**Minutes of the meeting of the National Committee of the National Pigeon Association held on Sunday 11th June 2017 at The Old Telephone Exchange, 32-42 Albert Street, Rugby.**

Meeting commenced 12:30

Present:

Graham Bates (GRB); Richard Henderson (RH); Paul Littlewood (PL); Jim Mullan (JM); Colin Ronald (CR), Mark Rudd (MR); and Helen Seed (HS).

John S Harrison, Secretary was in attendance.

The meeting was preceded by the interview at 10:30 for Ring Secretary, following the withdrawal of one applicant there was only one candidate, Jim Mullan. The interview panel consisted of PL, CR & HS. Observer MR, the Secretary was in attendance. JM presented the panel with a portfolio relating to his working life in Sales & Marketing. Previously agreed questions were asked by the panel on how JM would deal with various scenarios to which JM responded. When the panel had asked all the questions they wished to ask JM left the interview and the reminder of the National Committee returned. PL proposed JM be offered the role, this was seconded by HS – carried. Terms & Conditions were drawn up & agreed by all present, the T&Cs were recorded by CR. JM was asked back into the meeting. CR read out the T&C’s on behalf of the Committee, JM accepted these. MR stated that the same T&C’s would have offered to any offer candidate being successful in interviewing for the role, and advised that the T&C’s to be forwarded to JM after the meeting.

1. Chairman’s Welcome:

In the absence of the Chairman Mark Rudd, NPA President, opened the meeting by saying he hoped the meeting would be productive. He reminded those present that the meeting should be for the benefit of all Fanciers and that the NPA’s greatest asset its members and to carry out the democratic will of the members. MR also reminded those present about the contents of a recent email from the chair relating to conduct.

2. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from Evan Murray, John Surridge, Graham Giddings, and Gary Eaton. MR, on behalf of the Committee congratulated GG on his forthcoming marriage.

3. Minutes of meeting held 23rd April 2017:

GRB proposed that the minutes be accepted, seconded by JM, and agreed.

4. Matters arising:

RH asked whether the affiliation fee had been received from the Swallow, Saxon & Thuringer Colour Pigeon Club, the Secretary said that it had not been received.There was discussion on the incorrect information which had been given to the Southern Counties Show Racer & Flying Breeds Club regarding Best in Show awards and the Show Rules. PL offered to draft a letter to the Club and circulate to the committee for comment and approval.

HS asked that it be recorded in the minutes that she had given the Secretary payments for Breeders Cards and show advert which she had received from Mr & Mrs M Auger, A. McLaren, and C. Muir.

5. Committee decisions made between meetings:

The Secretary advised that the change of meeting venue, and the cancellation of the interview for the new Ring Secretary only such decision had been regarding. The Secretary confirmed that he had re-instated the section of the Rules which had been omitted from the copy previously submitted to the Committee.

6. Secretary/Treasurer’s Report:

The Secretary/Treasurer had provided sheets detailing the Membership Summary, Ring Sales, and Income & Expenditure. Membership for 2016/17 currently stands at 495, 11 less than at this point in 2016; he advised that at this stage in the year he would not expect the membership to increase by more than 4 or 5. He noted that 28 members had re-joined after an absence of several years.

Ring sales for the year stood at 22,400 which was slightly less than at this time last year. The Secretary/Treasurer advised on the number of remaining rings and it was agreed that the number of rings ordered for 2018 be reduced to A - 4500, B - 8,000, C – 4,500, D – 3,500, E – 3,500, F – 1000. JM asked if there was a cut-off date for the sale of rings, GRB said that it had previously been agreed that current year rings could be sold all year provided they were available. The Secretary advised that in 2016 the cut-off date for the purchase of rings from the supplier had been June 30th. It was agreed that a notice be placed on the website and Facebook advising members that the stock of rings in some sizes was relatively low and orders for additional rings should be sent in quickly.

The Secretary/Treasurer presented the monthly Income & Expenditure summary which indicated that the total income to date was in excess of £24,000 and the expenditure almost £20,000 with £35,000 in the Bank and PayPal account. He suggested that there would be very little additional income to year-end, but that there would be an estimated £3,000 expenditure. There was full discussion. GRB asked questioned the costs relating to the franking machine costs. HS to send on other costings relating to this for comparison.

The Secretary provided information relating to over-due payments for FPW advertising, indicating that £125 was outstanding for show adverts and Breeders Cards, and £30 outstanding which had been given to a Committee Member. He reported that there were 4 adverts in the June 2017 issue which had not been received.

7. NPA Management:

7a. Ring Secretary:

The Secretary/Treasurer advised that he would obtain a SIM card/phone, PO Box Number and all relevant stationery to ensure that JM as the Ring Secretary could be ‘up and running’ by the beginning of July and would arrange to meet JM to hand over all relevant files and effects. HS agreed to set up an email for the Ring Secretary. The Secretary advised that until he received confirmation of the phone number and PO Box it was not possible to get new membership and transfer forms printed to go out with the June issue of FPW, subject to this there may be a slight delay in sending out the magazine. MR said that with the appointment of a Ring Secretary the wording in the C&R’s would need reviewing, adding that ‘Secretary’, needed to be amended to ‘Secretaries’.

7b. Fancy Pigeon World:

GRB advised that the June issue had been printed and was ready to go to members whenever the Secretary had the documentation to go out with it.

HS said that she had received a letter from Neil Newman, Secretary of SUFEX requesting that the SUFEX show advert be included in the September issue of FPW, but that it had already been included in the June issue. The Secretary said that Neil Newman had spoken to him and said that he had said in previous years that he did not want the advert in the June issue as it was far too early for the show and accordingly wanted it to appear in the September issue not the June issue. There was discussion on the subject.

