

## **Minutes for Maryculter Woodland Trust for Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2018-09-08**

**Members Present** Ed Thorogood, Nigel Astell, Inga Milne, David Brainwood and Susan Astell.

**Apologies** Alice McAra and Bill Caffyn.

**Minutes** The previous minutes were accepted

**Finance** The current bank balance is £15,505

The following payments were made:

1. £5,944 to Rob Robertson for mulching (incl 990 VAT)
2. £156 to Inga for expenses
3. £494 to HMRC VAT payment
4. £142 to Ed for expenses (2 hammers, 4 spades and 500 ties)

The following payments were received:

1. £8,126 wood sales
2. £1,000 donation from Balmoral Group
3. £13 from Amazon Smile

Known Liabilities:

1. Orchard/tree nursery £4,050 for construction + £1,080 for plants + £4,200 for expansion
2. £7,000 committed to roads
3. Signs £130. Action: Nigel to present invoice
4. Chap Quarries. Delivery of 'dirty' sand. Hopefully a charitable donation

Known Income:

1. Vat reclaim
2. Gift aid still to be claimed

The accounting year ends on 31<sup>st</sup> August so it is important that we are invoiced for all work done this accounting year before end Aug. Invoices dated in August but only received in Sept are also acceptable. Action: Nigel to chase Alan & also invoice us for the orchard.

### **Projects**

**Roads** There is £7,000 committed to roads. The Board has previously kept an additional contingency of £2,000 for the roads but this was all used up on additional mulching (see mulching project). Various scenarios were discussed to create a prioritized list for Alan Whiteford to see what could be achieved with a fixed budget of £7,000.

Nigel has bought a digger and so further work can be done by buying in hardcore, spreading it with the help of work parties, and hiring in a roller from Allan Whiteford to compact. This might save

some costs for future road maintenance/refurbishment. Action: Nigel to contact Hugh Craigie of Chap Construction to ascertain what price can be arranged.

**Mulching** Rob has done a fantastic job but it was more expensive than expected. The extra mulching costs were mostly due to additional scope and Rob using more time with the expensive mulcher. The Board had realised that £4,000 - £5,000 was a more realistic budget for 7 days of mulching but we still overran relative to this figure. It appeared that Rob was running underbudget due to his greater use of the cheaper machines. On this basis an extra day of mulching was agreed but it turned out that some timewriting had got left off Rob's estimate – hence the extra day exceeded the budget. The Board agreed to pay the invoice in full (it is still a good price for all the work done) but we need to improve the way that we manage scope changes.

**Orchard** The orchard/nursery is ready for planting. David will order some bare-rooted trees. Full details still to be discussed, with reference to Austin's generous donation. Ed will send out a reminder of the tree budget included in previous correspondence. It is vital that the trees are ordered asap to meet the terms of the wind farm grant.

**Nest boxes. Nothing to report**

**Recycled Deer fencing.** The fence remains rolled up near the veteran scots pines in the SW corner of the wood. The Board agreed to find a place to install the fence, as cheaply as possible, somewhere in the SW corner and possibly as a pilot to a more significant project to restore Caledonian pinewood to the area. **Action:** Ed, Nigel & Bill to agree a location.

**Pond** An application will be made to the Wind Farm to fund the pond liner - approx 15m by 5m – and this should be applied for before the end of September. **Action:** Ed will co-ordinate the application. Nigel to check with Wm Donald to cost for a liner for the new pond near Ian's garden.

**Burnside entrance.** Still waiting for the forest road to be blinded. Gate & noticeboard to be reinstated.

**Insect hotel.** Work is progressing well. Stan has spoken to several local schools to make them aware of the insect hotel. School parties could potentially fill in some of the holes for insects. Time capsules may also be installed within the structure.

## **Events**

**September Work Party** Suggested activities include completing the painting of the container and look at possible cladding. Cutting further paths through the trees. Clearing more gorse off the heather moor. Looking at the second bridge requirements. Putting up the signs. Bill's fence and regeneration project

**AGM** The AGM is due and four weeks notice is required. The 7<sup>th</sup> November was suggested with either the scout hut or Church as the location. Alice and Bill have completed their 3 year term so will need to seek re-election if they are willing to continue. Action: Inga to book venue, ideally the church.

**Beer Fest** The board agreed to hold another Beer Fest in October, date to be confirmed. Ed kindly offered the use of his garage. Action: Ed to find some dates.

**Winter Wonderland** This will be held in December.

**AOB**

**Nexen** Volunteers from Nexen Petroleum UK worked in the wood on 21<sup>st</sup> August, under Ed's supervision. They did a great job removing gorse, spruce and birch from the heather moor. Ed sent thanks to Laura Gardiner & a photo was posted on our facebook site.

**Letter** A letter of thanks was sent to J Milne of the Balmoral Group to thank him for the generous donation.

**Church of Scotland** Lawyers acting for the Church are in discussion to see if access can be granted to the area of land behind Ann Massie's house. The board felt that this was a matter to be discussed with the Membership, and will be deferred until the AGM.

**Next Meeting** This will be held at Eastland at 8pm on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September. TBC.