

The Minutes of the Autumn Delegates Meeting of the Hants & Dorset Amateur Rowing Association, held at the BTC A. R. C. Clubhouse, Southampton on Saturday, 31st October, 2009.

There were 27 delegates in attendance, including all the Executive Officers, with apologies received from a further 6 delegates (Peter Staddon of Christchurch, Brian Gowman of Westover, Brent Hartland of Southampton, Martin Bradbeer of Itchen, Sue Sothcott of Poole and Kevin Bennett of Newport) when the Chairman, John Purkess, opened the meeting at 10.45am. There were no delegates in attendance from Newport and Worthing Rowing Clubs and Newport Regatta. Tim Bull of Lymington joined the meeting late as did Max Maxwell of BTC; Mike Green of Christchurch and Pete Lamb and David Smith of Westover had to leave the meeting early.

The Minutes of the last Delegates Meeting were taken as read, and agreed as a correct record on a proposal from - D. Woodford, seconded by R. Sivier.

The only matter arising was a statement from the Association Secretary regarding the World Coastal Rowing Championships in Plymouth, following the action agreed at the Executive Meeting of 15th August. The association Secretary summarised the actions taken and responses received in trying to understand the entry criteria and format of the event and the conclusion that was reached that – the H&D Clubs who initially expressed an interest in competing in the World Coastal Championships were primarily interested in the main event - so as to test themselves at this level - but with the exception of Southampton it had proved impossible to source a FISA standard boat. The initial uncertainty regarding the restrictions on the local boat events, the fact that it was on a Sunday, which would almost certainly require time off work and the possibility that it would not take place if the main event was delayed and needed the Sunday - plus the fact that we would just be racing the same crews as we raced all season in our domestic competitions - all be it over a longer course - and with no small boats events at all our Clubs were put-off the local boat event and no H&D Clubs competed.

Colin Eales also reported that the event had been discussed at the recent ARA/British Rowing council meeting and it was clear from comments made that the ARA still don't really understand what we do. Ray Mallet's comments made at this meeting had not been helpful and when the event was brought up at a South Coast Council meeting it was "brushed off" in spite of earlier promises made by WEARA delegates. It was noted that the ARA had covered the cost of 45 FISA standard boats for the event at a cost of £250,000 which they hoped to recover when the boats were sold and had contributed a further £40,000 to help stage the event which would not be recovered.

At this point in the meeting the opportunity was taken to get an update on the situation at Westover & Bournemouth R. C. who, following an article around 3 weeks ago in the local paper had discovered the councils plans to give them two weeks notice to quit their clubhouse and relocate them to the Gentleman's Toilets under Bournemouth Pier. Representatives of the Club advised the meeting that, thanks in part to the support of H&D Clubs the Club had been able to put forward an excellent case and now had a stay of execution. The Westover Club which is now thriving again are waiting on a further response from the Council and our working on three options to put to Council with support from Alan Megan at the ARA/British Rowing.

It was noted that both BTC and Itchen Rowing Clubs could be affected by the decision of Southampton City Council to put the Crosshouse site on the market as an area for development. Both Clubs can be given 12 months notice to quit.

The Association Secretary then gave details of the correspondence he had undertaken on the Associations behalf since the Annual General Meeting in March which included the usual correspondence relating to a busy Hants & Dorset season including correspondence relating to Club affiliation, Club and individual registration, Points claims, plus correspondence relating to the affiliated events - permit applications and issues, results etc... and communications with Racing Officials and Club and Regatta Safety advisors with relevant information and administration of the Racing Officials ARA membership contributions for Insurance purposes and their availability for events. Association bulletins were sent to all Executive Officers, Vice Presidents, Clubs and Regatta's in July and October the July bulletin included the minutes of the AGM, Officials Meeting and the Safety Meeting. The October bulletin included the minutes of the Executive meeting of 15th August and the notice and Agenda for this meeting. Documentation required for the season for Clubs, Regattas and racing Officials were sent out in April and the H&D ARA South Coast Rowing Handbooks which provided the contact lists for all Executive, Officers, Clubs, Regattas and Racing Officials were distributed during May and early June. Correspondence relating to this years South Coast Rowing Championships in Folkestone was dealt with. This included entering the Championship Crews - and letters of invitation and congratulation were sent to all H&D Clubs with representative crews. As required by South Coast Council Rules the Hants & Dorset Regatta results were sent to the South Coast Council, CARA and West of England and a letter of thanks for hosting the event and their hospitality was sent to the organising committee on behalf of the Association.

