

Amatola Fly Fishing Club
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Gubu Dam

Date: 1st September 2013 at 9:00am

1. Welcome: The chairman welcomed all present and again thanked the sponsors who helped to make the previous day's events possible and also thanked Craig Warren and Rance Timber for the bakkie-load of donated fire wood.
2. Present and apologies: 28 members were present. Apologies were received from Dean Warkus, Travis Bauer, Hylton Lewis, Ken Brown, Bruce Truter, Andrew Lindstrom, Alan Withers, Div van Niekerk, Pedro de Abreu, Justin Thackeray, Dean Rhind, and Craig Jacobs.
3. Minutes of the previous (21st October 2012) meeting:
 - a. Poaching and signage: it was noted that nothing had been done re. signage.
 - b. Increase of fees: rod ticket had increased to R100.00 and accommodation to R75.00 with immediate effect, annual membership fees increased by 10% (rounded up to the nearest R10) for 2013/14 subs, and the club joining fee increased to R200.
 - c. The 2012 fishing competition had raised R1350.
4. Arising from the previous minutes: none.
5. Chairman's report: the chairman reported that the merger between S.T.A.C. and F.A.S. had come about and although some admin and treasury formalities still had to be completed, the new Amatola Fly Fishing Club was largely in place. It was also reported that since the last AGM, memberships had grown by 90% and now stood at around 75 (actual members are more due to couple and family memberships). The chairman made an appeal to members to actively recruit new members in order to reach 150 memberships so as to be economically sustainable in the long term.
6. Financial report (treasurer, Glenn Raath): the treasurer presented the financial statements up until 31st May 2013. AFFC finances as of 1st September were also reported and the bank balances are as follows:

STAC current account: R45143.40
STAC call account: R 1735.99
STAC 32 day account: R11739.39
FAS current account: R19528.27

7. Matters arising:
 - a. **A new constitution:** a new constitution compiled from the existing F.A.S. & S.T.A.C. constitutions will be proposed and distributed for comment by e-mail in due course.
 - b. **Clubhouse maintenance and changes/additions (e.g. braai area):** various areas requiring maintenance (e.g. painting, toilets, kitchen floor, etc.) were discussed as was various changes and additions. Ryan Smith was tasked with prioritizing the maintenance/refurbishment plans and coordinating member working party weekend/s. Edward Truter proposed changes to the braai area to include changing the fire places to raised, open fire pits better suited to more efficient and more social braai fires and sheltered by a lapa-style palisade or similar. Ryan Smith proposed a photo-space sponsoring system for the clubhouse whereby members could buy a photo space on which to hang a framed fishing photo. This would raise funds for maintenance and provide for an interesting and historical backdrop.
 - c. **DWAF/Bailiff house maintenance:** Although no written record can be found, Rodney Webb reported that maintaining the bailiff's DWAF house is the responsibility of the club. There are a number of maintenance issues that need attention. Edward Truter will follow this up with DWAF/Amatola Water in an attempt to establish a formalised agreement and ensure that the maintenance is subsequently carried out.
 - d. **Budgeting and regular costs:** Edward Truter and Glenn Raath to work on an annual budget for the club so as to have a better idea of longer term finances and requirements. The high base cost of electricity (R14.82 per day + R1.682/kWh), maintenance costs, and insurance all require attention. It was agreed to raise the cost of electricity meter tickets to R70/40kWh units. The new tickets will be in a R35/20kWh unit format. Mention was made of calculating the costs of an off-the-grid solar and gas option for the clubhouse and whether the repayment period made this feasible. Shaun Petersen is to evaluate the current insurance policy with respect to replacement cost of the clubhouse and the annual premium. A proposal was received to charge members a day fee for clubhouse use and with which to establish a maintenance fund. The executive argued however that the

majority of the club's costs should be covered by annual subs, and that the current relatively simple approach for clubhouse use was low admin and part of the privileges of being a member. An across the board day fee should only be seen as very last-resort to raise maintenance funds. It was stated that any members wishing to donate monies, materials, and/or time towards maintenance and clubhouse refurbishment/upliftment are always most welcome.