7c. EE and Breed Standards:

Graham Giddings had provided a report on the recent EE meeting held in Hungary, he noted that the Pigeon Section meeting was attended by 43 people from 21 countries. GG said he would circulate the minutes of the meeting as soon as he received them, however some key points were that the ring size for Kings would remain at 10mm; rings for 2018 would be of an improved quality; standards were discussed and in conversation with GG, Jean Louis Frindell (JLF) had said that discussion on UK breeds was progressing; Avian Flu in 2016/17 had brought caused disruption of poultry & pigeon shows across much of Europe; and finally the EE show would be held at Herning in Denmark on 9 – 11 November 2018.

MR said that he had a good working relationship with Jean Louis Frindell and was in regular email contact. He said that in April JLF had apologised for the delay in providing new drawings for some UK standards and that there was no problem with the standards. MR said that he was awaiting the new drawings.

7d. Review of NPA prices and costs:

There was a full and lengthy discussion on this matter and various ideas were discussed. The consensus was that the Committee needed to be mindful of possible increases in costs which could result in a need to revise NPA fees and prices. The Committee were agreed that there was no need to increase any fees or prices at the present time, but the membership be made aware that increases may become necessary in future years. PL offered to write an article for FPW appraising members of the situation, this was to be sent to the Committee for approval.

8. Shows.

8a. Stafford Spring Bird Show:

The show will provide a table free of charge for associations to advertise their hobby, and the cost for a table for bird sales was in the region of £15. It was agreed that the NPA should have a presence at the show. JM said that he had display boards which may be suitable and he would bring them to the September meeting. It was agreed that the Committee would discuss further the content of display boards and a possible rota for manning the table at the next meeting.

8B. General Shows:

**NPA Special** - HS proposed that the NPA should offer a £50 Special for members winning Best Young Bird at two championship shows. The committee agreed and by the “drawing of papers” the two shows were London & Essex and the BPSS. The £50 special was restricted to NPA members and would be paid out when membership had been confirmed. The Secretary to provide rosettes which would be handed out to the winner on the day and were not limited to NPA Members. The Secretary to advise the shows.

9. Correspondence:

**BHW Stud Book** -The Secretary had received a letter from BHW with notification of prices for advertising in the BHW Stud Book. It was agreed that the NPA would advertise as in 2016. HS agreed to provide copy.

**“The Racing Pigeon”** - The Secretary said he had received communication from “The Racing Pigeon” regarding advertising. PL said that this was small and did not have the circulation of BHW. It was agreed that the NPA would continue to advertise in BHW. JM suggested that the Committee consider advertising in “Cage & Aviary Birds”.

**Southern Counties Show Racer & Flying Breeds Club** – this was discussed under Matters Arising.

**London & Essex** – the show had advised, following notification that Colin Ronald was not eligible to judge Chinese Owls, that the Chinese Owl Club would put forward CR as a judge. In view of the discussion at the April meeting the Secretary sought confirmation/clarification that the Judges Register would only be updated after the April meeting and questioned whether judges put forward by breed clubs could be added at any time during the year? PL said that it should be the responsibility of the Breed Clubs to send in all judge amendments on the Club Returns Form after the club has held the AGM. CR agreed with this. PL said that if names of judges had not been sent to the Secretary for the April meeting there would be no other additions during the year and late nominations would be added to the Register the following year. CR suggested that Breed Clubs be made aware that nominations must be submitted by March 31st. MR said that there were shows in some geographic areas where there was no one in the area to judge the breed, citing Scotland where there were no Modena judges, but there were breeders and exhibitors. He said this matter needed addressing. MR said that Breed Clubs must be advised when they submit the Club Returns that the NPA Committee will add judges to the list where there is a shortage of judges in an area, and also that any deletions will be reviewed by the committee. The Secretary to advise London & Essex that CR was not eligible, even though he was on the Emergency List, and it was necessary to schedule another judge; and that this would apply to all shows.

10. Meeting dates and venues:

The Secretary confirmed that he had booked the Premier Inn, Rugby for the 17th September committee meeting, and would book the Holiday Inn Rugby at Crick as was used 2 years ago.

11. Any Other Business:

PL asked whether the NPA should be involved with the repatriation of un-ringed birds? He said that in his view the NPA had no rights or jurisdiction over un-ringed birds. He said that birds with rings could be traced, but those with no ID were untraceable and were not the responsibility of the NPA and suggested that members of the public should be advised to contact the RSPCA in these circumstances. The Secretary said that he was currently advising callers that the NPA could not help with un-ringed birds; adding that in the majority of instances the general public considered any pigeon which is not a blue bar or blue chequer to be a fancy pigeon! MR said that NPA Members must arrange collection of any birds that are found.

HS suggested that the website should have a page with information on looking after lost pigeons for a short period? CR agreed that this would be a good idea. MR offered to write information on the care of lost birds.

HS asked whether the website should contain information/guidance on the vaccination of pigeons? There was consensus of opinion that the NPA was not qualified to do this, and RH suggested that links to relevant websites giving this information would be very useful.

HS provided copies of a draft Welcome Pack for new members for discussion at the next committee meeting. The Secretary was asked to send copies to those members not present at the meeting. The Secretary suggested that it was essential to have the C+R printed and supplied to all members as well as new members, he would provide a price for the next meeting.

The Secretary said that he was receiving an increasing number of phone calls and messages relating to “pet pigeons” and suggested that the NPA should provide basic information on the care of such birds.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 15:45.