The Executive Officers have dealt with a number of transfers of registration issues and mediated over issues about outstanding fees to the satisfaction of the Clubs and individuals involved. Ken Fraser and Mark Viner were advised of their election as Vice Presidents of the Association and both have been in contact to thank the Association for this honour. Meetings of the Wessex Regional Rowing Council, the Amateur Rowing Association/ British Rowing Water Safety Meetings were attended and an element of secretarial and administrative service to the Associations Umpires Commission and the Safety Commission. There were 35 fines for late withdrawal from Regatta imposed and 15 appeals received which were considered by the Associations executive Officers – there were two fines for failing to attend Club Briefings at Championship Regatta's – that have been paid without appeal. The Hants & Dorset ARA web site - hdara.co.uk - has been maintained. Two requests for additional Championship Medals for 2009 have been received which will be considered in line with the new rules agreed and decided on at the AGM. Another 400 H&D Championship Medals and 5 Past Presidents Medals – approx 10 years supply – have been purchased at a cost to the Association of £2,021:25.

There was one other item of correspondence received which needed the consideration of the meeting - a letter from Adam Rose and Tom Jaokim of Christchurch asking the Association to consider the possibility of introducing status regression. While some sympathy was expressed regarding their particular situation it was agreed that the possibility of introducing regression into our rules is more complicated than it sounds as it would have an impact on a number of rules, could effect the Championship league system and South Coast selection procedures and cause potential conflict with the other two South Coastal Rowing Associations. It was however agreed that it deserved careful consideration and the Hants & Dorset ARA Forum would be asked to look into this and formulate some proposals. But it was also agreed that formulating any rule changes in time for the approaching 2010 season is unlikely.

The 2009 Regatta season was then considered in detail by the meeting. (*See attached summary – Master only. Appendix 1*). The Association Secretary gave a summary, extracted from the reports from the racing officials received for each Regatta, the regatta de-brief form and any correspondence received – all of which had already been copied to the event secretaries. **In addition** to the summary presented to the meeting the following additional comments and points were raised and discussed by the meeting –
Ryde - Regatta Secretary apologised for late start and stated that they would appoint a boat marshal for the 2010 event as requested.

Shanklin – early departure of Umpires boat needs to be resolved.

Newport - while the meeting agreed that improvements had been made to the timing arrangements and that the starters position afloat was also an improvement on the previous year the use of one of the designated safety boats as the umpires boat as well was not acceptable – as had been pointed out the previous years. It was also noted that the 2nd Safety boat only had one person on board, that the Regatta could have started earlier putting unfair pressure on the starters and competing crews. The suggestion of a static umpire's boat was rejected because of the nature of the course where the umpire repeatedly needed to warn the small boats about their course and so needed to be following the racing. In the absence of any delegates from Newport Rowing Club or Regatta the Association Chairman and Umpires Commission Chairman – John Purkess – agreed to contact Newport to discuss the issues.

Woolston - the meeting agreed that a recommendation be made that where more than one event is taking place within a race then the lane draw should be grouped to make it easier for officials and competitors alike.

Southsea – much discussion about issues over the fairness of the course, the conflict between CARA and Hants & Dorset Rules and the inflexibility of CARA Officials – or at least one in particular – regarding a sensible compromise or deviation from the rules when circumstances require it. Southsea agreed to give careful consideration to these issues and to discuss them at the CARA delegates meeting and to consider the possibility of a set of rules specifically for Southsea Regatta which might elevate some of the problems if they could be agreed between Southsea and the two Associations.

Bournemouth – the Regatta, which was cancelled, was thanked for returning all entry fees.

Itchen – much debate about the fairness of the course and the decision to re-draw the Ladies Senior Pairs event to include heats. While Itchen were adamant that the course was the same as last year – and fair – general feeling was that turning buoys were closer to the sea wall which may have affected the course. Southampton's letter of complaint regarding the Senior Ladies pairs and the late entry procedure was discussed in detail and it was agreed that a different late entry procedure need to be adopted – perhaps accepting all late entries made at the correct time – and then making a draw for over subscribed events.

The Association Secretary gave a brief report on Swanage Regatta organized by the Association on Saturday, 4th July after the local authority had requested an earlier date to avoid a clash with a demonstration by the Red Arrows display team on our usual end of July date, as they anticipated heavy traffic in the bay. He reported that although there was a heavy shower before the start of the Regatta the rest of the day was fine with light winds and good conditions and that even on this earlier date the Regatta had continued to be very popular with an entry of 132 crews and Scullers including late entries compared with 130 in 2008 and this generated £1,657 in income and a South Coast Levy of £383. The Regatta was organized on behalf of the

Association by a willing and enthusiastic band of volunteers drawn from a number of Hants & Dorset Clubs and the thanks of the Association was recorded to all who helped - in particular the race officials, to John Bailey and Sue Sothcott who were Regatta Controllers, Andy Sothcott for his role as Safety Advisor and with the trailer parking, Tim Bull for doing the draw and producing the program, Denny Woodford for arranging the prizes, Pete Staddon and Dave Smith for laying the course and to Poole, Christchurch and Lymington Rowing Clubs for the providing safety boats, Christchurch for scaffold tower and radios, BTC for the PA system, Poole for the tent and Ryde for the Officials meals. Thanks are also due to John Purkess on behalf of Southampton Town Regatta and Southampton City Council who bequeathed some Trophies to the Regatta.

