**Weston-super-Mare Croquet Club**

**Meeting 13th November at 9.30**

**at 20 Southridge Heights, Bleadon Hill.**

**Committee: James Doulton – Chair; Pauline McAllister – Secretary; Jan Scotchmer – Treasurer; Lance Binning; Graham Cole; Brian Robinson.**

**MINUTES**

1. **Minutes of the Meeting of Committee meeting 6th September 2024** – were agreed.
2. **Matters arising**

An updated Cash Flow forecast was presented to address queries raised on the previous one. This does not affect the balance stated in the minutes of the last minutes.

1. **Correspondence**

* Landlord – Alistair House

PM read her email sent to AH asking for further consideration of a long lease with an option to purchase so that the Club can look for funding to make the very necessary improvements. He replied that he was still looking into this but that the sale to us was linked to the sale of another package of land, which has been delayed by complications to its planning permission. He is pursuing the matter further. GC suggested that we should not be paying rent while the delay continues.

* Winter Membership

Mike Dudley asked that a Winter membership be considered for two people brought along by Dave Channing. They have already played several times. It was resolved that a Winter membership to run from October to March would be offered at £50. The lawn fees already paid would be deducted. **Action PM**

* Advantage Handicap System

Maureen Brace had questioned the implementation of the Advantage system for internal competitions.

JD & JS took part in the South West Federation extended Zoom meeting on 12th November that was set up solely to discuss The Advantage System, prior to the SWF AGM on 24th November where it will be decided whether to adopt the Advantage System for the relevant leagues, to match the National Championships. JD & JS reported back to the committee.

Key points were that:

* + Analysis of the results in other regions where the system has been adopted confirm that it favours the weaker player. This suggests that handicaps may change a little.
  + Games seem to take longer on average, unless a time limit is applied. Who is ‘winning’ at any point is not immediately clear from the score and needs to be checked against a particular chart depending on the starting score.
  + The tables do not allow for players with a big difference in handicaps (i.e. more than 7) to play a fair game (noting that it doesn’t work well in the extra-shot scheme either). There were no work arounds proposed by any attendees, other than limiting the entrants.

After much discussion it was decided that our club does not have enough experience with the system to form a firm opinion either way, therefore we should trial the new system in internal competitions through the next season to gather wider experience, on the understanding that this could be changed as the season progresses and that there may need to be some adjustment when the handicap difference is greater than 7, as can happen in unlimited internal competitions.

1. **Lawns - MD joined the meeting**

The outfield is too wet to cut at the moment. MD has been cutting Lawns 1 and 2 fortnightly and they are both still playable. MD will monitor the situation over winter and will cut if the need and opportunity arises. Lawn cuttings will be put in the compost bin.

There are two small areas of dipped surface that could use levelling. This area is not amenable to the method used on the trench runs by Bill McAllister, Graham and Mary Cole in 2019, which still look good. Instead, it would need filling and re-seeding, and it is now too late to seed so this was postponed until March.

1. **Machinery**

The two Atco mowers have not been looked after and both need repairs. GC has been to Weston Garden Machinery. The company will be downsizing due to the illness of the owner, and they will no longer be servicing petrol machines. However, GC will contact one of their long-term employees who is setting up a petrol mower repair shop so that we can get the servicing and repairs done locally.

The white lining machine has build-up of hardened paint. GC will take it home and burn off the paint.

The small tractor is in good condition, but the big tractor needs a new belt, but GC will not fit another one until the new season.

1. **Treasurer**

The Cash Flow forecast shows a projected balance of more than £12,000 at the year end. That is about £4,000 more than at the beginning of the year. This is approximately the cost of getting a contractor to cut the lawns. It was decided to ask Ian Steward if he can do weekly lawn cutting next year, as in 2022. JD will approach him to check costs and availability. The volunteer lawn cutters would still be needed to do additional cuts prior to matches. **Action JD**

JS reported that Lloyds bank will now by levying charges on all transactions on our account. This is in line with most high street banks for this type of account, so there is not much to be gained by changing banks again at this time. JS will monitor the charges incurred and this decision may be revisited.

1. **Annual Trophy Lunch**

The result of the vote taken for the Annual trophy lunch was small majority for Batch Farm. The Lunch has been confirmed as Wed 22nd January at Batch Farm. We will shortly be contacting all members for confirmation of attendance and for meal choices. **Action PM**

1. **Fixtures 2025**

The following teams will be entered for 2025:

AC B League

AC Intermediate

GF Level Play League

GC Handicap League Ce “A”

GC Handicap League Ce “B”

GC High Handicap NW

Short Croquet team competitions (Nailsea & Budleigh)

Team captains will be confirmed next year.

PM will be Fixtures Secretary

1. **AGM**

The AGM will be on 12th February at Coronation Hall

Pauline McAllister will be standing down as club Secretary.

The meeting closed at 1.05. The next meeting will be on 8th January, the venue to be confirmed.

Signed……………………………………………………………… Date …………………………….