

Minutes of CFU Open Meeting held on 5th May 2004 at the Golden Hind, Cambridge

Present : Heather Wilkanowski(Chair)
Barry Eley
Ben Yelton
Andrew Lang
Justyn Medd
Brian Attmore
Dave Matthews-Jones
Martin Jordan
Lionel Webb (Secretary)
Mark Saywell
Carol Looker

Guests : Richard Smith (part-time)
Holly Worland
Bruce Agar-Strath
Noam
Malcolm Bailey

This was an open meeting, to which members had been invited through the newsletter, programme, radio and CEN. Heather welcomed the guest members and explained that Richard Smith would join us during the meeting to talk about the NRE redevelopment.

1 Apologies for Absence

Received from Jamie, Derek, Lorna and Terry.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (7th April 2004)

Accepted as an accurate record.

3. Finances

Derek had, as always, circulated the financials to the committee. In his absence, the report was taken as read.

Highlights were read out to the meeting, £1060 of membership income, plus £350 grant from CCC towards costs of the Youth Tournament, nearly £1500 income from the Tom Findlay gig, well done to Ben. From this, donations have been made, £300 to the local 29th Scouts group and £75 to Cancer Research. Expenses were quite high due to costs of producing and mailing the newsletter. We are finding out which members can accept email versions.

After expenses, we now have £7,000 in the bank and we are worth £160,685.

4. Membership

Mark reported that membership currently stands at 468, so 32 members have dropped out this year. Only two of these were on Direct Debit. It is clear that there are huge benefits in getting members onto DD and we must all, when signing up new people, produce the DD form and do all possible to get it completed. It is easier to accept a cash payment but people do not always remember to renew and have to be chased. With DD, they have to do something to cancel it and there is a much better chance of keeping them

ACTION: All to encourage members onto DD terms.

Martin suggested that attempts should be made to introduce a Family Membership scheme. It might not be easy, but if it can be done, it would appeal to a lot of people.

Mark was congratulated for all his hard work on taking over the Membership Secretary role, getting the database set up to suit, and for preparing the mailing of the newsletter to all members.

Also, at the meeting, Mark presented Lionel with 140 envelopes containing letters to lapsed members + newsletters. These were posted the following day and, will, hopefully result in a lot of renewals.

Increasing our membership is a key issue and a meeting of the group will be called, as a matter of urgency, so that different aspects can be ascribed to individuals to progress. Heather is keen to attend this meeting.

ACTION: Mark to arrange a Membership group meeting.

Mark has been very busy with the newsletter/lapsed member mailing and, not surprisingly, has had little chance to progress the new brochure. The general feeling was that the newsletter should do most of the communicating and we should have a condensed brochure, reduced in size and content, maybe A4 folded to A5, including the application form. We could possibly get Will Jeans to assist with artwork.

ACTION: Mark to call a meeting of the brochure group to progress.

5. Special Item – NRE Redevelopment

Brian Attmore introduced this item, which had been raised as a result of discussions at the last CUFC board meeting, on Good Friday. The planning application for redevelopment of NRE was now at the third or fourth stage. The club had changed the original plan, largely for cost reasons but the planners had requested changes to make the scheme more acceptable aesthetically. The plan is now ready to go forward to the Planning Committee. It had been suggested that, with local elections coming up, CFU might like field a local candidate.

Richard Smith introduced himself as a local councillor, for Abbey ward. He had been a full director of CUFC in the early 1980s but in recent years, he has

been an associate director. Mr Smith is a member of the Planning Committee but will not take part in the vote, which will be on Wednesday 2nd June. Mr Smith explained that the original plan was approved but had been changed, on cost grounds, by the club's directors. He stressed that the planners cannot, and will not, take financial considerations into account.

How could CFU help the process? Mr Smith did not recommend fielding a candidate for Abbey ward. He is very pro-CUFC and his fellow councillors, Caroline Ward and John Durrant, are too. He felt we should lobby the 10 members of the Planning Committee. Mr Smith feels that the planning officers appear satisfied with the changes that have been made to the plan and that there should be no need to mount an aggressive campaign but we should go to the meeting on 2nd June and make our case. The rules have changed now and we would be allowed to speak for 3 minutes. The papers for the meeting go out 8-10 days beforehand.

ACTION: Mr Smith will keep us informed, will provide contact details for the Planning Committee members and will give us a list of points he feels we should cover in our presentation.

