

Minutes of Methwold Parish Council Annual Meeting held on Thursday May 12th 2011 at St. George's Hall, Methwold.

Present: Mr R Hood, Mrs B Horton, Mr C Neville, Mrs B Bluck, Mr P Ashman, Mr J Henry, Mr J Marriage, Mr D Masters, Mr C Stone, Mrs S Stones, Mrs M Truss, Mr D Wortley, Mrs M Wortley
Borough Councillor Mr M Storey
Borough Councillor Mr M Peake
13 members of the public

OPEN FORUM

- It was reported that the 40mph vehicle activated sign outside Methwold High School does not appear to be working correctly.
- It was queried why a resolution to exclude the public is made at most Parish Council meetings. A council has the discretion to exclude the public when a meeting is considering confidential or other matters prejudicial to the public interest and often tenders and contracts are discussed after such a resolution has been passed.
- Mrs Truss, editor of the Methwold Times, was asked why profiles for some candidates who stood at the recent Parish Council election had been published in the Methwold Times while others had not. Mrs Truss replied that people are not invited to provide articles for the magazine but what is submitted is published.
- It was asked what work Parkers had undertaken for the Parish Council and what the acronym CGM stands for. Parkers are electrical contractors who have worked at St. George's Hall and Country Grounds Maintenance (CGM) is the grounds maintenance contractor engaged by the Parish Council.
- It was noted the Borough Council Returning Officer should inform candidates of the results of an election.

- 1. Mr R Hood was nominated and seconded as Chairman and with no other nominations duly elected to remain as Chairman.**
- 2. Declaration of Acceptance of Office signed by the Chairman.**
- 3. Apologies for absence received from County Councillor Mr. A White.**
- 4. Declaration of Interest:**
Mr C Stone declared an interest in item 15.2.
- 5. Acceptance of Office signed by all Councillors.**
- 6. Mr C Neville was nominated and seconded as Vice-Chairman and with no other nominations duly elected as Vice-Chairman.**
- 7. Mrs B Horton was nominated and seconded and with no other nominations elected to remain as Deputy Vice-Chairman.**
- 8. Consideration was given to membership of the various Parish Council Committees. This will be an agenda item again for the June Parish Council meeting.**
Mr J Marriage presented a suggested format for future Committees and advantages and disadvantages of the system suggested was compared to the former Committee structure. Former Parish Council Committees were:

1. Planning Committee
2. St. George's Hall Committee
3. Recreation Ground Committee
4. Finance Committee
5. Footpath Committee

The Parish Council also has representation on the Batchcroft Charity.

It was agreed to hold a working party meeting prior to the June meeting of the Parish Council to discuss the structure of future Committees. A date for the meeting was set for Thursday May 26th.

The Cemetery Superintendent and Assistant Cemetery Superintendent, together with the Parish Council Clerk, manage the day to day running of the Cemetery.

9. Mr R Hood was appointed as Cemetery Superintendent with Mrs M Wortley as Assistant Cemetery Superintendent.

10. The minutes of the meeting held on 14/04/11 were confirmed as a true record with the addition of Mr M Storey to the list of those present.

11. Matters arising from the minutes

11.1 Request by Methwold Primary School to use the Recreation Ground

A letter has been received from the Supporters of Methwold Primary School requesting use of the Recreation Ground to hold a summer fete. This was agreed in principal but the Parish Council would want sight of the School's insurance policy covering the event.

11.2 A request has been received to use the football pitch on the Recreation Ground. It is hoped a local football team can be established. The team will need premises to change in and possible use of St. George's Hall will be discussed at the June Parish Council meeting. In principle the Council would be supportive of a local football team and would encourage use of the Recreation Ground.

11.3 An e-mail has been received from the Environment Agency following a request made by the Parish Council for information on the reported dead seagulls found near the Lodge Road, Oakery Landfill site. A joint investigation was conducted by the Environment Agency and a representative of the Veterinary Laboratory Agency (VLA). The landfill site fully cooperated with the investigation and was found to be operating within agreed procedures and fully compliant with their permit.

The VLA carried out approximately fifty post mortems on the gulls found. The cause of death could not be identified. The VLA officer concluded that the deaths were likely to have been caused by potentially infected material that the gulls were feeding on.

During the inspection any contamination of water was ruled out as no other birds in the area had been affected.

11.4 The Village Handyman will trim brambles from the Churchyard wall.

11.5 Mr J Marriage has purchased wood to repair the Jubilee seats, starting with the seat along Main Road, Brookville.

11.6 There has been no response from Royal Mail regarding possible re-siting of the post box in Crown Street.

11.7 Mr. Ashman has contacted the Highway Department and Councillor Tony White regarding concerns with Whiteplot Road, Methwold Hythe. A report from highways will be requested for the June Parish Council meeting.

11.8 The telephone box in Methwold Hythe has been repaired but not cleaned.

11.9 It was queried whether Norfolk County Council Rights of Way Officer David Mills will be available to attend a Parish Council meeting.