The Association Secretary then read his report on the 2009 South Coast Championship Regatta held at in Folkestone and hosted by the Coast ARA and recorded the disappointing results for the Hants & Dorset ARA Clubs and a number of other issues regarding the organisation and administration of the Regatta including the very marginal conditions. (*See attached – Appendix 2.*) Commenting on the Secretaries report Ted Shergold stated that it was the "Worst (South Coast) Regatta he had ever been to" and it had failed to promote Coastal rowing. Others at the meeting also expressed their concerns – in particular about the lack of information and the starting arrangements which arguably contributed to the two Itchen crews being left at the start of the Men's Open Senior Final. A statement – as follows – from the designated H&D Starter Pete Staddon was read to the meeting – "The conditions for the starters were very poor. The boat provided was too small and could not be positioned on the start line despite 4 attempts to move it. The conditions on the water were such that it was borderline as to whether it was safe to be out there and discussions took place as to whether to cancel. 2 of the starters were being sick and the skipper said it was the worst conditions he had ever been out in. The communications with the boat marshals were non existent up to this race (they improved afterwards when the marshals were allowed to change channels). The starters were not aware of who was on the water, sometimes we had 3 races together and we were trying to ask crews who they were and what races they were in. We could not see crews approaching the starting marshals and were nor aware that Itchen crews were close to the start line. The race was started by Brian Feeney – Coast and Ray Mallett was in the cockpit with him. As there was no room inside I has strapped myself to the main mast and boom to operate the flags. The race was started on time. I believe that the lateness of the crews arriving at the start and the poor conditions resulted in these crews missing their race."

Denny Woodford then reported on the South Coast Council meetings than had taken place since the AGM and matters arising from these. Our Council delegates were questioned in some detail regarding the attitude of the delegates from the other two Associations at South Coast Meeting with the view expressed that the South Coast Council was not developing and forward thinking and was very fixed in its ways and took very defensive positions although the meeting did believe that our delegates were the exception and were the most forward thinking and were prepared to experiment with new ideas. There was a feeling that both the CARA and WEARA Council delegates were out of touch with their oarsman and women. The H&D Delegates stated that for all these reasons the meeting were often difficult and it was hard to find away forward a sentiment echoed by Colin Eales the South Coast Council Secretary.

The Association Secretary asked if it was true that WEARA was going to propose and end to the current four year cycle of venues and return to a three year cycle – and the H&D Delegates stated that they believed this would be put forward at the Council AGM. The Secretary also asked if long serving but recently not re-elected WEARA Council delegate Jimmy Jewell had been proposed as a Life member of Council, as is the tradition – and if not would it be politically correct for the Hants & Dorset ARA to propose him. The H&D Delegates confirmed that WEARA had not proposed him as a life member of Council – and that it might cause some ill feeling if the Hants & Dorset ARA did which would not be helpful at a time when the H&D had to present their case for a return to Dorney Lake in 2011.

There were conflicting views at the meeting regarding the position of the starting boat and some thoughts regarding another attempt to have the rule that fixed the position amended but after some discussion it was agreed that with a request to be made at the next Council meeting for a dispensation to deviate from the rule at Dorney in 2011 it was better to leave this at the moment.

As a result of some incidents at the after Regatta Party at the Folkestone South Coast Championships there had been several items of correspondence received by the Association including a complaint from Folkestone Rowing Club about a number of Clubs. In the main the complaints related to the behaviour of some CARA Clubs and their members and these were for that Association, the Regatta organisers and the South Coast Council to resolve. Complaints about the behaviour of members of H&D Clubs centered around an attempt to remove a ceremonial blade from the Clubhouse by a member or members of Coalporters Rowing Club – which was returned – and an apology given and an incident, involving Itchen Rowing Club, which resulted in a member of Coalporters Rowing Club being taken to Hospital. The Associations Executive Officers were keen to draw a line under the incidents and as a result of discussions held with the Clubs concerned it was suggested and agreed that Coalporters would send a letter of apology to Folkestone R. C. regarding the ceremonial blade incident indicating that the members involved had been disciplined and that Itchen Rowing

Club would make a formal apology to Coalporters regarding the other incident. Our delegates would then be able to report to the South Coast Council that the incidents had been dealt with by the Association. However it was noted that all aspects of these and other incidents had not necessarily come to light yet and some further discussion and action may be necessary.

