**ETWALL BOWLS CLUB COMMITTEE MEETING**

Held on Tuesday 26th September 2023 at 2pm in the Pavilion, Frank Wickham Hall, Etwall.

The meeting was chaired by Dave Dolman

Members Present

Martin Bowker, Janet Dolman, Dave Dolman (by Skype), Graham Hesketh, Tony Higgott, Jackie Fisher, Kath Irvine, Beverley North

Apologies

Julian Baker.

Minutes of the last meeting

Distributed to all attendees and agreed as being correct.

Matters Arising

Beverley mentioned that the proposal Etwall put forward to the Belper League about hot weather was accepted and put into the league rules. Etwall’s request for more ladies games was rejected.

Beverley also confirmed that a letter of thanks was sent to Tina Beal as discussed.

Correspondence

A condolence card had been sent on behalf of the Club to member Derek Taylor whose wife sadly passed away.

A condolence card had been sent on behalf of the Club to the family of Ken Harrison, a well respected member of the club and a hard working colleague on the Committee.

Finance Update - Report by Jan Dolman

This year the Club started with a balance of £17902.25.

£4089.54 was spent on the balance for  floodlights as previously agreed and we have also agreed to spend a further £5240 on new boarding around the green.

Income this year so far £6504, last year was £6442

We had very good revenue from both bank holiday competitions and sponsorship of £300 for the August one.

One of our players - Jane Greaves has kindly donated £500 to the club which I said would be spent carefully after discussing with the committee.

We had a total of 71 members of which 14 were social.

Expenditure this year was £4098, last year £4523. About £400 cheaper after taking into account the purchase of a spiker at £1315, this was mainly due to a reduced cost for the mower service and stationery costs.

There are one or two other bills to pay, a couple of league fees to clear and  also some match fees to be paid-in which I have taken into account.

I anticipate that our closing balance should be between £14500 and £15000.

We owe our thanks to Etwall Parish Council for their continued support in paying 50% towards our green keeping materials and for the help in paying the vat for the floodlights and boarding which would have cost us an extra  £4015.

Janet also mentioned that the Etwall Parish Council would keep the Pavilion rent increase to no more than 5% on last year.

Dave thanked Janet for all the hard work she does behind the scenes in producing the accounts.

Jackie raised a point that the Club should promote Easy Fundraising. This is a simple way all members who shop online could raise money for the Club. Whilst this has been mentioned at the last AGM only 4 people have used the website. Dave suggested that instead of just mentioning it again at the AGM, Committee members could personally talk to other members and show them how easy it is to use.

Green maintenance

Kath told the meeting that many people she has spoken have commented on how good the Etwall green is.

Tony reported that September is the optimum time for work on the green but due to participation in the floodlit league this work has now been pushed back into October. There is a lot of work to be done as soon as the playing season ends. All materials have been delivered, the cost of which has increased significantly.

Next week Tony needs help from as many volunteers as possible to manually fork the green, which will provide aeration. After that Tony will then scarify the green twice in opposite directions, which will take several hours. The green will then need to be mowed and rolled which will make small holes for the grass seed to take hold. If all goes to plan, the next day the seed needs spreading and brushing in, followed by the spreading of top soil.

Tony asked if Beverley could send out a message to all members asking for volunteers to help

Graham mentioned that the corners were badly worn and would it be an idea next season to rope off these areas and spread grass seed earlier. Tony would consider this.

League Meetings

For the Belper league it was agreed to again ask that more ladies games are organised.

No further suggestions for other leagues were raised.

Captains reports and suggestions

All the reports submitted were read out.

Only one Captain raised concerns about finding enough players, and the difficulty higher teams would face next year.

Other thoughts included:-

Where there are 2 teams in the same league competition the Captains should liaise more.

One Committee member felt that inexperienced players were not made welcome in teams playing in higher divisions.

Captains should encourage more support around the green.

Martin suggested that Captains be invited to a pre-season meeting to discuss numbers and to ask them to encourage players to have a more proactive approach to helping at matches.

Dave mentioned that League Cup competitions were a strain on player numbers and hosting. However it was agreed that in the Belper League all competitions would be entered as normal. South Derbyshire Dickie Cup would be entered. Burton Vets would consider numbers at the time of player registration and if short, the 1st team would not enter the Cup.

