



## *New England Bridge Conference of the American Contract Bridge League*

### **Minutes**

Executive Committee  
Presidential Regional  
Red Lion Inn  
Cromwell, CT  
February 16, 2019

#### Officers:

Lois DeBlois, President; Jack Mahoney, Vice President; Joseph Brouillard, Treasurer; Carolyn Weiser, Secretary; Robert Bertoni, Past President  
Unit Representatives: EMBA- Neil Montague (B. Montague alt.), Curtis Barton; CMBA- Carol Seager; CBA- Michael Wavada, Esther Watstein ; RIBA - Marshall Williams; NHBA - Sarah Widhu; VBA -Karen Randle (Wayne Hersey alt.); MBA - Daniel Morgenstern; WMBA -Peter Samsel

*Absent - Brenda Montague, EMBA, Wayne Hersey - VBA*

Invited Guests (non-voting)- Sally Kirtley, Tournament Manager; Peter Marcus, DIC; Marilyn Wells, ACBL Regional Tournament Manager;

#### **Call to Order**

#### **President's Opening remarks-** Lois DeBlois

President DeBlois welcomed Marilyn Wells, ACBL Regional Tournament Manager, to the meeting and Marshall Williams, the new President of RIBA who replaced Paula Najarian.

**Secretary's Report** -The Minutes of Executive Committee meeting held in Mansfield, MA, November 10, 2018 we accepted as sent.

#### **Treasurer's Report** - Joseph Brouillard

2018 was not a good year for District finances. We lost money at 4 of our regionals. The worst loss was at the Cape, where we lost \$11,966, an increase of \$4810 from 2017.

Working capital is down. Current Assets are also down substantially.

We did see an increase in the Grass Roots Fund. Our net income loss was almost \$12,000. We hope that the increase in table fees of \$1.00 per session will stem the tide.

The end of 2018 was bumpy for the NABC Fund. In December, There was a drop of 3.79% leaving the fund with a 15.3% return for the year. 2019 started off well and we are up since January 1 for an increase of 5.8%. We have a total return on investment of

22%. The current balance is just of \$100,000. We hope that the market will continue to improve, though we do not know where the economy is going in the short turn.

The 1099s were sent out and filed on January 28 by the IRS. The 990, due by May 15 has also been filed.

The sale of vouchers and the use of credit cards to purchase them have been going very well. The players like them. \$11,000 in \$10.00 vouchers were sold. The hotel Wi-Fi is to slow. I will install the required software on to Lois's I-Pad for Sturbridge.

(C. Barton) Would it be reasonable to out the NABC money into short-term funds to stabilize the return?

(J. Brouillard) When we hit \$105,000 we intend to start laddering the money into CD's. The budget in 2014 was \$103,000. We raised over \$40,000 in sponsorships. We returned \$64,000 to the District. This earned \$18,000. We also added \$15,000 from the general funds to the NABC Fund when were more flush. We will still need money in 2020. We would like ladder \$18,000 this July.

(S. Widhu) Will be buy an I-pad for the District?

(J. Brouillard) The issue is the data plan that goes with it. We need to use it for only 5 weeks a year. A yearly plan would be a waste of money. Lois' and I are fine with using ours. It might be more prudent to make sure we have an I-pad with a data plan. P. Marcus has multiple I-pads.

(S. Widhu) People heard about this but may not understand. We need to get more information out.

(President DeBlois) I was surprised at how many bought only for the day and came back every day.

(J. Brouillard) Citizens Bank has been terrific. Two days have already been credited to our account.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the Treasurer's report as presented.

### **Non-Life Master Gold Mine Regional**

President DeBlois noted that I/N Director, Sue Miguel was planning to join us and share what she has been working on regarding the Gold Mine, Non-life master regional, but is not able to attend. She and Peter (Marcus) are working on emails, trophies, special prizes, as well as other things. This will be a magnificent event. Many have volunteered to help.

### **Tournament Manager's Report – Sally Kirtley**

Summary -Harvest Regional, 2018

A 3-year comparison of the Harvest Regional/Nap Regional was handed out. The table count is missing. This information will be added next time.

