

EPSOM DIVISION SURREY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF MAIN COMMITTEE MEETING

Held at Upper Mill Apiary
Monday 20th August 2012 at 8.00pm

Present

Peter Smith (PeS)
David Jones (DJ)
Steven Secker (SS)
Andrew Knott (AK)
Marysia Owsianka (MO)
Colin Sutton (CS)
Mike Petryszyn (MP)
David Dowson (DD)
Tina Corr (TC)
Sue Brookes (SB)
Hilary Livesey (HL)
Phil Shepherd (PhS)

Apologies

Liz Knee (EK)

1. Minutes of meeting held on 21st May 2012

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed, apart from noting an error that incorrectly showed CS as being present and MP as being absent.

2. Matters arising – action points

PeS asked all committee members to give some thought to possibly subjects for Tuesday night sessions and to email EK with one idea.

It was agreed that EBKA will purchase the third Course-in-a-Case from BBKA.

PeS has investigated the possibility of EBKA developing a mentoring forum, but he reported that we are not big enough as a club to make it worthwhile. A better alternative is to encourage people to join a BBKA forum.

PeS reported that he has not found any membership software that would give EBKA what is needed without having to amend it, and he does not have enough time to do that in time for this year's renewal.

PeS has not yet written an article for the newsletter about swarm collecting and the press. There was a discussion about the difficulty of managing the volume of requests for swarm collection and the distances the collectors are asked to travel. There is a need to consider how EBKA can best handle requests next year.

DD will discuss with DJ and PhS when it will be possible for him to treat the remaining weeds without disturbing the Queen Rearing Project bees. He added that some thought

should be given for planting to extend the forage season. PeS stated that Neil Manley had some wildflower seed mix which might be available to use.

TC stated that she is not in favour of emailing members with a link to the website for the newsletter, rather than emailing the newsletter itself. She felt that this would make members less inclined to read the newsletter.

Mollie Bonard has given TC a couple of lines for the newsletter on external events, but has not yet written a report about it.

3. Reports from sub-committees and officers

Education, Training and Events Sub-Committee

PeS congratulated SS and EK on passing their PTTLS City and Guilds course. SS reported that EK is going to follow this up with a 2-year course.

PeS reported that some posters have been produced for next year's beginners' course, and we have 5 people registered on the course. There are also a couple of training days coming up on 15th and 22nd September organised by SBKA. He confirmed that over the winter, EBKA will hold talks on the first Tuesday of every month over the winter. We need another 4 subjects to fill the sessions.

A review of external events showed that EBKA made £23 profit from the event at the lavender fields. There was a discussion about whether EBKA should have a presence at some external events, with some members expressing the view that some events are not local to EBKA, and others stating that if members are enthusiastic to do external events and there is no cost to EBKA then they should be able to do them. However, if an EBKA banner is used, then there could be product liability issues.

Apiary Sub-Committee

SS informed the committee that there are 9 hives in the apiary, and all are now queen-right. Honey has been extracted and Apiguard put in the hives.

DJ reported that the QRP being in the Upper Mill apiary this year has attracted a good deal of interest. 7 nucs have been sold, 4 more have been ordered and there will be a few nucs still available after that. The initial budget has been repaid and substantial stocks of bees and equipment have been built up. PhS stated that the QRP has equipment and bees to generate 10 nucs a month and the costs will be covered by the selling price. A decision is needed on how the project should proceed. There is a desire to get experienced members involved in the project to help out. DJ suggested that the Committee may wish to review the charge of £125 per nuc, and consider the possibility of selling surplus stocks to other outlets. SS noted that the QRP will have ongoing costs, but stated that this could be included as a part of the Apiary Sub-Committee budget.

Administration Sub-Committee

SS reported that no progress has been made with the Asset Register or the EBKA Rule Book. It was agreed that the work on the Rule Book will be completed in time for the AGM.

SB stated that a decision needs to be made on the level of subscriptions for the next membership year. PeS asked the Administration Sub-Committee to make a recommendation on subscriptions to the Main Committee.

Communications and Publicity Sub-Committee

TC reported that EK is keen to get more traffic on the website, but that is difficult to achieve when the content is static. She suggested that putting on some advice to new beekeepers might encourage people to log in to the website to have a look. PeS asked members of the committee to let TC know if they know of anyone who would be willing to write the content.

Building and Grounds Sub-Committee

SS reported that it has been decided to get a company in to shampoo the carpet. He also stated that there needs to be another working party to case the windows and paint the workshop. The grounds also need tidying up around the gravel area and by the yew hedge.

Some quotes have been obtained for a commercial dishwasher. The budget was set at £500, which would enable us to get a model with a quick wash programme. The committee voted unanimously to purchase a dishwasher for £500.

Treasurer

SB reported that:

- The bank balance as at 31.7.12 was £7711.15
- The autumn BDI payment is due at the end of the month. SB thinks this will be £10. HL will check against the membership records.
- The balance of capitation due to SBKA in September is £439.00
- The insurance paperwork is all sorted out, and £861.70 has been paid to the broker.
- A payment of £978.00 is due to C Wynne Jones
- £28.10 is due to be paid at the end of the month for electricity
- Taking account of the above, the bank balance currently is £5394.35.

SS queried whether a cheque has come through recently from The Clink, who have ordered about £1000 of equipment. SB replied that she only gets statements once a month, and so this may have been paid in since the last statement.

