**Minutes of Grove RFC Board meeting held 17/11/2014.**

Present: - Adrian Amies, Niki Dinsey, Martin Stalder, Paul Walsh, John Sevier.

Apologies: - Craig Burrows, Phil Connolly and Chris McCarthy

Also in attendance for part of the meeting: - Dave Parry (Membership Secretary - seniors)

1. Membership and issue of membership cards.

DP has made a good start to the task at hand with a meeting with Karen Harrington (membership secretary – minis and juniors) and PW

In order for DP to gain a clearer understanding of the membership he will be setting up a further meeting with Karen in order to gain full access to the GMS system, which is where the official membership lists are held.

At present, these lists are not as clear cut as would be expected, (new S/W system) but it is hoped that next season the bugs will be ironed out and we will have a clearer understanding of the membership.

DP will be given lists of all players each week and from the lists he will have a clearer understanding of those who have, as yet, not paid their membership with the intention of chasing those players.

It is recognised that in these challenging financial times some members may find it hard to find the cash. Pitchero is there to help with this, but, as in the past the membership secretary, with the full backing of the board, may use his discretion as to how much to charge for those who approach him with problems. Such discretionary payments should be kept confidential.

To make it easier for prospective members to pay using the direct debit system JS has changed the DD choices to £20, £30, £40 and £50.

It was decided that to produce membership card at this late date would not provide any benefits to the club or its members, therefore, handbooks will be issued to members in lieu of membership cards.

The costs of membership was also discussed and it was felt by some that by reducing the membership fee would help to encourage more members and, if we did our sums right, could also produce more funding for the club. This matter will be discussed further over the coming months and opinions gathered, as no change could be made until the next AGM

*DP left the meeting at this point.*

1. Letter from the Club President

The letter was well received by the board and wishes to thank Roger for the work he has done in recruiting Brendon White, who is an asset to the club.

With regard to the keeping of the flat when BW returns to NZ, this will have to be looked further down the line. A commitment of £10K+/year to keep the flat on would not be feasible at this time due to the financial restraints the club faces. However, it was felt that some solution may present itself later down the line.

The subject of the Rugby Development position was discussed and it was felt that this was one of the best ways to introduce new players to the game and the club.

The board can only congratulate Roger for the work he is doing in this area and support that work as is appropriate.

1. Treasurers Report.

The treasurer reported that at the current time the club has a balance of approximately £23k. However, it has outstanding bills of around £20k

This balance includes the money raised at the Fireworks evening (see below).

With this in mind all board members are reminded that we must be very careful before we commit to further spends. Without the fireworks profit the club would again be balancing on the red.

PW raised the issue of an invoice from Elmer Cotton; he has received for £680 for the purchase of 90 pairs of socks.

As no board member present knew anything about this, which in turn meant it was either an un-authorised order or was an historic order it was decided that payment would be with-held until full clarification could be obtained.

It was re-iterated that:-

**All** board members only have authority to spend/authorise amounts up to £50.

For amounts between £50 and £200 a further authorisation will be required from the Treasurer (PW).

For sums greater that £200 full approval must be sought from the board before the money can be committed.

(Refer to minutes of BM 25/06/2014 where the matter was agreed.

**Action:-** MS to contact CM (the person named on the invoice) to see if he has any knowledge of the order.

*It has come to light that Elmer Cotton , (suppliers of the socks) had been written to last year instructing them that they should not accept any orders from Grove RFC unless accompanied by signed approval from the club secretary. This clearly did not happen in this case.*

*PW has been in contact with EC, re-iterated this condition and is in discussion with them about any future orders.*

1. Clubhouse/bar area re-development.

The new flooring has now been laid and the lady’s loos stripped out ready for refurbishment.

The new projector and screen have been installed. (Great picture!, many thanks to ND).

ND to meet with Dusty Miller on 4th Dec to further discuss RFU grants.

The honours board is in need of a new surface but it is expected that this will be completed in the near future, Falcon signs will then apply all the new names and we should have the board back and ready to hang before Xmas.

The club house cleanliness was also discussed. It was pointed out that there is a cleaning charge that should be levied on all persons renting the club unless they clean up after their event. At present neither is happening.

The routine cleaning of the clubhouse is also not taking place on occasion.

PW to talk to Jimmy W. If JW cannot commit to a regular cleaning routine then outside contractors will be considered.

The question of the “intelligent Till” was also raised it was felt that ND should pursue the matter in order that we have some definite options/costs to discuss.

