

Tuesday, 7 January 2014

Present: David Blair, Steve Williamson, Andrew Graham-Weall, Willie McAllan, Jamie Chaplin-Brice, Fiona Hamilton, Fraser Brown.

Apologies: Nikki Woolf,

David welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2014, predicted to be a great year for KCFC.

Minutes of previous meeting proposed by Steve, seconded by Willie.

Rob was in a good mood.

Operation Managers Report

- Shed. Jamie thanked everyone who turned out to lay the shed floor on Sat 21st. It now needs clad on three sides from our own larch, then sort the roof. The issue of remuneration has been raised with Robinsons, payment will not be made until this is resolved.
- Sawmill will arrive on Thursday with training happening on Friday. Anyone interested in training is welcome to come along around 9 am.
- Electrics. Rob now has the 3 phase wired in, with meter. The mill shed is to have electricity in time for Thursday/Friday. Ross Petro will fell final tree liable to blow onto – to be encouraged sooner rather than later.
- Road – Colin has raked and will need to rake a little more. 40 wagons expected out by Friday. Some money has come in from Egger. We expect to receive around £70k in total.
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- Long Term Forest Plan. Has now been looked at by Tom, but the PDA hasn't been mentioned enough so this will be added to. Then it will go out for another 28 day consultation and then signed off.
- Further felling. Egger are still very interested, Andy will visit with Wilsons from Troon on Wednesday of next week, looking to start felling in March if at all possible., subject to LTFP being approved. They expect to offer a better deal and give money up front to help with road repairs. Road issues will be discussed on Wednesday to ensure it is handled better. SDRP may be a source of funding if leisure use is included. Felling would tie in well for the road clearance to get to the hydro site.
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- Colin is doing a spraying course next week, organised by Steve.
- Keys – shed keys have been found. Need to organise a better system to ensure keys are put back in the correct place – or perhaps combination lock. Spare keys are being cut.
- Health & Safety. The company erecting the shed had an interesting approach to H&S. The netting contractors hadn't arrived in time before roof was being built. Raised an interesting issue that we are still liable if an accident had occurred. Fraser and Jamie will review procedures.

- Ladders are being collected by Steve, which will make the job of cladding, etc., easier.
- Rhododendron management. Jamie will get Colin organised to take on more of the management. It will probably take about a day a week of his time. The maps have been updated. Second phase still needs finished, right down to the road. First claim for payment is still being processed, second claim should be due end Jan/Feb.
- Wood fuel. No dry logs available. Will have to sell them wet at a discount to people who can store & dry them. £35 per cube was suggested. Shouldn't be a problem in future now there is a large shed available.
- Hauling timber from road to mill – McKerral will be asked to do 25 tonnes for £100, while they're on site anyway. The telehandler could do the job but much slower. This expenditure was challenged in view of our financial position. It was decided to go ahead as there is an immediate market for the product.
- Machinery. Jamie is looking for a planer thicknesser. Budget has all been spent on the road. David offered the use of his.
- Community training opportunity at Colglen Development Trust on path building.
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Rob's report

- Electricity. We have three-phase power. David thanked Rob for 'keeping the lights on!'
- Rob shared a financial plan showing approximate costs to get four houses built this year. Two self-build plots to be sold and two KCFC built houses. It is hoped to have planning permission by April, allowing money to be borrowed. £15k will be needed to get planning permission and building warrants for 6 plots – can be cut down by seeking permission for fewer. Costs include de-stumping and roads. Building warrants could be postponed if a Letter of Comfort is sought instead. Building process isn't envisaged to be too long to get weather-tight. Decision needs to be made at which point KCFC built house is released for – weather-tight or fully complete. These houses will be built on spec. Willie will investigate possibility of funding from some source. Value of plots is indeterminate at the moment, so formal valuation will be needed once permission is granted. De-stumping work will start 27th January. Criteria need to be set up so applications can be assessed in the eventuality of more applicants than number of plots. Rob will prioritise on finalising the master plan identifying costs and revenue. The new office and hydro will also be built this year.

Treasurer's report

- Willie will speak to Ailsa & Nikki about whether we need to register for VAT as we are now approaching the threshold. Business plan shows that we are consistently over the threshold. Discussion with HMRC required as they are not keen on charities registering.

AOCB

- It was clarified that all insurance is up to date.
- Fraser agreed to let Jamie have a spare pin for the tractor, as the lack of one is holding up operations.
- Wall planner requested for significant periods when staff and directors are away.
- Archaeology. No more progress to report. Willie's proposal to spend massive amount of money be spent to freeze curling pond. The board considered briefly before guffawing loudly. Willie squared his lip
- Hydro. Co-hydro team are coming to have a second look. Highland Eco Design have expressed an interest in re-quoting. Once we've found a team to build it, funding needs to be found. Mull & Iona raised money through crowd-funding. Money comes in, if target isn't reached people are refunded, no return is given until income is generated. It might also be a way of buying the next parcel of forest. Other options are a share scheme or borrowing money. Important for directors to consider their liability if it fails when making the decision. Cost benefit analysis needs to be done to see which option allows us to keep most income for benefit for local community. Willie will undertake this. Costs and revenue are not certain – feasibility study estimates will be used. Social Investment Scotland keen to do a PR project with us and would maybe lend the money.
- Nordic Walking Instructor training may be available. Craig will be approached to coordinate and Steve expressed an interest. In return volunteers would be asked to commit to assisting with some after school Nordic Walking club sessions for the wider community.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, 5th February, 2014