The Association Secretary reported that no Hants & Dorset or CARA crews had entered the Coastal events at the National Championships and therefore they had not taken place. While no communication had been received from the National Championships Committee it was assumed that as the Championships were being held in Strathclyde, Scotland in 2010 that no Coastal events would be on offer.

The Regatta dates for the 2010 season were then discussed and agreed as far as possible. Prior to the discussion on dates BTC made a further presentation on their proposal to switch venues to the Itchen from Woolston with a course involving two racing turns. The course was explained and a trial regatta held – although not over the full course. Although there was a general understanding and appreciation of why BTC wanted to move venue's there were misgivings expressed – the loss of another "coastal" regatta, limitations on the use of the public slipway, the untested "two turn" format and concerns over marshalling on the water and the time the regatta would take. An informal vote was taken to give BTC some guidance which was 7 to 5 in favour of remaining at Western Shore. BTC agreed to give the matter further consideration and advise the Association on the venue selected by the Associations AGM in March at the latest. In the mean times dates for a BTC Regatta at both venues would be included in the fixture list. The agreed dates were as follows -

H&D CHAMPIONSHIP REGATTA'S IN CAPITALS. *Junior Events in Italics.*

Saturday, 17 th April.	Southampton Coastal Fours HERR.
Saturday, 8 th May.	COALPORERS REGATTA.
Saturday, 15 th May.	RYDE REGATTA.
Sunday, 16 th May.	SHANKLIN REGATTA.
Saturday, 22 nd May.	MILFORD (LYMINGTON) REGATTA.
Saturday, 29 th May.	NEWPORT REGATTA.
Saturday, 5 th June.	ITCHEN IMPERIAL REGATTA.
Saturday, 12 th June.	BTC REGATTA (if at Western shore*)
Saturday, 19 th June.	POOLE REGATTA.
Saturday, 26 th June.	WOOLSTON REGATTA.
Saturday, 3 rd July.	BTC REGATTA (if on the River Itchen*)
Saturday, 10 th July.	SOUTHSEA REGATTA.
(Friday, 16 th to Sunday, 18 th July	National Championships, Strathclyde).
Sunday, 25 th July.	<i>Coalporters Junior Regatta</i>
Saturday, 31 st July.	SWANAGE REGATTA [subject to the approval of Swanage Council]
Saturday, 7 th August.	BOURNEMOUTH REGATTA.
Saturday, 14 th August	CHRISTCHURCH REGATTA.
Saturday, 21 st August.	Provisional date for Hants & Dorset Championship and South Coast Selection row-offs if required. Dockhead, Southampton. 11.00am.**
Saturday, 11 th September.	<i>South Coast Junior Regatta and South Coast</i> South Coast Championships Regatta, Wimbleball.

*The venue and therefore the date of BTC Regatta will be decided, at the latest by the Association AGM in March, 2010 – when the provisional date for any South coast Championship selection or Hants & Dorset Championship row-offs will also be confirmed.

Dates still to be advised: **Southampton Eights, River & Small Boats HERR.**
Head of the Stour, Christchurch.
Itchen Junior Sprint Regatta.
Coalporters Winter Sculls HERR.

There will be no Wessex Junior Regatta at Bryanston School in 2010

** If postponement of a Regatta results in an Events being staged after the Christchurch Regatta any Hants & Dorset Championship and South Coast Selection row-offs will take place on the Sunday following the last Regatta, 11.00am at Dockhead, Southampton.

NOTES.

Saturday, 27th March – Tideway HERR.

Sunday, 3rd April – University Boat Race.

Sunday, 15th April - Junior Inter-Regional's, Nottingham

Wednesday, 30th June to Sunday 4th July. Henley Royal Regatta.

Sunday, 14th November – Fours Head.

On behalf of the organising committee of the 2011 South Coast Championship Regatta the Association Secretary handed out a copy of the first draft of the presentation that will be given to the South Coast Council at its AGM in January and this included the results on an unofficial survey of Clubs who attended this years Championship Regatta which showed strong support for a return to Eton Dorney for the 2011 event. Questions were invited from the floor on the presentation but none were forthcoming.

