

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE
THORNTREE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
HELD ON TUESDAY 17th JANUARY 2023
AT THE OFFICES OF TOWNEND CLEGG & CO, 4 BELGRAVIA, GOOLE
COMMENCING AT 09:00am

PRESENT

D. N. Hinchliffe – Chairman
R Hinchliffe
S Longthorp
D Backhouse
K Fillingham
M J Townend - Clerk

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies have been received from Mr S Hall.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING HELD ON 29th NOVEMBER 2022

The minutes of the Board Meeting held on the 29th November 2022 having been previously circulated to all Board Members, it was proposed Mr R Hinchliffe, and seconded Mr D Backhouse that these were a true record of the meeting. This was carried and the minutes were signed by the Chairman, Mr D N Hinchliffe.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. RELEVANT CORRESPONDANCES

There was no relevant correspondences to be brought to the Board Meeting.

5. TO APPROVE INVOICES PAID FOR PERIOD 1ST NOVEMBER TO 31ST DECEMBER 2022

The Clerk presented a schedule of payments for approval, consisting of direct debit payments, for electricity and bank charges as well as Clerk's expenses, and it was proposed Mr D Backhouse, seconded Mr K Fillingham that the accounts be approved and this was carried by the meeting.

6. FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Clerk reported that the various balances as at the date of the meeting being as follows:

Current Account: £27,191.47

Deposit Account: £15,332.85

Total: **£42,524.32**

The Clerk still awaited the invoice from Mr Colwill with regards to the 2022 bucket works to the Board's drains.

The Clerk advised that the December electricity bill was £1,516.00, and that the likely January bill based on current pumping hours was likely to be around £2,000.00.

7. MAINTENANCE MATTERS

The Chairman confirmed that he would chase Mr Colwill with regards to his invoice.

As estimate was still awaited for the sludging of the Board's Reservoir.

The Chairman reported that the outfall flap into the river had been checked, and there was a slight ingress of water back into the pump sump, and this would be attended to.

8. TO AGREE THE PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2024

The Clerk provided a copy of estimated costs for the current year, and the proposed budget for the year 2023/2024. The accepted budget for 2023 had been £18,200.00, with an estimated actual cost likely to be in the region of £19,175.00.

The draft proposed budget for 2023/2024 was presented, and the Clerk raised the question that as a result of the steep increase in electricity costs, and the end of the fixed price contract with Eon in July 2022, when electricity increased from 13.8 to 43 pence per unit, this would likely increase the cost of electricity to the Board to a figure around about £15,000 for the year based on average year's pumping.

However in view of the uncertainty and the fact that electricity costs may drop within the budget period, the Clerk had recommended a budget figure of £10,000 for the forthcoming year, making an overall budget of £22,300.00.

It was agreed that the pump reserve account should remain at an annual payment of £1,000 to build up funds for as and when the pump needed further refurbishment in the future.

It was proposed Mr K Fillingham, seconded Mr R Hinchliffe that the proposed budget for 2023/2024 be the sum of £22,300.00, and this was approved by the Board.

9. TO FIX THE DRAINAGE RATE AND SPECIAL LEVY FOR 2023/2024

The Clerk reported that in view of the proposed budget for 2023/2024 having increased by £4,100.00 from the previous year's budget that it would necessitate an increase in drainage rates from the current level of 13.5p in the £, to 16.5p in the £, it was proposed Mr R Hinchliffe, seconded Mr K Fillingham that the drainage rate in the £ for the Board for the year ending 31st March 2021, should be 16.5p, and this was approved by the Board.

Taking into account the Special Levy rateable value, which stood at a rateable value of £17,952.00, and based on a rate of 16.5p in the £, this would give an amount for Special Levy of £2,962.08. It was proposed Mr S Longthorp, seconded Mr R Hinchliffe that the Special Levy for the year ending 31st March 2024 should be fixed at £2,962.08, and this was approved by the Board.

10. HEALTH AND SAFETY MATTERS

The Clerk said that there was nothing to report to the meeting however, it would be necessary to review and update the health and safety policy during the current year, and it was agreed that this should be placed in the November 2023 Agenda.

11. THORNE MOORS WATER LEVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

The Hydrology report commissioned by Natural England to ascertain the impact of the rewetting of Thorne Moors had been circulated to board members since the last meeting. Members noted it was a comprehensive report and only part of it was relevant to the Thorntree IDB area.

A discussion took place around the report's findings, that an increased level of water was entering the IDB watercourses, effectively supporting the boards position.

All board members agreed this was a situation that Natural England has to acknowledge and address. Given the very large increase in electricity costs this is now an unacceptable burden on the ratepayers.

Board members were in agreement that there should be an ongoing financial commitment from Natural England to mitigate the extra burden being placed on the IDB's finances.

The clerk agreed to write to Natural England's land agent and senior reserve manager to arrange a meeting to discuss a way forward.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Board Meetings for the current year were fixed as to:

Tuesday 20th June 2023 @ 8:30am at the offices of Townend Clegg & Co, 4 Belgravia, Goole

Tuesday 7th November 2023 @ 9am at the same venue

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9:40am.