Update - Presidential Regional

Table count is down 14 tables at this moment. It was down 52 until last night. Today was huge.

Update hotel contracts for Regionals

No new contracts have been signed.

## **Tournament / Scheduling Committee Report - Vice President, Jack Mahoney**

### Update Tournament Schedules

Current schedules will have to be redone. We are planning on going to the Cape Codder in 2020. We expect to have options for the Spring. The possible alternatives are discussed in the packet. The Cape Regional has not been successful. We want to see if the Falmouth was the problem or the Cape itself. 2020 will give us a comparison.

(C. Barton) Do we have definite dates for the Cape Codder?

(S. Kirtley) They are ok with our dates and we have the right of first refusal. I don't know about 2021. I will not sign any new contracts.

(C. Barton) If the Cape Codder solves all of our problems, can we stay there?

(S. Kirtley) They have been very accommodating. I will make sure we have the right of first refusal (for the next year) before we go there.

(C. Seager) Have we renegotiated our room block for Falmouth.

(S. Kirtley) No. If we do not meet our room block, we will have to buy a few rooms. We can negotiate a different number of rooms at the Cape Codder. We met our number at Falmouth. It is 415, we can absorb a 20% attrition, without penalty.

### Mansfield KO's

We have an issue with the early week KO's. We have to do something to ameliorate the situation. Moving the NAP "As" to Mansfield and killing the KO's might be the best solution. We kept the KOs to give the As a place to play. If we include the As, Bs, and Cs in the same place, it would preclude the possibility of Bs competing in the As and then in the Bs later. Mansfield is more centrally located. There is very little overlap in the players who play in B and A. We would keep the A-B-C Pairs and the A-B-C Swiss. The mid-week KO's would continue. President DeBlois added that we will need to promote this. Sue Miguel has named this mid-week KO the "Knock-IN." The first day is a Swiss. The survivors get "knocked in" to the KO the next day. We would like to use this, if popular, at the Cape and at other mid-week KOs.

(J. Mahoney) We had one negative response from the As regarding the Thursday round-robin.

(B. Bertoni) We would maintain the traditional KO for Saturday and Sunday. We would use the Knock-in the rest of the time. This is the best format for a small field.

### Change in Cromwell Schedule

The Committee approved a proposal to change the Cromwell schedule to Tuesday to Sunday. Monday is a ghost town. The numbers have been abysmal. Sally (Kirtley) has spoken to the hotel and it is not a problem.

(M. Wavada) Has anyone checked with Donna Feir (Hartford Bridge Club) to see if this makes a difference to her?

(J. Mahoney) The numbers for Tuesday and Wednesday both are much better than Monday. Peter's (Marcus) numbers support the change.

### Sponsors for Regionals

We are working on a form to be used for sponsorships for our Regionals. We would offer individual games, or days. We are working on the application form and fee

structure. We want to start small and fill all the game slots and make this a tradition. Eventually we might be able to include larger sponsors for the whole regional. Rusty Kraus was very helpful and will continue to help as we progress. Margo Hennings has given me information on what other regionals have done.

(E. Watstein) We have to be careful to review the names. There are some names we would want to avoid.

(J. Mahoney) All the names will be reviewed. When we get to that point, someone will be in charge of reviewing the names and accepting the money.

### **Items that Require Votes- President DeBlois**

Everyone has received a packet on the items under consideration.

1. Location of the Senior Regional in 2020.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted, without dissent, to move the Senior Regional to the Cape Codder in Hyannis for 2020. We will continue to investigate locations for 2021.

2. Move the NAP A to Mansfield

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to move the Flight A KO's to Mansfield in 2020.

3. Try KO's at the Cape.

We plan to introduce KO's to the Senior Regional. We will try a new format that provides for a round-robin Swiss for the first day and a full KO for the second day.

4. Change the Cromwell

A motion was made, seconded and so voted, without dissent, to change the schedule for the Presidential Regional from Wednesday to Monday to Tuesday to Sunday. This is contingent on hotel availability.