SB confirmed that the capitation to SBKA is staying the same for the coming membership year as it was this year. DJ reported that the SBKA Treasurer had proposed increasing subscriptions by £3 to increase SBKA's reserves, but this had been opposed at the Trustees meeting. He also said that the cost of Beecraft has increased because of the increase in postage costs. There is an option for members to receive Beecraft online instead of in printed copy, which would cost £31 instead of £37. It is up to each division to decide whether to offer that to members. DJ confirmed that there is not an option to not receive Beecraft, because it is in the rules that members will receive it. SB confirmed that the BDI premiums are not increasing.

SS noted that the current £47 subscription for registered members does not enable EBKA to cover costs. SB suggested that subscriptions could be increased to £50 for a registered member, £20 for a partner member (currently £15) and £15 for a country member (currently £15). From the current subscriptions, EBKA receives £8 for a registered member, £1 for a partner member and £6 for a country member. Some committee members felt that we need to have a justification for increasing the subscription, particularly as SBKA is not putting the subs up. MP asked whether EBKA's costs are going up, and DJ replied that he has not seen any evidence of it and that it needs to be looked at properly. PeS noted that EBKA relies for a certain percentage of its funds on income from the shop, and that takings are a third down this year. SS reported that because takings are down, the shop has more stock than last year and so he will not need to buy so much next year. However, he needs to buy stock in October to get good prices, and therefore a judgment will need to be made.

It was agreed that the Administration Sub-Committee meet soon to discuss subscriptions, and make a recommendation to the Main Committee.

Trustee

DJ informed the committee that the Constitution is now in one booklet. He also noted the new class in the National Honey Show for honey produced in an association apiary.

Membership

HL passed round an amended membership renewal form. She has added a tick box at the bottom of the form for members to tick if they do not want their contact details shared with other members. This was accepted by Committee, and it was suggested that it should be clarified on the form which contact details would be shared.

4. Honey show

PeS reminded the Committee that last year's honey show had been cancelled. 22nd September has been pencilled in for a show this year. He asked the Committee for their views on whether we should hold a show this year. He queried whether anyone had been asked to be Show Secretary for this year, and it seems that no-one has. He reported that Mollie Bonard has been asked to judge this year's show. SS noted that last year, even when there had been a decent honey crop, there was still little interest in the show. He queried whether the show had been mentioned in responses to the member survey, and it was confirmed that there had been very little response on the subject.

It was suggested that instead of a honey show, EBKA could hold a honey tasting. It was also suggested that the event could include a barbeque. A vote was taken on whether to cancel the honey show this year, which was carried. It was suggested that the question of whether to hold a honey show could be put to the AGM, and that a Show Secretary could be elected at that time.

DD suggested that the 22nd September could be used to have a working party, followed by a barbeque. This was agreed. It was suggested that the honey tasting could be held on a Tuesday evening.

5. Out-apiaries

PeS reported that 4 possible sites for out-apiaries have been found:

- Hatchfurlong Nursery. This is National Trust land in Ewell. EBKA needs to obtain permission in writing from the National Trust to use the site as an apiary.
- Plough Road Allotments. The allotment site is in West Ewell. PeS has a written tenancy agreement from the Council, and written agreement to using an allotment plot to keep hives on.
- Belmont Allotments. PhS reported that this could hold 4-6 hives. He is waiting to hear from the Allotment Association, who need to approach Sutton Council to get their agreement to keep bees there.
- Highdown Prison. PhS reported that we have been told that we can keep bees there, but that we have to clear it with Alex Keedens (a Prison Officer and EBKA member) first. This would need to be done by EK liaising with Alex Keedens.

PeS informed the committee that we are losing the out-apiary site at Nescot. We may also lose Vernons, but for the time being we are still able to use this site as an out apiary.

PeS reported that EK is drafting a guidance note on out-apiaries.

6. Winter Tuesday Club Night Programme

The following suggestions were made for additional Tuesday night sessions:

- Honey tasting;
- Spring management;
- Physical demonstration of an artificial swarm;
- Swarm control more generally;
- A talk on the bee acoustics research being done at Kingston University.

7. Date and time of next meeting

EK is to email the Committee with a date for the next meeting. This will probably need to be in September, to discuss among other things the recommendation from the Administration Sub-Committee on next year's subscription rates.

8. Action list

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| All | Email EK with one idea for a subject for the Tuesday evening club nights. |
| All | Let TC know of anyone who might be willing to write some content for the website giving advice to new beekeepers. |
| EK | Purchase the third Course-in-a-Case. |
| EK | Check whether candles made with foundation is or is not a product from members' hives for liability insurance purposes. |
| EK | Email a date for the next meeting to the Committee. |
| EK | Continue to ask Mollie Bonard for a promotional article for the newsletter to inform members what is going on with external events and to try to drum up more support with helping set up and staffing the stalls. |
| PeS | Write an item for the newsletter regarding swarm collection by members and |

press coverage, and email the individual member appearing in the recent newspaper article.

- DD Talk to DJ and PhS about treating remaining weeds with weedkiller.
- SB Convene a meeting of the Administration Sub-Committee in the near future to discuss next year's subscription rates and make a recommendation to the Main Committee.
- SS/SB Review the Asset Register to ensure it is fit for purpose.
- SS/DJ Complete the revision of the Rule Book in time for the AGM.
- NM Purchase a commercial dishwasher with a quick wash programme.
- HL Check amount of BDI premium due for Autumn return.
- HL Clarify contact details on the membership renewal form.