	617.00	
109 + 110	89.98	340.00	
			<u>Balance at 31 August 2022</u>
			Current Account 8314.44
	1,833.11	4,084.97	
Closing Balance	1,833.11	4,084.97	
Annual Income/Expenditure Balance		2,251.86	
Expenditure		1,833.11	
Income		4,084.97	
diff income/exp & statement	0.00	0.00	
Balance		0.00	
Cleared cheques			
Uncleared cheques			
Balance		0.00	

Proposed by Neil MacRae, seconded by Duncan Gibson, unanimously approved subject to audit.

6. Appointment of Auditor

It was agreed to retain the services of Nevis Accountancy Services Ltd.

Proposed by Colin McAndrew, seconded by Georgie Grimson and unanimously approved,

7. Any Motions to be proposed

The Secretary reported that two motions had been proposed by the Board in relation to (a) virtual meetings and voting and (b) Trust membership. Colin Parsons had also proposed a motion to change the membership subscription to zero. This had been proposed at a Trust meeting 10th May 2022 for discussion at the AGM and was agreed.

Colin McAndrew then informed the meeting that Board's motions were withdrawn from the AGM as, after examination, it was felt that the Trust's Memorandum and Articles, written in 1998, need to be reviewed as quite a few clauses are now out of date. There have also been two Company Acts passed since they were written as well as changes in Charity regulations. The Board will consider and call an EGM in the future to put forward the changes which then have to be submitted to Company's House and the Charities Commission.

8. Elections of Directors

With no AGM held in 2021 the directors who were due to stand down had agreed to carry over their duties until this year's AGM when they would stand down. but were happy to stand again for re-election. The remaining directors have stood down but are also happy to stand again for re-election. Colin Parsons wished it to be noted that he was not happy with the procedure.

Nominations for Directors of the FCT were received by the Secretary as follows:

***Colin McAndrew** – Nominated by Roddy MacPherson, seconded by Lizzie Bird and agreed.*

***Lizzie Bird** – Nominated by Roddy MacPherson, seconded by Colin McAndrew and agreed*

***Roddy MacPherson** – Nominated by Lizzie Bird, seconded by Colin McAndrew and agreed.*

***Duncan Gibson** – Nominated by Roddy MacPherson, seconded by Jack Bird and agreed.*

***Martin Irving** – Nominated by Lizzie Bird, seconded by Irene Gibson and agreed.*

***Georgina Grimson** – Nominated by Kate Bulloch, seconded by Callum Bulloch and agreed.*

***Neil MacRae** – Nominated by Martin Irving, seconded by Colin McAndrew and agreed.*

***Colin Parsons** – Nominated by Kate Bulloch, seconded by Jim Coomber and agreed.*

Officer roles will be agreed at the Trust's Board meeting following the AGM tonight.

With no other business, Colin McAndrew thanked all those present for attending the AGM and the meeting closed at 20.15.