5. District 25 will proceed with a plan to introduce sponsorship for Regional events. The final plan will be presented to the Executive Committee for approval before anything is put into practice or sold.

#### **J. Mahoney**

We need to use different formats for the Mid-week and weekend KOs. The number of teams does not always meet the required critical mass during the week. The ACBL has approved an alternate format. It has not been tried yet. There is nothing wrong with using two different formats, as long as we are clear in the flyers. This would give us information we could use when making decisions for other regionals. We would need to advertise it once we have decided how it will be run. Peter Marcus will use whatever format the players want.

6. Regionals at Clubs

Peter Marcus

There is a loop hole in the ACBL conditions of contest that allows all clubs to run games as part of the regionals as Regional side games. These would add to the table count for those who attended the Regional. The cost would be “0” to us. It would cost the clubs special registration and fees. Potentially this is a political minefield. The ACBL has allows others to ignore the rules. If we wanted to try this, we could do so on an experimental basis. We could do it with the evening side game. It would benefit the smaller clubs. We could choose to do it with other sessions too. We could start at the Cape with clubs on the Cape, opposite the side games only. There would be an additional fee of \$11 per table plus the sanction fee. We would need to receive \$16.00 per table from the participating clubs. (they would have to add their usual fee to that number) There is a possibility that this would cost us players at the regionals. If so, we could stop the practice. It would operate similar to a STaC. There are always on-line issues regarding potential cheating opportunities.

(J. Mahoney) This would be part of our side-game series. A player would have to play in two sessions to get gold. All participating clubs would be added as a separate section.

(J. Brouillard) This might be a way to minimize our losses at Falmouth this year.

(P. Marcus) I do not believe that the clubs have hardened their schedule for April. I think the clubs could adjust their schedule. We would have to charge \$16.00 per table (\$4.00 per person) What each club would charge would be up to them. The hand records would be sent to the clubs and they would have to send their game files in to use.

(B. Bertoni) This is politically highly charged. I think it is a great idea. I think that we should mandate that the clubs charge \$15.00, the same as a player coming here would have to play. We might consider a radius of 45 or 60 miles as ineligible to participate.

(M. Wavada) What about the Senior restrictions at the at the Cape?

(P. Marcus) They would have to meet the Senior requirement to participate. Everyone in the “section” would have to be eligible. `

(J. Brouillard) I understand why you would want a restricted radius. They will be working on the bridge again this year. This might be a way to increase attendance at the side game. This might decrease the number who would come, even more. I think we should wave the mileage restriction.

(J. Mahoney) For places like Maine and Vermont, this would be the best thing ever. Few com in any case.

(President DeBlois) We need a motion to go forward with this. We need to work out the details with Jack and Peter. The Board would have to be notified. We could use an email for approval. We need the group to consider this.

A motion was made, and seconded that Jack, Peter and Bob work out a plan for a side game(s) at the Cape at which clubs could participate. When this plan is completed it will be sent out via email to the Executive Committee for approval. The motion was seconded and so approved, without dissent.

7. Second Alternate District Director

The election for District Director created an opening for 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate District Director as the ACBL regulations stipulate that when the I was elected District Director, Carole Weinstein moved up to the position of First Alternate District Director, leaving the position of 2<sup>nd</sup> alternate District Director vacant. This vacancy was sent to the Executive Committee members. This person would represent the District at the meeting of the Board of Governors. The position is up for election this year and the individual elected would serve for 3 years starting January 1.

No one has indicated any interest in this position. We know someone who is interested and would like to offer it to Sabrina Miles. She attends the NABCs. I would like the Executive Committee to approve this selection, should she accept. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to approve Sabrina Miles and the interim 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate District Director.

**District Director's Report - Robert Bertoni**

President DeBlois sent out a number of motions that I want the Executive Committee to consider. That one referring to the NAP Finals is now moot with the permanent switch of the event to Mansfield.

I have already gone through an intense, online, initiation procedure. I am going to Horn Lake for 4 days before the NABC in March. I have been placed on the two committees: the NABC Review Committee, which helps select the sites for the NABCs. Future sites were discussed during a number of phone conferences. At one point, two consecutive sites in District 7, Atlanta and Charlotte, were under consideration that were in the same District. The Committee recommended Portland Oregon for the Spring 2024. Our report was accepted by Mark Harmon.