Competitons 2024

The Committee agreed to keep all three competitions again in 2024. Dave would organise the entrants for the May Day with Beverley running the on-day administration. Kath and Graham agreed to jointly organise the Club doubles comp. Dave would organise the August knockout comp. In the event of no further volunteers Jan would co-ordinate the refreshments. It was mentioned that the volunteering and donations all fell on the same people.

Floodlights

Since the installation of the floodlights the neighbouring household had raised concerns about the amount of light projecting into their property. Dave informed the meeting that he and Martin North had visited the neighbour to discuss the matter.

Dave had contacted Abacus Lighting who installed the lights to gain confirmation that the installation had fully complied with planning and did they have any comment regarding the neighbour’s issue.

Abacus confirmed all planning specifications had been adhered to and they could undertake some remedial work at a price of £975 + VAT. This would include:-

1 Reducing the elevations on all 4no LEDs

2 Installation of a front cowl onto M1 which is the floodlight causing the issue with the neighbour.

Even with these changes, the light onto the bowling green is still compliant with the performance specification.

Dave Dolman questioned whether the above would resolve the issue and Abacus replied:-

“Yes we’ve done this type of thing before (adding cowls and de-elevating) and it would reduce the amount of light being able to be seen from the house in question.

It would lessen the impact of the light but not necessary remove it entirely; this is something we need to explain to the neighbour as they may be expecting something that is not achievable.”

Dave informed the meeting that when the visit took place, the light only shone on one area of the settee in their room and a blind at the window would negate nearly all the light. The neighbour completely dismissed this solution. He also refused the suggestion of putting up scaffolding poles with a mesh screen. Both Dave and Martin felt that no action the club did to negate the glare would satisfy the neighbour, and once a problem is admitted then we are bound to find a solution.

It was mentioned that the bowling green is the property of the Parish Council and the planning application was in their name, so really the Bowls Club itself should not be liable.

After much discussion between the Committee, and a vote whether to install the Abacus cowl it was decided by a majority of 5 to 2 (without the Chairman's vote) that as a Club no further action would be taken. Beverley would write to the neighbour to inform him of the Committee’s decision.

Future Projects

The boards around the green are to be replaced. Dave is meeting with the contractors next week to discuss the work and obtain a date for work to commence.

After nearly two years of hard fundraising, Dave would not be seeking further funding in 2024.

Safeguarding and Behaviour

Beverley informed the meeting that the club has three members who have had their DBS certificate renewed, so the club is fully compliant. Tony also completed a new safeguarding course, when his DBS was renewed.

Beverley had previously distributed messages from the South Derbyshire league reminding Clubs to curb any antisocial behaviour from their members. Fortunately Etwall does not have this problem. If any issues occur during a match it is the responsibility of Captains to address the issue. Graham said as a first-time Captain he had never been given any guidelines. It was suggested that Captains are invited to a pre-season meeting and given clear advice on what to do in situations that may arise during a game.

Preparations for AGM

Fees - all agreed to keep the fees at the same rate for another year.

Officers 2024 - Beverley informed the meeting that she was resigning from the position of Club Secretary. Whilst officials are nominated and voted for at the AGM (March), the close season is the busiest time for the Secretary, so Graham Hesketh has kindly agreed to take over this role in the interim.

Beverley would offer to continue to stand as a member of the Committee.

All remaining members agreed to stand next year.

A.O.B.

1. Jan mentioned that the website front picture did not reflect that we now have floodlights. Graham agreed to take new pictures and upload onto the site.
2. Tony commented that because of the standard of our green, the request to host external matches would increase considerably, and finding hosts would be a problem. This year Graham took on the responsibility of hosting nearly all the games, which Beverley thought took advantage of Graham’s goodwill. Graham said he was happy with the situation.
3. Stephen Wilson had mentioned how dark it was after the floodlights had been turned off and the key had to be taken over the green to be placed in the shed. Janet said this was a safety issue and would look at the possibility of a key safe closer to the Pavilion.

The meeting closed at 4.15pm.