



2012 Annual General Meeting of the BHPA

Minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 3rd March at the Nottingham Belfry Hotel, commencing at 11.00am

These minutes are not to be taken as a true record without referring to the minutes of the Executive Council meeting at which they were approved.

Present:

Marc Asquith
Bill Bell
Jennie Burdett
Paul Dancey
Martin Heywood
Brett Janaway
Angus Langford
John Nash
Joe Schofield
Dave Thompson

In attendance:

4 Voting members of
the Association

Apologies:

Angus Pinkerton

ITEM 1: CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that apart from members of the Exec, a candidate for Exec and staff, there were only three voting members present.

ITEM 2: RESOLUTIONS

2.1 That the Accounts and Report of the Executive Council for the year ended 31 March 2011 be approved.

The resolution to approve the accounts was passed.

2.2 That the following members be elected to the Executive Council: E. Cunliffe, B. Janaway, A. Pinkerton, S. Walsh.

The resolution was approved and the four members elected.

2.3 That Clear & Lane be re-appointed as auditors and the Executive Council be authorised to fix their remuneration.

The resolution was approved and this concluded the formal business of BHPA Limited.

ITEM 3: OFFICERS' REPORTS

3.1 Treasurer

Angus Langford said that although the aim has been to break even, over the years fluctuations have meant that for the last few years we have made losses. In order to preserve a healthy level of reserves we need to aim to make a small profit. The reserves are there to provide a cushion for difficult times and for site purchase. Our operating costs are going up but we still need to build our reserves so it is a fine balance as to where we pitch our membership fees.

Last year we turned from a 20k loss to a 40k profit due to the reduction in insurance costs when we changed insurers. This year we will probably just break even.

There were some questions on the accounts and in particular Bill Morris noted that the accounts being discussed were from 23 months ago. He wondered whether we could have the AGM closer to the end of the financial year.

Marc Asquith replied that we were in the hands of the BGA regarding the date and we had hoped that by joining in with the BGA it would encourage more of our members and traders to attend. Unfortunately this means that fee increases could not be discussed at the AGM because they had to be planned before the AGM. Martin Heywood said that we could always have a referendum but added that the fee increases were announced in November and no howls of protest had been heard.

Martin Cowley pointed out that as a proportion of costs in the sport, the membership fee had actually gone down and the cost of equipment etc. had all increased.

4.2 Insurance

Martin Heywood reported that things are going very well with the insurance. This is our third year with Hiscox and nothing has come in yet so they are very happy.

The insurance cap has been raised from 25k to 50k for the instructional element and we also hope to take on and provide cover for other disciplines such as SSDRs.

Also, our ex-pat non-UK residents who do not have cover with their BHPA membership, now get cover for 365 days per year with their FAI licence (excluding USA and Canada).

Our previous insurers have had a couple of claims come in which could have an impact; it is too early to say how this will go but defence costs will go on to the schedule anyway so Hiscox may look at this.

Ed mentioned that Joint Aviation have had their underwriter pull out so there are problems with people due to renew. This could result in us getting some more members.

Martin referred to an email he had received from Tom Hardie. It seems that the CAA are becoming more interested in rogue paramotorists and if they come down heavily on these pilots we are not going to discourage them.

Bill Morris said that Tom Hardie had been looking after aviation legislation for us for years and is a real unsung hero who deserves our gratitude. All agreed that Tom should have a vote of thanks for all the work that he does.

Martin then explained that we have changed our insurance brokers as the person who was dealing with our account has moved brokers and we have moved our account with him. This will make no difference to our insurance.

3.3 Admin

Marc Asquith expressed his thanks to Jennie and the staff at the BHPA office. There were no questions on his written report.

3.4 FSC

Unfortunately Angus Pinkerton was unable to be at the meeting but his written report was available.

Bill Morris said that speed gliding has been the biggest revolution in years and although Mark Dale and Dave Thompson have done some very good work on this there is still a good way to go. The majority of speed wings are flown by people who are not in the system that has been set up. He then went on to explain that many pilots who fly uncertified wings are registering as Development Pilots but not bothering to register their wings as they often have two or three and tend to change them very quickly.

Bill requested that the requirement to register all speed wings that do not have EN9262 should be looked at again. This requirement adds an extra layer of bureaucracy that puts people off. It would be easier if the manufacturers would just get the wings certified but they are not going to do that. Calvo added that FFVL are also looking at this as speed gliding is very big in France.

Bill asked for the whole situation with non-certified, non-registered speed wings to be looked at. They should either be made EN9261 or there should be another system.

3.5 Skywings

Paul Dancey reported on Skywings and said there are encouraging signs. We have suffered badly in the last few years with advertising but hopefully the decline has bottomed out and the trend is on the up. Paul said thanks were due to Joe Schofield and all the people who contribute to the magazine.

Martin Cowley added that Skywings is an excellent magazine and better than any other for our sport.

3.6 Website

Paul reported that the website had been something of a nightmare over the last 12 months due to a server upgrade which meant that much of it had had to be rewritten. This work had caused a delay with the online Incident Report form but this is on track to be completed this year and the form should be simpler. It should be up and running for the start of the season.

Marc asked how much the website costs us. Paul replied that it costs hours and hours of his time but in financial terms only £300 for hosting it.

3.7 Competitions

Calvo reported that British pilots are figuring more and more and we have a very strong team at the moment. We now have more pilots in the top 100 rankings than in the last ten years.

Bill added that we punch well above our weight and have made real progress in regard to safety issues in the last year. All the top competitions are now using systems developed in British competitions and this should make a big difference in terms of safety. UK competitions were the leaders in this and now the rest of the world are following suit.

There followed some discussion on the size of reserves and Bill Morris said that for the last 10 years they have been saying at the Big Fat Repack that reserves are too small but people still turn up with them. He said that hang glider pilots turn up at the BFR with tiny little parachutes. Calvo then mentioned ambidextrous deployment of reserves which CIVL have been discussing.

Bill Bell said that getting hang glider pilots to change is a matter of education. Some have had their parachute for 30 years without thinking about it and some are frightened of repacking their parachute.

There are normally presentations of awards at the AGM but Martin said that as none of the recipients were present there was no point.

In closing the meeting, Martin informed members that at the Exec Meeting following the AGM there would be a reshuffle, he would be taking a break from the post of Chairman and Marc Asquith would take over. Martin would remain as Vice Chairman and Insurance Officer.

Martin then thanked the members who had attended.