The second committee is the Bridge Committee. There has not been much yet. I will be getting the agenda soon.

I have set up a separate website - [district25director.org](http://district25director.org)- where I will post information, polls, and other items of interest. Anyone can email me there. I can also be reached at [BobBertoni@acbl.org](mailto:BobBertoni@acbl.org) and at [District25director@acbl.org](mailto:District25director@acbl.org). Mike Wavada has also out in a link at the District website.

There is one matter on which I would like to take a straw poll. The question has come up on the reinstatement of collusive cheaters. There is a move to reinstate Lenzarotti, who was barred. The BoG motion was to permanently bar collusive cheaters. I also hate cheaters, but I also know that there is redemption in this world, and am therefore, conflicted. The question is whether collusive cheaters should never be allowed to play again.

(D. Morgenstern) Regardless of a new vote, no change should be retroactive.

B. Bertoni asked for a show of hands. The majority voted for the possibility of readmittance.

Mark Aquino did a lot of good work. He got a motion passed that allows two teams from the B & C flights to advance to the GNT Finals if the field is at least 8 teams. We pay a \$2000 to the winners. I make a motion that we allocate \$1200 for the B & C flight second and third place teams. We would fund this using the Grass Roots money. The current cost is \$8,000 the new cost would be \$10,400. If the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place tied, there would have to be a playoff for the stipend. The motion was seconded and so voted.

Currently the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place NAP finalists get no financial assistance from the ACBL. Each player from our District is given \$100. I make a motion that the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place pairs in the NAP be given a stipend of \$200 rather than \$100. This would be a total additional cost of \$1,000. This would also be paid from the Grass Roots Fund money. The motion was seconded and so voted.

We currently provide the GNT players a chit worth \$5.00 toward their lunch. I would like to replace this with a subsidized breakfast, similar to what is provided to the Board of Delegates. It would be served from 8:30 to 9:30 or 8:15 to 9:15. We would no longer give them a lunch ticket. It will be expensive.

(C. Weiser) This is an open ended cost. We do not know how many will come or how many who are eligible will come early enough to participate. If we do this once, it will become an expectation and it is hard to take it away. Many players will not be able to get to the site by the earlier time. What would you do with the Goldmine players who are also there?

(B. Bertoni) We could make this part of the Gold Mine this year as part of the grand opening. It would be intended as a one-time event.

(M. Wavada) There are other non-district and non-GNT events on Sunday.

(J. Brouillard) What would be the estimated cost.

(S. Kirtley) About \$13.50 per person.

(J. Brouillard) My concern is that you will get a lot of Gold Mine and non-district players there on Sunday.

(C. Seager) We will be removing what they get now.

(M. Williams) People will ask "where's my lunch ticket?" that everyone is used to getting.

(President DeBlois) Could we do less?

(J. Brouillard) Could we do a buffet for \$200? Spending \$1700 is not sustainable. We still have to provide hospitality the rest of the days. We spent \$1,700 last year and it wasn't for just one day.

(P. Marcus) we are giving \$1000 away in special treats. This year is unique. It will never be this way again.

(B. Bertoni) It would give the out-of-towners a reason to stay in the hotel.

(S. Kirtley) we already spend \$16.50 per table in hospitality, which is just over \$4.00 per player. The day travelers won't know about the experiment.

(J. Brouillard) I think it is too expensive. The number of people is unknown.

The motion to provide breakfast to the players Sunday morning was called. The motion carried 9-3 with one abstention.

#### **NABC Update-** Joe Brouillard

The website has been updated. Most of the chair positions have been filled. We are happy with the number of people who have volunteered. Because it is a Summer

NABC, the Youth Bridge Tournament will be included. Wendy Sullivan is no longer with the ACBL. We will be working with Mark Hudson. He has been very responsive and we work well with him. There is a new policy regarding the funding of hospitality. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded and so voted at 7:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Carolyn Weiser  
Secretary, District 25