The South Coast Rowing handbook was then discussed. This had been produced as a single Association Handbook – by the Hants & Dorset ARA in 2009 – with the support of the former Editor of the three Association Book – Jimmy Jewell, following the withdrawal of WEARA and CARA's failure to make a decision on continuation in time. The Association Secretary had been in contact with Jimmy Jewell who was prepared to assist again – and the printing cost would remain the same at £650 – covered by the Associations addition to the Affiliation fee which was deductible from ARA/British Rowing affiliation and therefore costs the Clubs and Associations nothing as long as they are affiliated. After a very brief discussion and on a proposal from the Association Secretary, seconded by Graham Reeve it was agreed to accept Jimmy's offer of help and to continue with the single Association handbook for 2010. If either of the other Associations wanted to get involved this would be acceptable – but their involvement would not be sought.

John Purkess then reported to the meeting on behalf of the Umpires Commission. His *report (see attached – Appendix 3)* touched on the procedures before the start of racing – including crews going out of the range of the PA system, their tendency to "hold back" and the number of incidents of "lost" numbers and unpainted blades. Also covered was the racing course – including the need to re-align buoys at a number of Regattas. Safety boat manning was another area covered as well as the improper use of the H&D supplied safety equipment. He also put on record that Mike Green had decided to stand down as a Hants & Dorset Race Official after many years service although he was still prepared to help with the Umpires Commission. The meeting passed a vote of thanks to Mike for his long service to the Association. John also thanked the H&D Race Officials at the South Coast Championships – and reminded Event Secretaries that Carol Wall was now a full official and not to forget her as she had suffered from the usual problem of few invitations following promotion to full official.

The Association Secretary reported on the activities of the Safety Sub Committee since the Annual General Meeting - as follows - they had not met formally since the Associations AGM in March but had met informally on a number of occasions including boat inspection undertaken at four events during the season including one Head Race. A summary of boat inspections was given as follows – inspections undertaken at four events with a total of sixty-eight boats inspected on which twenty-eight faults were found. – that's a fault found on 41% of boats inspected – although this is slightly misleading as there was sometimes more than one fault on a boat. Only one Club – BTC – had no faults found on any of their boats inspected (which does not mean they had no faults – just that they were not on the boats we inspected). All boats were tagged on inspection. Biggest single fault found as always was Heel Restraints which at 24 of the 28 faults found is 85%. A full analysis including individual club performance will be published later and discussed in detail at the next Safety Commission meeting.

All H&D (& all Wessex Clubs) complied with the ARA/British Rowing requirement to complete the Club Safety Audit as part of their affiliation process and no Wessex Region Clubs appeared on the published defaulters list or faced suspension. The format of the next Club audit due by 31st December will change and will take the form of a Gap Analysis Check Sheet. All Hants & Dorset events including the Wessex Junior Regatta at Bryanston submitted a safety audit to the Safety Commission but only two events – Ryde and the Wessex Junior Regatta received formal re-audits on the day. I am not able to comment of the condition of the H&D Race Officials safety Equipment as they have not yet been returned to me as they have been retained for use at the Autumn Heads. The ARA/British Rowing on-line incident reporting system has been up and running since 1st January and appears to have been fairly successful and well received nationally and within our region. 31 incident reports have been submitted by Association Clubs using the new procedure – and the

National Safety Committee will be publishing national and regional statistics based on these reports at the end of the year. It is clear however that in spite of a number of reminders not all Clubs have registered the required E Mail address to receive notice of incidents and that a number of incidents have gone unreported. I have only been able to attend one National Safety Meeting at the ARA/British Rowing since the Associations AGM – on 3rd October at Hammersmith. At this meeting we had a presentation from Shimano – the bicycle equipment company – on their new rowing shoe and stretcher – which will be on the market next year. We examined it from a safety point of view as it does away with the need for heel restraints – and it passed this examination. Basically it's a shoe with clips similar to those used by cyclists that fits on an especially designed stretcher – but while effective its expensive – several hundred pound making it only likely to be used at elite levels and it has only been developed for single sculling so far. Latest guidance from the NSC and FISA on heel restraints confirms we should continue to check that shoes don't go above the horizontal rather than a specific measurement. There was much discussion about the suitability of "tin fish" as safety boats as opposed to coaching boats – which confirmed the generally held view that they are unsuitable as safety boats because of stability issues. As always there was a disproportionate amount of time spent discussing boat buoyancy and swamping situations and the misleading FISA guidelines on the subject. The "Leo Blockley" fatality always rears its head – even though this was not really a boat buoyancy issue as those who remained with the boat all survived and swamped boats seldom dump people in the water. There is work underway on methods of identifying and managing less buoyant boats and event safety advisors are being asked to give more specific warnings where a boat swamping situation is likely. Car topping and trailering boats was also discussed and some new guidance documents and check lists are due to be circulated soon.