- e. **Stocking strategy, logistics and date:** Edward Truter explained that he had consulted widely, looked at the stocking histories, and compared numerous stocking models as well as had tried to calculate the productive area of Gubu Dam as typical stocking models cannot be applied to all of Gubu's 109 ha area (a large part of which is unproductive). Based on this, a number of 3500 10cm/4" fish for Maden Dam and 15500 fish for Gubu was calculated as being a good baseline stocking. Dr. Olaf Weyl, a fisheries scientist with extensive sportfishery experience and based at SAIAB in Grahamstown, has agreed to provide input in the monitoring of the AFFC's fisheries so that a truly optimal stocking model can be developed in time.

The fish will come from the new Sandile Trout Farm hatchery (hatched from eyed ova flown in from the Western Cape and which are from many-generation South African strain fish). The stocking date is currently set for the 18th (Maden in the afternoon) and 19th (Gubu in the morning) October. It remains to be seen how big the fry will have grown by the stocking date and the stocking numbers may be adjusted accordingly to take into account smaller fry. Stocking costs will be in the order of R16000 – R17000, excluding delivery charges.

The idea is to stock the fry in as fragmented a way as possible and only in the vicinity of cover (vlei margins, weedbeds, timber, rocky areas, etc.), this is partly to prevent the fry from shoaling, which makes it easier for predators to bait-ball and catch larger numbers. Karl Krull has agreed to make his live-well fitted boat available for the Gubu stocking but an appeal will also be made for helpers, especially to stock some areas via wading.

- f. **Controlling poaching & access:** an appeal was made to members to engage other anglers and request politely whether they were members or had day tickets. New AFFC day tickets are to be printed and made available at the standard outlets (Target Line, E.L. and Criterion Supermarket, K.W.T.), until then the older day tickets are still valid.

The vehicle registration numbers of blatant poachers and hard cases should be reported to the stac.trout@gmail.com address.

A proposal has been put to Amatola Forests re. gating access to Gubu and the campsite (with a key available from the bailiff). If implemented, this will go a long way towards controlling access and collecting fees.

Maden Dam is of particular concern regarding poaching. Trout have no protection and Maden is a public area, however, a proposal was made to erect a sign threatening prosecution under stock-theft legislation. Edward Truter is looking into this.

- g. **Water quality and forestry management around Gubu Dam:** the chairman reported that Amatola Forests had agreed to clear the pines along Doctor's Creek's southeast bank, the Drift's west bank and the broader area around but excluding the actual campsite. Francois Sparks of Amatola Forests mentioned that this work had been delayed due to forest fires resulting in workforce and scheduling problems. Craig Rance has also subsequently reported that it is hoped to remove the blue gum in the Otter's Creek area in the future now that the nearby sawmill will soon have the capacity to process gum. Gum and pine plantations have a negative impact on water pH, nutrient input, productivity, etc. and hence where possible it is hoped to establish an indigenous buffer around the dam. Mention was also made to Craig Rance requesting if Amatola Forests would consider removing the oak plantation growing along the main stream where it flows into Gubu Dam. For the moment, the lack of any vegetation beneath the oaks is resulting in silting of the stream and toppled oaks damming the stream's flow are causing bank erosion. If the oaks can be removed, and some stream rehabilitation done, there is a good chance that trout may be able to use this stream for limited spawning and it is currently suspected that the brown trout that turn up from time to time in Gubu have spawned in this stream.
- h. **Youth development and promoting the club:** Marco Olivieri is to follow up on contact already made with Selborne and Hudson Park re. fishing field trips to AFFC waters. Contact is also to be initiated with Stirling. Glenn Raath and Dean Stoltz reported that Selborne had already had one outing to Maden Dam. An appeal was made for members to approach their schools and also to actively promote the club amongst their peers as memberships still need to increase for the club to be economically sustainable in the long term.
- i. **AFFC website:** www.amatolaflyfishingclub.co.za has been registered and paid for (donated) by committee member, Justin Thackeray. The website is operational but under construction, however the public can be directed there for more info on the club, AFFC waters, and to download a membership form, etc.

