

Federation of Commoners and Moorland Graziers.

Minutes of Committee Meeting, Thursday Sept. 22nd 2011, 7.00pm at The Old Black Swan, 5 Market Place, Bedale, DL8 1ED

Present: S. Ridley (Chair), Kenneth Hird (KH), Tom Metcalfe (TM), Clive Welford), Robert Ventress (RV), David Hodgson (DH) Richard Spensley (RS), Jonathan Murray (JM), Jim Bailey (JB), Jeff Pickles (JP).

1. The Chair introduced Miss Geraldine Williams.
2. Chris Windle reported back on the 1st meeting re SPS consultation/payment/common land. A resume of the meeting was circulated. Discussion took place around various points and problems. The Chair asked Chris Windle if he was able to continue to represent the Fed, he said he was. JB wished it to be recorded that the committee is delighted. Chris Windle left the meeting. CW asked the Chair to e-mail our appreciation also. JB enquired about payment, Chair said Chris Windle was happy with no fee at present though he would be offered expenses.
3. Apologies were received from Jeffrey Sutcliffe and Raymond Calvert.
4. The Minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record.
5. Notes from the previous meeting following AGM – given the width of the County, it is preferable to work on-line where possible. Angela Lynas has given an offer of help. Mary Gibson has been given the pictures we discussed. She did not wish to come to any further events/meetings. Carl Walters/Viv Lewis is trying to set up the English Federation, have asked for input for their web-site. Chair has been travelling to develop the infrastructure of the Federation and to meet members. The data base, although in it's early stages is proving useful. Judith Dawson has enquired about the possibility of a meeting local to them, looking at Clapham, to meet those West of Hawes. Chris Windle has indicated he would be willing to do a meeting. A reminder that asking Anne McIntosh was discussed earlier. Plan to engage the Black Face Sheep Society.

Money matters – many people are not members, JB felt £15 well worth the benefit of membership, RS complimented Chair and suggested back-up. Chair felt any new Chair in the future would need to be a figure-head and improve visibility by doing the meetings. Also needs to be on-line. Trying to set things up so it is a more attractive job for some-one to take on. Needs to be pro-active and enthusiastic.

6. Correspondence –

- i. letter from Judith Dawson, Sec. Ingleborough Commoners' Association enclosing £100 as possible affiliation fee. JB felt admin. would be easier with use of associated commons membership, CW felt neighbours paying individually could be unhappy- to be discussed at AGM. Anne Cowgill

sent an e-mail of support for the Commons Act and would attend a meeting held near/at Clapham. JP indicated Ingleborough divided. Chair suggested Chris Windle would be an asset as he would be at the meeting.

- ii. membership issues – many people get free information one way or another. Chair suggested subs. could be paid annually, from Jan. 1st, 2013 and by direct debit. CW pointed there would be 6 months to account for. Chair said it wasn't possible to know yet how many associations there were. JP suggested Defra would know. Chair felt they would not release the information. JB stated no advantage in trying to persuade people to join who would not fit in. Better to be smaller and united. Outcome – to try to arrange future meeting at Clapham in Nov. JP to help invite surrounding associations
- iii. paying full subs? JM – better not to have to chase small amounts, especially in the summer, better to run Jan. to Jan. Chair raised problem of setting fee for different sized commons, e.g. Ingleborough C.A £100 represents only 6/7 members, we are £150 out of pocket. JP suggested they would have to declare no. of active graziers.
- iv. Letter from David Smith in 2009, retiring and proposing Martin Muir, Comondale, chairman of Blackface Sheep Society, he was turned down as he was not a member. Chair will meet him in Nov. at the AGM of Blackface Sheep Society. CW was not sure if he would wish to be involved. RS suggested we should also connect with Swaledale Sheep Breeders' Society as most of those members will graze commons/moors and stand to benefit by our representation.
- v. Letter from John Whitley, of Darnholm Grange, Goathland, concerned some feared joining the Federation for fear of alienating N.E. Chair has replied explaining the origins and connections of the Fed. to N.E.

7 Treasurer's comments JM stated we had received the £4,000 from the previous account . JB asked if there was a list of members/outstanding subs. JM suggested a list of paid up members in next newsletter. CW supported a list of payers, not non payers.

8 Press items- none.

9 Pilot Scheme – email from Grant Mc Phee explaining the implementation of Part 1 of the Commons Act will run from Oct 2012 to March 2016 in 9 new authorities and the Minister will be writing to NYCC for them to be included. The registers will be open to the public for amendment from April 2013 onwards. JB was against this. The committee felt at the moment it may not be appropriate to support the idea that NYCC implements the Act. The de-registration of wrongly registered land would begin in April/Oct. 2013. In the previous pilot scheme, 7 authorities had taken part. Uptake was slow, but improved as people realised the registers were open. Chair reminded the committee, Hugh Craddock had been to Hawes to explain the Act and played down what would be possible

to amend. CW remembered he had said it would not be possible to register rights that were not originally registered. CW said more information was required. Chair would send it.

- 10 Venue/timing of future meetings. Chair explained there are usually two committee meetings and one AGM. Decision, committee meetings, Feb. and Sept., AGM first week in June. Venue for committee meetings at Bedale, members were happy. AGM venue not discussed.
- 11 Federation set up costs, £20k from Defra, all spent. Chair has file of related spreadsheets available to committee. Reassured CW, no money would need to be paid back to Defra.
- 12 AOB RS has difficulties with ESA going into UELS, coming out on RPA computer as double funding. Expecting others to be affected.
- 13 Date of next meeting – Thursday, Feb 16th, 2012.