The Chairman of the Wessex Regional Rowing Council, Colin Eales then gave a brief report on the regions activities which included - a report of the activities of the regions CDO and the new arrangement that gave the Wessex Region exclusive use of a CDO who would also fulfil one of the Regions Club Coach roles; the change of name from ARA to British Rowing; the British Rowing Conference which three members from the region attended including John Purkess who received the regions volunteer of the year award; the forward plan that had been published and the UK Sport change of approach with the emphasis on participation. He also noted that British Rowing now employs 116 people – and that they still don't really understand Coastal Rowing – as opposed to offshore rowing.

Division 22 ARA Representative Mike Green's then gave a brief report on the activities of the British Rowing from his point of view covering the whole sport plan; Security of tenure issues which is a National problem; the main themes of the British Rowing Conference which were – participation, structure, learning; the new Chief Executive role; Club development and British Rowing Fees where new rates for individual membership were under consideration and Juniors and drinking which was a growing concern.

The arrangements for the Presentation Dinner, being organised for the Association by Gareth Cook, were then confirmed as Saturday, 7th November, at 7.00pm at the Novotel, Southampton with Tickets costing £25.50. More than 230 tickets had been sold across a good section of the Associations affiliated Clubs. Tim Bull from Lymington would propose the Toast to the Association. The Wessex Regional Rowing Council had asked if a presentation could be made to the Wessex Region Young Volunteer of the Year which was agreed by the meeting with the Wessex Region Secretary being asked to do the honours. The Association Secretary advised the meeting that all the Trophies had been returned except the Ladies Novice Fours Trophy which was awarded jointly to the four Southampton based Clubs in 2008 and they were all asked to check who had the Trophy and for them too return it in a clean condition at the Dinner or preferably to Keith Warland before hand. The only issue was that the Novotel was under going a degree of refurbishment which might have an impact on the toilet arrangements.

The meeting then considered possible rule changes for discussion and approval at AGM. This included a statement from the Association Secretary regarding clarification of H&D Vice Presidents Rule because for many years (at least ten) at the Associations Annual General Meetings the Association has elected Vice Presidents and LIFE VICE PRESIDENTS but it had emerged at the last AGM that there was no Rule covering the position of Live Vice President. A statement from the Association Secretary had been circulated prior to the meeting and this was discussed alongside a written contribution from John Bailey which broadly came to the same conclusion. After a short debate the meeting agreed that we should proceed in line with the existing rules which allows for the election of Vice Presidents with voting rights (Rule 6) and Honorary Members without voting rights (Rule 8) and that at the next AGM of the Association these rules should be applied which would probably mean that all those currently "elected" as Life Vice Presidents would revert to Vice Presidents with the option to appoint Honorary Members.

A Further discussion followed concerning voting rights following a submission from Gary Joyce of Itchen Imperial Rowing Club regarding his concerns that voting is now not properly representative of the members attending. Gary Joyce suggested that -

1. As most regattas are tied to a club (Swanage is the only independent one) giving regattas representation and vote slightly immaterial.

2. To encourage clubs to debate the circulated proposals beforehand and advise their delegates how to vote at the AGM accordingly, either a single voting card should be issued to the club delegate or a card indicating how many votes the club is entitled to cast is issued.

3. Anyone attending and entitled to vote should be given a voting card - one for each club (as 2 above) and one for everyone else entitled to vote - otherwise no vote (this is after you've sorted out the query over life members/life vice-presidents and vice presidents etc).

4. Most clubs don't get their entitled number of bodies at the meetings anyway (some can't get any there at all!) so having only one vote card should not be too radical. However if for some masochistical reason more than one clubs members wants to attend then that should be allowed up to a maximum (6 tops as allowed by current rules perhaps) but must vote as a club.

A further point raised was that although Rule 12 dictates that the rules don't stop amendments to the proposed amendments being made at the meeting and the danger of this is that the original proposal gets 'confused' with counter proposals which pop up out of the debate and which as we know has led to some very odd decisions being made in the past. The rules only says that if these amendments come during the meeting and they are passed by a two thirds majority they become binding but must be circulated properly and voted on again at the next AGM - rule 12 again.

There was a significant discussion about these points but no firm conclusion was reached other than the proposal that voting rights at AGM's be restricted to the two delegates from each Club and one from each event, Executive Officers and Vic Presidents – which would have to be approved at an AGM. A complete review of the Association Rules was probably needed but this would be complex and time consuming and would probably need a sub-committee appointed but again no firm conclusion was reached by the meeting.