At our meeting, it was agreed that Lionel will attend the Planning Committee meeting on 2nd June and will speak on behalf of CFU. Other CFU committee members will attend if commitments permit.

Mr Smith was thanked for all his help and left us to attend his fifth meeting of the day!

6. Special Item – Share Availability

Brian reported from the last board meeting that shares had been increased from 2 million to 3.2 million. Two directors had increased their holdings, 64,000 had gone to Paul Barry (19.5%) and 125,00 to Johnny Hon (17.5%).

There are currently 860,000 shares left. Edward Friedman has offered to take 400,000 shares and this will be discussed in a forthcoming interview. Grovefield have an option on 20% = 400,000.

The residue of shares are available to CFU, at 50p each, estimated at £19,000 worth. After some discussion, it was agreed that CFU should offer to take £5,000 worth, provided that CUFC reserve the remainder for us to purchase in the future, out of our income. This was voted on, with unanimous agreement.

ACTION: Heather to progress, after talking to Derek.

7. Communications

- We now have a very good relationship with the local media. The difference now is that the local press and radio are coming to us. We did a lot towards the organisation of Moment of the Season and Clubman of the Year awards.

A leaflet has been produced and given out at the Scunthorpe game, with Brian's contact details, also info on the fixture list posters.

- Ben has got the CEN and free newspapers columns on CUFC sorted out.

- There are no formal Communications Group meetings with the club since Peter Salvage's departure and Heather has expressed concerns to Gary Harwood, who wants to resuscitate it, just have to keep trying.

- The CFU survey is being progressed by Ben and will be publicised through the newsletters, Ben is taking note of the help offered by respondents. He has about 60 responses and will report to the committee at the June meeting.

ACTION: Ben to report survey findings at June meeting.

- TTCA is going well with more and more poster sites being established, we have a really good base now, from which to develop next season. FIC are involved now, which will be a big help. Dave reported that Gordon Theobald will get them ready before next season, for the whole season. He will also produce some of his own, in B&W.

- Heather is working on promotion of season-tickets for youngsters. The earlybird promotion rate for children under 10 yo is only £25 and we must get this message out to schools and to parents.

- The new newsletter has already been mentioned but this will obviously become our main channel of communication with members and so is very important to our activities.

7. Events

- Ben was congratulated for all his hard work on the Tom Findlay gig, which was a great success.

- Heather reported that she had recently spoken to Eleanor, who is happy to organise the Golf Day once again, when her exams are over.

- Fixture list posters will be done again by Dave. Mark offered to help with St Neots and Huntingdon.

- Youth/Adults Tournaments, from the discussions so far, will need to be held on separate weekends. The late August bank-holiday will be the Youth Tournament, the weekend before the Adults Match.

ACTION: Heather to speak to Karen about running the database and to Terry about running the YT, in place of Barry.

ACTION: Ben to book pitches for both events.

8. Other Business

- We know that Johnny Hon was impressed by the Bridge the Gap campaign and its success was alleged to be largely responsible for him investing in the club. However, this member of the board is hardly known to us and it was felt that it would be a good thing for Heather and one or two CFU committee members to meet with Dr Hon to discuss matters of mutual interest.

ACTION: Brian to arrange.

- Ben reported that John Keane continues to work on developing the website and needs feedback from committee members, via Ben. The plan is to have it operational by the time players are back for training in July. Discussions will be held with Peter Stearn regarding links to the HelpCFU website.

ACTION: All to give website feedback to Ben.

- Ben has spoken to a contact at Doncaster, who makes DVDs which sell in the club shop for about £11 and cost very little to make. A highlights disk sold 300 copies. Ben's idea is to film the games, there should be no copyright problems, do some interviews, and compile a highlights film at the end of the season. He is happy to progress it, this was agreed and will be cleared with the club.

ACTION: Heather to discuss with Gary Harwood.

10. Next Meetings

- Wed 2nd June (after the CCC Planning Committee meeting)
- Wed 7th July
- Wed 4th August (designated as an Open Meeting)
- Wed 1st September
- Wed 13th October
- Wed 3rd November
- Wed 1st December

The Open Meetings will be held at the Golden Hind as usual but will be open to members to join us.

ACTION: Dave to publicise

It may be that the November meeting will be open but we will not announce it until nearer the time – we are aiming to hold our AGM earlier than the usual late February date so that we can complete ours before the club hold their AGM late in January. It may be that we'll have ours in December.