1. Report from the Director of Rugby.

Since the last board meeting the first team have beaten Devizes 45-14 at home and lost narrowly to Witney 15-14 and Leighton Buzzard 25-22. We currently are 1 place above the relegation zone but have no major concerns, just frustrations. We have put a full team out twice this season v Buckingham and Devizes.

We are a match for any team when we have everyone available but this seems impossible at the moment and not due to injury but unavailability’s either through holiday, work, weekends away or unwilling to travel away.

Unfortunately this will be the pattern for the rest of the season and I'm confident of another mid table position but nothing more. I know we are looking at ways to increase our playing base but unless this happens quickly we will not progress out of this league. Next season presents our best chance for promotion with 4 teams due to qualify when the restructure occurs. It's up to us as a board to decide if we want to do it and if so the best way to go about it. Rogers’s proposal is a no brainer if we are to progress without the big outlay that usually goes with promotion from this league.

There have been a few new promising players coming to the club in recent weeks but none who will commit to training on a regular basis.

This all sounds a bit negative but it depends what we want long term, we can do nothing and be a mid table side for 3/4 years or we can decide to push on.

The seconds are playing well and have recorded good wins V Maidenhead III 33-15, Chinnor IV 47-7 and a narrow loss at Bracknell. However the gulf in standard is huge and players being brought in to the first team are just out of their depth. Anyone watching at Leighton Buzzard would realise this. It's also worrying that a number of our younger players are training and looking sharp but are constantly unavailable at weekends. So we are spending time developing them but having little return.

Training numbers are ok but the surface is nearly unplayable and has no markings, this will only get worse. Tomorrow will see the last Tuesday session before we move to the gym in Abingdon for the winter. This has served us well in the past 2 years and our fitness and injury list has been very good in comparison to other teams. We would like to think we are looking after the surface as well but unless the other teams and footballers do the same it will have little impact.

1. Report on the Junior and Mini’s section.

Kit still remains an issue for the Minis and Juniors.

Storm Dinsey is currently assessing the situation and will report back when she knows exactly what is needed.

Coach’s kit is being distributed slowly as the coaches pay their membership.

U13’s have progressed to the next round of the Oxfordshire cup.

The Wasps tag festival proved to be a great success with Dale from KA’s doing a superb job in running the festival.

The Mini’s Xmas party has been set for Sunday 21st Dec.

There are 2 junior games on that day but it should not be a problem to work round them.

1. Fireworks Night.

Fireworks Night proved to be a great success with many comments received about how “great” the display was. “Probably the best display for years” was heard from many lips.

Over £12500 was taken on the night which produced a profit of around £6500. (Inclusive of bar)

The gate receipts were up 6%. ( *It is expected that this figure will be revised upwards when final accounting for the night comes in )*

The board wishes to express its thanks to all those who turned up to help on the night.

Without that help we could not have had such a successful evening.

1. Monday Youth Club.

Not action to date but it is not expected to move forward until the New Year.

1. TV Packages,

*PC has arranged a deal with Sky which can be suspended at any time. The deal also includes a new Sky box and 2 cards. Although it costs a couple of £s more each month it will save us a huge amount as we can suspend the option during the summer months*

1. Electronic Score Board.

No Progress.

**Action: -** MS. To continue with investigation and provide some concrete costs.

1. Key Register.

NO Progress

The list of actual key holders is growing but is still not a definitive list.

The board as a whole need to keep asking individuals if they have keys.

1. Christmas and New Year.

John Sevier has agreed to organise the Xmas draw.

New Year’s party – will need to confirm with PC of any arrangements already in had

JS is requesting information on any Xmas functions in order to put the info in the match programs.

1. AOB.

*The Annual Dinner Dance. - Christine Barguss, Social secretary, and Margret Connolly are again organising the end of season dinner.*

Drawing in new players. \_ the need for new players is agreed by all.

JS has drawn up some plans to attract new players and will manage the Recruitment drive.

Club Shop – The web site shop advert has not been updated for some time.

*Sarah McCarthy has been running the shop but had no access to website. JS has now sorted access for her. JS has added list of current stock including Photos of kit to the web site.SM to update advert with prices.*

Date of next Board Meeting -Monday 15th December 2014

**Time – 7.30pm** Location -Grove Rugby club

All items for the agenda to be sent to MS by Friday 12th December 2014

*All items in italics have been added after the board meeting. They are included to add clarity that was not available at the time.*