Under Any Other Business the meeting Christchurch Rowing Clubs commitment to Hants & Dorset Coastal rowing was discussed. Being aware of the likely complaint the Chairman of Christchurch Rowing Club – Peter Staddon – had issued the following statement – “I expect a number of comments about our attendance at regattas this year and our commitment to the Hants and Dorset. It has been a difficult year following some poor captaincy in 2008. There have been occasions where we have brought our juniors together with the scattering of other members and given full support, there have been other weeks when we can not get any crews together. Our junior squad of 5 -7 people have travelled a lot and achieved excellent results at the National Schools and National Championships. This reflects well on our club, Wessex and H & D but has appeared to be a source of criticism. Some members of other clubs seem to know more about our club and how to run it than we do. For the future I can assure the meeting that we remain committed to the H & D and this is reflected in the squad training that has already started this winter and the purchase of a new coastal four. Additionally we are considering buying quad and double riggers”. The meeting accepted the statement and looked forward to seeing an improvement in attendance and commitment from Christchurch Rowing Club.

There was no further "Any other business" and it was agreed the date for the Annual General Meeting would be on a Saturday in March, depending on the Southampton F. C. Fixture List and Rowing fixtures. The Association Secretary would make the final decision in consultation with his fellow Executive Officers.

With no other business the meeting closed a 4.10pm with thanks to BTC Rowing Club for their hospitality.

H&D ARA Chairman.

[Minutes taken and written by Steve Bull, Association Secretary, November, 2009].

ATTACHMENTS.

The attachments listed below form an integral part of these minutes.

- 1 Summary of Race Officials Reports, Correspondence and incidents at 2008 events. (master only)*
- 2. Report on the 2009 South Coast Championship Regatta.*
- 3. Umpires Commission Report.*

Association Secretaries Report on the 2009 South Coast Rowing Championships and Junior Regatta, at Folkestone, 5th September, 2009.

The 2009 South Coast Rowing Championships and South Coast Junior Regatta's were hosted and organised by Folkestone Rowing Club on behalf of the Coast Amateur Rowing Association and while the performance of their Championship crews was impressive the same can not be said of the organisation of the event, although I do have some sympathy with Andy West and Steve Tupper who seemed to me to be the only two people doing all the work!

Folkestone always made clear that this would be a Championships run on a very limited budget – with some of the things we have come to expect – like the individual mementos missing, The Reception on the Friday evening was probably another example – the event being held in hall that had seen better days and lacking "showmanship" that other Associations have tried to inject in to the proceedings in recent years. But it also lacked format and organisation with our President, who had to call to confirm he was able to attend, not even invited to speak, as is the custom.

Communication in the build up to the Regatta were very poor, with limited information received late or in a number of cases not at all – for example, to this date, my own Club Ryde have not received their copy of the program or their invitation to the reception. From my observations the information that some Clubs did receive was sketchy and lacking in detail and where only received a few days before the Regatta. Fortunately as a Race Official I had received a draft copy of the program around a week before the event and as Clubs began to query the lack of information I was at least able to E Mail this to the Clubs so they could undertake some advance planning. Detailed information was received at the Captains briefing – but this was really too late in the day to be absorbed in time for the start of the Regatta. Another example of the poor communication was the information about trailer parking and unloading which only became available on the Thursday before the Regatta – and only sent to me as Association Secretary and I then had to try and disseminate this to my Association Clubs.

Around three weeks before the Regatta, just after entry closure, the Association received a request from Hilary Bastone, on behalf of WEARA to allow one of their repetitive crews in the Veteran Championship event to have a composite crew. After a brief consultation with my fellow Executive Officers and bearing in mind the H&D rejection of Coalporters request to deviate from the rules I rejected this request as it is very clearly against the South Coast Council Rules. Much to my surprise I was then advised that CARA – or at least Phil Challen – who refused to "bend" any CARA rules at Southsea Regatta this year – had agreed to the WEARA request. I then had an exchange of E Mails with Hilary Bastone who accused the Hants & Dorset ARA of a poor attitude stating that "If the Hants & Dorset ARA doesn't soften its attitude and encourage crews to row it could well see the end of the Championships as we know them". I thought his attitude was grossly unfair and uncalled for – and he has certainly changed my opinion of a person whom I had previously had great respect. The irony is that the crew in question then failed to attend the Regatta!

Unfortunately I am not able to give a very detailed report on the racing – as I spent half the day on the open umpire's boat – and so did not see the final stages of many of the races. Normally I rely on getting hold of a copy of John Baileys press report which provides me with some detail and comment on the racing – but he had the nerve to go on holiday! So all I can really record are the basic facts – and they don't make happy reading for the Hants & Dorset ARA!

In the Championship events our only success came in the Ladies Senior Fours where Coalporters retained their title in an event they have dominated for the past few years. The Associations 2nd representatives, BTC, finished in 4th place. CARA representatives Eastbourne were 2nd and Hastings 3rd.

