

South Chiltern Beekeepers' Association Committee Meeting
Wednesday, 10th June 2015, 7.30pm
Rising Sun, Witheridge Hill
MINUTES

Present: Caroline Bushell, Linda Clark, Reg Hook, Margaret Moore, Sue Remenyi, Tim Selwyn, Max Stone, Meryl Toomey, John White.

1. **Apologies:** Max Vine

2. **Minutes** of 1st April 2015 committee meeting approved with the following amendments:

*Minute 10) paragraph 4: ...Filipe was proposed as **committee member, later becoming** Swarm Co-ordinator... [Post-minute note – Filipe resigned from the committee on 1st April 2015]*

*Minute 10) paragraph 7: ... (Margaret) intends to stand down as programme manager **but would like to stay on the committee.***

*Minute 18) ...~~Max V.~~ **Margaret** was concerned that it might indicate that swarms are not being adequately valued...*

Minute 19) There is no intention to fund any of the ~~other~~-BBKA exams.

3. **Matters arising:**

Minute 13) review of videotapes still in progress; as they failed to play on Sue's VCR at the first attempt, she will try a different VCR.

4. **Treasurer's report**

Deposit account: £2195.76

Current account: £4102.41 with £45 in cheques undrawn leaving balance of £4057.41

Cash: £93.75

Further income of around £150 was handed to the Treasurer at the meeting.

5. **Membership report**

Our membership currently stands at 122: 94 full; 11 partner; 3 country; 14 associate, so we have gained 3 full members, 1 partner and 1 associate. Members may join as associates at this time of year after completing the BCA course, or to be able to attend apiary meetings.

6. **Federation report**

The Federation will be represented at the Special Delegates Meeting of the BBKA at Stoneleigh on 20th June, called to seek approval for moving the Annual Delegates Meeting from January to June in order to be able to approve the proposed budget in advance, rather than in arrears as at present.

7. **Training report**

The Summer Experience has covered swarm control, artificial swarms, grafting for Queen-raising, setting up a nucleus and mini-nucs, and making frames; there was

also a swarm in the association apiary to deal with. This year's Summer Experience is more hands-on and is going well, and John commented that the reports on the forum are a good learning aid.

6 members are taking the Basic Assessment in July, and will be joined by 2 Reading members. The assessors are Lilian and John Valentine from Vale and Down BKA and it will be held at Max Vine's apiary, using his hives plus two others kindly lent by Filipe Salbany. John has organised two very helpful meetings to discuss the syllabus.

The Federation's Bee Health Day is on 4th July in Bracknell with 20 places available to each member BKA at a cost of £10 for adults and £6 for juniors. The presenting team of inspectors have put a lot of effort into creating an interesting programme and there is concern that not enough people are taking it up as yet. As it clashes with one of the Summer Experience dates, the SE team will ask participants if they would like the opportunity to go to both [*this was done by email after the committee meeting*] and will change the SE date if there is a demand.

8. **Apiary report**

The apiary is going well; Kate kindly extracted 9 supers and the Artificial Swarm hives will be coming back into production shortly.

9. **Swarm report**

As Swarm Co-ordinator, Filipe has reported 37 swarms caught, with 2 or 3 quarantine sites in use; Margaret has also caught 4, and Reg reported one or two in the bait hives. It's possible that this year's publicity engendered more swarm calls, prompting a discussion on whether a designated SCBKA swarm collector should continue to collect after his/her own requirement is satisfied. It's the Swarm Co-ordinator's responsibility to manage swarm collection, contact collectors, and find kit. We should consider our policy for what to do about swarm calls when kit runs out. In order to increase available resources, Sue suggested we could buy some extra nuc boxes; if not needed they can be added to the apiary inventory. Reg reminded us that it's good practice to unite swarms once their health and temper has been established.

Vote that policy should make it clear that nominated swarm collectors should continue to collect after their own requirements are satisfied: carried unanimously.

Vote to spend £100 on plywood national nuc boxes for swarm collectors' use: carried by majority.

Action: MS

10. **Show report**

The team on the stand at the Braziers Park festival was very busy all day and there were a large number of children interested in the observation hive. It was well organised by Caroline, and SCBKA has been asked to return next year. Donations totalled £9 and honey sales £40; one person applied for membership and another wants to join later in the year.

11. Basildon Park

Following *Round & About's* request for a follow-up article (Minute 9, 1st April 2015) Filipe had spoken to them again about the Bee-Long charity project. The article wrongly reported that £470 was donated by Waitrose to SCBKA when this money was in fact given to the Bee-Long project. It also reported that Filipe is establishing an apiary at Basildon Park; the presence of captured swarm bees there could jeopardise Bill Sievwright's native bee strain. This seemed to be the result of a misunderstanding, and Filipe and Bill are now communicating to ensure this does not happen.

The article gave the misleading impression that Bee-Long was an initiative of the SCBKA, but as we cannot accept any liability engendered by swarm capture or stings to members of the public, the association has to remain dissociated from the charitable project, so *Round & About* will be asked to print corrections.

Action: MS

Filipe will also be asked to ensure that there will be no future confusion between the activities of Bee-Long and the SCBKA.

Action: MV

Garth Matthews of Wokingham BKA informed us that he answered a swarm call for bees in the cavity wall of a house on the borders between our two associations, where Filipe also attended later and changed the tactics, interfering with Garth's response. John will inform Max Vine of the details, and ask Max to discuss it with Filipe.

Action: JW/MV

12. Bee Health Advisor training day

Co-ordinated by the Federation, this day was run by Bee Inspectors Nigel Semmence and Dan Eldridge, who discussed diseases and showed examples to Linda, John, Sue and Jemima of SCBKA (Reg was unable to attend). They received lateral flow devices for testing for EFB and AFB, and will voluntarily assist local beekeepers by acting as first point of contact for the recognition and control of disease. If foul brood is suspected, they will contact an Authorised Bee Inspector. A description of the role with the names of our Bee Health advisors will be circulated to our membership.

Action: JW/LC/SR

13. BBKA Basic Assessment

See Agendum 7.

14. Programme secretary

As Margaret is standing down, a new programme secretary is needed, and Margaret suggested that the November honey show should be done by a different person to ease the workload. Sue volunteered to run this, and a flyer will be prepared to send out to the membership seeking a new programme secretary.

Margaret reminded us that the talk following the October AGM should be from a member, to increase flexibility in view of the uncertain timings. *[Matthew Heard has since agreed to do a talk on bumble bees after the AGM]*

15. Any other business

- Max S. reported on the long battle with Lloyds Bank to correct their errors over signatories and internet access, culminating in a formal complaint. This resulted in a written apology with a compensation payment of £150 to the association, and £25 each to Max and Caroline to cover their costs. In view of this the account will stay with Lloyds for the time being. Caroline and Dave Moss are trying to create the option of online membership applications, and Max thanked them both for their perseverance with this.
- Linda presented some excellent sample honey jar labels designed by member Tom Hudson, and asked the committee to vote on their favourite from the selection. She will go back to Tom with the feedback.
- Margaret reminded us of the mechanics of providing drinks and food for the forthcoming picnic meeting, and suggested we could boost attendance next year by organising a bring-and-buy sale or an auction for bee equipment, and/or a plant sale. Meryl reported that Sue Abbott is willing to offer her apiary site in Peppard as a suitable venue for a barbecue if required.

16. Date of next meeting:

16th September 2015, Woodcote Community Centre, 7.30pm