- j. **A club boat/s at Maden Dam:** The chairman made a proposal to negotiate with Buffalo City so that one or two boats on chain and combination lock could be placed at Maden Dam for use by club members. This approach has worked well at other municipal dams in the area where municipal regulations bar the public from using boats. In the meanwhile an appeal was made to inform the club if anyone had a suitable, small and light boat available that was not being used.
- k. **2014 AGM, open day competitions, etc.:** It was agreed by all present to shift the next AGM get-together to mid-May so as to increase the likelihood of better weather and for administration reasons considering that the subs run from 1st June to 31st May.

A proposal was made to put thought into candidates for the committee and portfolios prior to the AGM and for members who wished to be involved at any level to step forward and make themselves known at any time.

- l. **2014/15 Fees (subs and day fees):** to be discussed at the 2014 AGM.
- m. **FOSAF's work with NEM:BA and FOSAF fees:** Brian Clark, the standing-in chairman of FOSAF E-Cape, gave a summary of the current state of affairs with respect to the NEM:BA act's treating of trout and how FOSAF is negotiating at govt. level for an acceptable and practical solution to managing trout distribution and trout waters. Mr. Clark also explained that although FOSAF is largely beyond the public eye, they also play an important role as environmental watch dogs and in taking up the cause where bad environmental practices threaten aquatic ecosystems.

AFFC members pay a club affiliation fee of R30 to FOSAF, which is currently paid out of the funds taken in as subs. It is proposed that as of June 2014, this affiliation fee be added to the subs.

- n. **Endangered Wildlife Trust Source to Sea program in the Amatolas:** the chairman reported that he had been informed by the Endangered Wildlife Trust that they are undertaking a project in the Amatolas looking primarily at improving conservation measures (e.g. better catchment management) with respect to a number of endemic and/or threatened species (including two species of fish, a frog, a toad, and a damsel fly). Christine Coppinger who recently completed her M.Sc. in fisheries science at Rhodes will be leading the project.
- o. **BRC (Cata & Mnyameni) feedback and promotion weekend:** a proposal made by AFFC at an April 2013 meeting with the Border Rural Council's local representatives, to have fishing access to the Cata stream and Mnyameni Dam, was positively received. Further details still need to be discussed however. For the moment though Mnyameni Dam is closed due to DWAF repairs to the dam wall and will only be re-opened in 2014.

The BRC has extended a special, promotional invitation to host AFFC members at their Cata Lodge and fish the BRC waters (including Mnyameni Dam for which DWAF has granted special permission) on the weekend of 18-20 October, all free of charge. To reserve a place contact Cata Lodge's, Boniswa on 0837340739 or 072568 926. Cata Lodge's chalets sleep 12 people i.e. 6 each and 16 if there are couples who could share a double bed (see www.amatolaflyfishing.co.za for more info on the BRC fishing project).

- 8. General: The chairman noted that he had received numerous requests with respect to fishing the Wolf River. In light of this he agreed to initiate contact with the Zingcuka community to negotiate safe access and parking areas (for a fee).
- 9. Floating trophy for the biggest *log-registered* fish caught during 2012- 2013: to Scott Blair (2.5kg).
- 10. Election of Committee for following portfolios:

Chairman	Edward Truter
Secretary	Ryan Smith
Treasurer	Glenn Raath
IT Admin, Communications & Media	Justin Thackery, Mathew Bekker to assist with FB
Clubhouse maintenance	Ryan Smith, Mathew Bekker, Rodney Webb, Shaun Peterson
Youth development (1 st member)	Marco Olivieri
Youth development (2 nd member)	Ryan Smith
Event management & Planning	Grizelda Rose, Dean Stoltz and others
Other	Dean Stoltz

- 11. Closure, followed by a tour of the Sandile Trout Farm hatchery.