In the main event of the day – the Men's Senior Fours Championship there was a brave challenge from BTC, the Hants & Dorset Champions, but they failed to keep pace with CARA winners Herne Bay, finishing in 2nd place with the other CARA representatives Deal in 3rd and our other representatives Ryde a disappointing 4th. For the 2nd successive year there were no WEARA representatives in this event!

The Men's Junior Senior Fours Championship was another disappointment for the Association with CARA representatives Deal winning the first of their two Championships with Hants & Dorset ARA's Coalporters finishing 2nd and Shanklin 3rd.

CARA's Deal won their 2nd Championship race in the Men's Junior Fours with the other CARA representatives Herne Bay 2nd and Hants Dorset representatives Westover 3rd and Coalporters in 4th place.

There was yet more disappointment in the Ladies Junior Fours where Herne Bay won their 2nd Championship of the day with the other CARA representatives Worthing in 2nd place and the Hants & Dorset crews from Coalporters and Poole 3rd and 4th.

Hants & Dorset Champions BTC mounted a strong challenge in the Veteran Fours Championship but once again will be disappointed with their 2nd place behind CARA's Folkestone who's second representatives Eastbourne finished in 3rd and the Hants & Dorset's Lymington in 4th.

The Coast ARA were comfortable winners of the Bass Charrington Shield for the most successful Association in the Championship events.

This was probably the Association's worst set of Championship results since I became Association Secretary summed up by the word already used several times in this report – disappointing! Certainly the conditions had something to do with CARA's success as their crews coped better with the rough sea – Hants & Dorset Clubs do seem to have lost some of their ability to cope with the coastal conditions possibly as a result of often seeking calmer waters for training and for a number of our Championship Regattas.

The Association fared a little better in the Open events – with wins for Poole in the Junior Seniors, and Novice Ladies, Itchen's Novice Men, Christchurch in the Junior Ladies and Lymington in the Veteran 50's – but CARA Club Bexhill won the Men's Senior Fours and Junior Fours, Shoreham the Senior Ladies and Worthing the Veteran 40's. A second place and two third places alongside their two open wins comfortably secured Bexhill the Open events aggregate trophy.

The Hants & Dorset ARA did have the best of the Junior Regatta with BTC winning the Boys J14 Quad, Lymington the Boys J16 Quad and Christchurch the Boys J18 Four to secure this Aggregate Trophy for the Association and with WEARA Club Exeter winning two events – the Girls J16 Quad and Girls J18 Four – CARA only managing the one win – from Herne Bay in the Girls J14 Quad. As an open umpire I had my concerns about the Junior races and my doubts about whether the crews would be able to cope – but have to say I was very impressed with the way all the Juniors coped with the conditions and they were all a credit to their Clubs and Associations,

According to the program, and not allowing for any scratchings, there were 29 crews from a possible 36 in the Championship races – with the Hants & Dorset and CARA entering a full complement – and yet again a disappointing entry from WEARA with just five Championship Crews. I would like to say this was because it was a coastal Regatta in Coastal Boats – which did probably have some effect – but they actually only boated a couple less than last year when the event was held at Plymouth, in their own region, The truth is that the majority of WEARA Clubs simply do not regard the event as that important. There were 91 entries in the open events – and if you count Worthing as a CARA Club and Southsea as a Hants & Dorset Club then CARA had the most open entries at 47 with the Hants & Dorset with 42 and WEARA just 2! The Hants & Dorset Clubs had the most entries in the Junior Regatta at 15, with CARA having 13 and WEARA 4. All affiliated Hants & Dorset and CARA Clubs were represented – but only Exeter, Bideford Reds, Plymouth and Dartmouth entered from the ten affiliated WEARA Clubs.

I guess it is to the credit of the local organisers that they rightly decided, along with the South Coast Council, that the event should go ahead at Folkestone, rather than one of the alternative courses, in conditions which were to say the least, marginal. A brave decision! The conditions certainly presented some difficulties – starting was very difficult as the moored starters boat pitched up and down in the conditions – severally enough to force one of the starters to go ashore after being very seasick. The position of the Starters boat, on the outside of the course, in line with South Coast Council Rules probably did not help and it certainly hindered the starters communications with the marshals boat, which was on the inside of the course, which

may well have contributed to a number of crews being left behind – notably the two Itchen Crews in the Men's Open Senior Fours Final – although on land communication difficulties may also have been a cause.

There were one or two unsavoury incidents during the evening after the regatta but these will be discussed in detail elsewhere.

I expect the record will show that this was a successful Regatta as all events were completed without serious incident and my comments may well be seen as "sour grapes" after a poor Hants & Dorset ARA performance – but I do believe they were actually pretty fortunate as conditions would only have deteriorated slightly for this regatta to have been something of a disaster!

Steve Bull,

Association Secretary.

October, 2009.