11.10A request has been submitted to Highways for two dog waste bins to be sited in Methwold Hythe.

11.11 Councillors were presented with a guidance note relating to electricity substations and further research is being undertaken regarding the wayleave agreement for the village sub-station and what might be a realistic rent for the site. It was agreed to proceed with possible engagement of a land agent to secure an appropriate rent. Norfolk Association of Local Councils has also been approached regarding legal advice on this matter.

12. Accounts for April were presented and approved for payment in accordance with the budget.

Expenditure

Payee	Net	VAT	Gross
Staff			752.79
BT	172.15		172.15
Lighting maintenance	100.24	20.05	120.29
CGM (March/April)	239.46	47.90	287.36
E.on - street lighting electric	71.98	3.60	75.58
Viking	44.96	8.97	53.93
J Marriage			60.00

Income

Doctors £60.00
PO £51.00

12.1 Copies of the accounts for the year ending March 31st 2010 were presented to Councillors. The accounts will need to be agreed at the June Parish Council meeting and the Annual Return Form must be completed. Councillors were also given a copy of the Annual Return form.

12.2 It was agreed to proceed with the installation of a replacement water heater in the Doctors room at St. George's Hall as discussed at the April Parish Council meeting but at an additional cost so hopefully providing a more reliable heater than could be purchased at the original price set.

12.3 The provision of water at the cemetery to be discussed after a resolution to exclude the public at the end of the meeting has been agreed.

12.4 Cemetery Fees

The Chairman has researched Cemetery Fees in neighbouring parishes and his recommended revised fees were considered. The following fees were agreed to come into immediate effect:

Burial in Cemetery

Child – stillborn /up to one year	No charge
Child - one year to twelve years	£36.00
All others	£75.00

Burial of cremated remains	£70.00
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Fees to be doubled if burial is for person not residing in the parish. (This can be waived at the discretion of the Council.)

Fees for headstones/monuments	
Headstones max. size 762mm x 610mm x 76mm	£40.00
Small headstone for the Garden of Rest max. size 457mm x 381mm x 51mm	£35.00
Flat tablet in Garden of Rest	£30.00
Added inscription to any memorial	£17.50

Fees will be reviewed on an annual basis at each May meeting of the Parish Council.

13. Reports

13.1 Chairman's Report

- The Chairman has contacted Waste Recycling Ltd (WREN) regarding the possibility of obtaining a grant to assist with refurbishment of St. George's Hall. An application form will need to be completed and submitted by May 15th and it was agreed the Chairman should proceed with this.
- Following receipt of a further letter from Mr. Depledge, it was agreed the Chairman and Mrs Wortley will meet Mr M Depledge at the cemetery to look at the placement of the memorial to Mr Depledge's parents which the Parish Council has requested should be resited. The Headstone has been placed in the walkway between graves and thus constitutes a hazard.

13.2 The Clerk's had nothing further to report as all matters have been raised on the agenda.

14. Correspondence

1. Norfolk Link Extra (copies for Councillors). Training for new councillors will be considered at the June Parish Council meeting. It was agreed to pay one fifth of the fee for the Clerk to attend the SLCC/NALC Summer Conference.
2. NAVH Newsletter
3. Nplaw – invitation to subscribe to legal services
4. WNVCA In Touch magazine
5. NPFA Playing Field magazine
6. Methwold gaol.
7. Letter of thanks for use of St. George's Hall on April 29th from Methwold Community Action Group.

It was agreed to pay the course fee for Mr J Marriage to attend training regarding play equipment inspections. The Clerk may also attend the course.

15. Planning

Mr. C Stone declared an interest in this agenda item and left the meeting for the duration of item 15.1.

15.1 Alterations and Construction of domer window at 51 Globe Street, Methwold IP26 4PQ 11/00565/F

Supported

15.2 To complete rear two storey extension following demolition of existing lean-to and extension, twin gable roof to rear extension and external finish will be existing chalk style at Fair Hill Cottage, 9 Globe Street, Methwold 11/00547/F

Supported

16. Further Reports/Items for the next agenda

16.1 It was suggested the Parish Council should hold an open meeting to encourage greater public participation.

16.2 There is little play equipment for young children at the Recreation Ground. This will be investigated with a view to obtaining possible grant funding.

16.3 A request will be made to Highways regarding erecting 'Slow, children playing' signs near the crossroads in Methwold Hythe.

16.4 It was requested that Royal Mail should be approached regarding provision of a post box outside the Post Office.

16.5 It was reported that there is a leak from a pipe leading to the right hand side hand basin in the ladies toilets at the Fenton Rooms.

16.6 The fascia boards at the Fenton Room are in need of cleaning.

16.7 Highways have repaired pot holes along Hythe Road but road works signs have been left in place. The crumbling road surface at the junction of Hythe Road and Ventura Close is still in need of repair.

16.8 A tree appears to have been planted on Lower Green, Globe Street without consent from the Parish Council. The clerk will investigate who planted the tree.

A resolution was passed to exclude the public