

**Minutes of the Open Albion Cattle Society AGM**

**held at Cotswold Farm Park on 19th October 2019**

Committee Members present at the meeting: John Ball (Chairman) & Lynn Parks (Treasurer), Susannah Mannerings (Secretary), John Pring, Mike Caunter and Lili Kersey.

The open meeting was also well attended by current members, potential members & interested persons.

Apologies were received from Ruth Dalton, (RBST,) Colin Nankervis, Bob Cowell and Graham Clews.

***Chairman’s & Secretary’s reports*** – Since the open meeting hosted by JP two years ago, the breed has achieved official breed recognition; leading to more publicity, more support- particularly from RBST, more interest with more members, more enquiries and more website hits. It is the right time to be moving forward with the breed.

***Treasurer’s report*** – At present, £2382.14 is in the account, amounting from subscriptions and kind donations. (Approximately £1500 of this was a donation for the purpose of Albion semen collection.) It was stated that subscriptions were not being regularly paid and that having a definite year start/end date should help improve this. It was decided that the annual subscription would renew on 1st January; proposed by JB, seconded by Leona Mills. LP is also looking into changing to a more user-friendly bank account.

Following discussions about membership fees & registration fees, JB proposed that membership fees should remain the same at £15 per annum but that we should start charging for registrations. This was seconded by SM.

***Appointment of Officers****-* JB, LP, JP & SM were all willing to continue in their roles; Florence Mannerings proposed them ‘en bloc’, seconded by LK. Mike Caunter was voted on to the committee; proposed by JB, seconded by Julian Stevens, Also Lili Kersey was voted on; proposed by SM, seconded by JP.

***Grading up-*** Following discussions, the room was in agreement for 3 female top crosses on a foundation cow before it can be accepted as pedigree and 4 to be registered as a pure bull. This was adopted by the society, proposed by Julian Stevens and seconded by Alan Mills. There followed discussion about the suitability of foundation cows and the need to take extreme care over what was acceptable & if there was a need for inspections. It was strongly felt that only an Albion crossed with a native breed could be considered as foundation stock, but not all native breeds eg not Dexters or Herefords. This will be looked in to further.

 ***Embryos & Semen*** – During 2019 RBST have generously paid for the collection of embryos from 2 Albions cows. One is considered a rare line about to become extinct & the other is considered a fine example of the breed; 7 embryos were obtained; RD will advise us of how these can be used.

MC stated that some embryo work is being planned at Cotswold Farm Park.

SM is planning semen collection from the 2017 white bull, Speckles Ferdinand by Barnacres Snowflake, this winter. JB is also planning to collect from a Betchton bull during 2020.

Mike Caunter is keeping a black bull calf born this Spring and JP has kept 4 bull calves entire.

LK asked if more details could be put on website regarding bulls with semen for sale; although there is not much information available, SM said she would look in to this.

***Database***- It has become clear that ACS will soon have to run its own database, which has been kindly run by Ruth Dalton (RBST) for the last few years. There are two firms which do this; Grassroots, which we use currently & Cloudlines. There may be the possibility of sponsorship to help with costs but it is clear that registration fees will need to be charged, (see treasurer’s report.) LK volunteered to run the registrations when ACS take over the database; this was gratefully accepted.

***DEFRA / FAnGR application*** – During 2019, ACS sent in an application to be accepted as a breed on the FAnGR list. More information was needed on past herdbook data which SM is looking in to. More information from the sadly deceased Alan Cheese, (author of 2 reports about Albion cattle in the 1980s,) has recently come forward, so ACS are positive they can reapply in 2020. A Zootech application could then follow on after this.

***AOB* –** John Thompson asked about current Albion numbers; SM estimated BCMS database to be about 180 (which may be not updated by all farmers) whereas RBST estimates them to be at a critical level of under 150 (calculated differently using the number of calves registered each year.)

 -It was asked if bull inspections would be carried out for any bulls with plans to have semen taken. Philip Liddell proposed that all Ai bulls going forward should be inspected; seconded by John Thompson. Guidelines for this are required and trained inspectors (at a fee,) so further thought is needed.

 **Minutes of the Albion Cattle Society Committee Meeting**

**Conference call on 13th January 2020**

Committee Members present at the meeting: John Ball (Chairman) & Lynn Parks (Treasurer), Susannah Mannerings (Secretary), John Pring, Mike Caunter and Lili Kersey and Ruth Dalton (RBST)

Apologies: Colin Nankervis.

***Database***- RD gave her leaving date (RBST) as 21st Jan and, as she has been running the Albion database, registrations etc, discussions followed to take a decision as to what follows this. Tom Brunt (RBST) can take this on for the short term. As sponsorship is not available at this time, it became clear that Cloudlines was the only one ACS can afford. RD stated it should be straight forward to change back to Grassroots at a later date when more funds were available. LK offered to approach Libby Henson about Grassroot, in case she had a more affordable proposal & also to contact Cloudlines. JB stated the importance of having a central database and offered to pay for the cost of the first year- a very generous offer.

***Registrations***- As it has been agreed to leave the subscription at £15 per year, the amount that ACS should charge for registrations was discussed. A figure of £20 was agreed for all registrations, whether heifer or bull, with no late fees at this early stage of charging. (LP proposed, SM seconded.) RD advised that all annual registrations should be in by mid-January in time for the annual rare breed registration report sent to RBST.

***Bull Inspections***- The difficulty in logistics of AI bull inspections around the country was discussed. MC proposed (LK seconded,) that a bespoke form should be designed, to take account of the breed’s conformation and characteristics. This could then be filled in by the attending vet when testing for AI. SM also suggested that when any member visits another’s Albion herd, they should always assess any bulls and suitable photographs could be used too.

***DEFRA / FAnGR application***- RD has had all her registrations printed out but feels some are missing. As FAnGR requires 40 years of registrations, RD asked the committee to study her spreadsheet to see whether they knew of any Albions which should be added to this. SM stated she has many more now that she has data from sadly deceased Alan Cheese but it would take some timely work. RD stated that when this was done, we could re-apply and should be accepted.

***AOB*** – LP is in the midst of changing the ACS bank account, the committee encouraged her to go with the easiest for her but hopefully an account where members could pay on-line.

* SM suggested that any ACS e-mail sent by committee members, should be copied to all committee members so we all know what is going on.
* LK asked if previous minutes could be put on the website. SM was concerned about private data but said this could be done. (See ‘News’ on website.)
* JP pointed out that 2021 would be the Albion cattle breed centenary and that we should plan ahead for this to gain media attention, particularly in Derbyshire. He also asked for members to keep sending in or posting up suitable Albion photographs.
* It was agreed to send £25 donation from ACS towards a leaving present for RD; a small token towards thanking her for the huge amount of work she has done for the Albion cattle breed.

**Memberships & Subscriptions–**

*On-line via website or phone: Susannah Mannerings 07733 419685*

*£15 due again now; (Any donations welcome!)*

***Please send cheques to****: Ms Lynn Parks, (treasurer)*

*Lynn House Farm, Betchton, Sandbach, Cheshire. CW11 2TX*

***Registrations -*** *On-line via website. New charge of* ***£20 per animal****. Don’t forget to send details of your calves born in 2019/20 !*

*Contact: Lili Kersey 07876 086871 lili.kersey@hotmail.co.uk*

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