



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

Executive Committee Meeting  
Ocean State Regional  
Warwick, RI  
Friday, September 1, 2023

Attendance

**Officers:** Curtis Barton, President; Joe Brouillard, Treasurer; Carolyn Weiser, Secretary  
**Unit Representatives:** EMBA - Paul Harris, Brenda Montague, CMBA - Denise Bahosh;  
CBA - William Seagraves (P. Marcus alt.), Michael Wavada; RIBA - Susan Miguel;  
NHBA - William Kennedy; VBA- Steve Ackerman; WMBA- Yan Drabeck (P. Samsel alt.)

**Invited Guests:** Mark Aquino, Regional Director; Sally Kirtley, Tournament Manager;  
David Metcalf, Tournament Advisor; Gary Peterson, Webmaster

**Absent:** Jack Mahoney, Past President, MBA - Daniel Morgenstern; WMBA - Peter Samsel

**Call to Order-** President Barton called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM

I am sure that everyone is aware that Vice President Mark Oettinger resigned effective immediately. President Barton asked for a motion to approve Susan Miguel to fill the current vacancy of Vice President for the remainder of 2023.

W. Kennedy (NHBA) made the motion, which was seconded and passed without dissent.

**Secretary's Report-** Carolyn Weiser

A motion was made, seconded, and so approved to accept the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held at the Granite State Regional in Nashua, NH on Saturday, June 24, 2023 as sent.

**Tournament Manager's Report -** Sally Kirtley

Review of Granite State Regional

We had a gain of \$144 in Nashua. This was the first positive in Nashua for many years.

Marlboro Gala

The Marlboro Gala is scheduled to begin on October 31, 2023 to avoid Election Day. There was some discussion at the Tournament Committee meeting regarding holding this tournament (Warwick) a week before or a week after Labor Day next year.

## **Tournament/Scheduling Committee Report – Sue Miguel**

Recommendations:

Fast Pairs - The Committee recommends the making the pair game on the last day Fast Pairs.

Consolidation of Youth Bridge fees -We are very concerned with gaining and retaining youth players. The committee agreed that D-25 should simplify the various discount fee schedules for players under 26 and make the entry fee for all NLMs under 26 \$5.00. After a brief discussion, a motion was made and seconded to accept the Youth Bridge fee proposal as made. It was accepted without dissent.

GNT and NAP – on-line – Both the GNTs and NAPs currently are held on-line. We have left the entry fee at \$15.00. Although there were no additional costs associated with online play, there is the issue of the stipends. Since these games should be self-supporting and we do not have enough Grass-Roots money to cover them, the TSC committee recommends that the fee be raise to \$20.00. The resulting profit should be earmarked for the stipends. General discussion followed.

RD M. Aquino – We have been tapping our residuals.

Pres. Barton – By 2025 we will not have the money. The rest of the District should not be expected to subsidize an event that they did not enter. The next GNT is on-line with face-to-face finals for the Championship and A-flight.

A motion was made and seconded to raise the free for the NAPs and GNTs to \$20.00. It was passed with one abstention.

## **Regional Director’s Report – Mark Aquino**

There are a lot of things going on in bridge. Membership, which dropped significantly during covid, has begun to bounce back. We dropped from 165,000 to 130,000. Everyone should be alerted that the fees and dues will go up next year.

On-line bridge has started to decline and face-to-face bridge has started to comeback. During the covid crisis, people such as J. Whipple and Uday Ivatury volunteered their time and technical expertise and succeeded in keeping the game going. BBO changed the interface structure but now things are beginning to flip-flop. The solutions they and the ACBL developed actually created a lot of other issues that we’re trying to unravel. There is a lot going on in the IT group trying to significantly improve and address many obsolete software platforms such as AS-400.

If anyone knows a player who is tempted to cheat on-line, tell them not to try. Suspensions and other disciplinary actions have increased. A significant number of people are being caught.

D. Metcalf noted that it is easier to cheat on-line than in person.

W. Seagraves added that he has worked on these cases.

(M. Aquino) Players have to accept that bridge is not poker.

W. Seagraves cautioned, that if a player has been caught cheating, it is better for him to come forward to Jeff Edelstein and confess. If he does, he (Edelstein) will be the first to help.

(M. Aquino) Bronia has set up communication forums. President Barton added that there was very poor attendance at her recent on-line meeting with the District Presidents. Only

13 of 25 attended. P. Harris noted that he had not been informed of such a meeting. RD. Aquino will check into this.

B. Seagraves asked whether a Unit President could assign an alternate to sit in for the president. President Barton said that they could.

RD Aquino ended by saying that BBO is owned by a French corporation. The current contract will be up in 2025.

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

Financially we are OK. The Statement of Financial Position shows that are current assets are down from last year. Our current liabilities are \$2,320. We have no long-term debt. Our Unrestricted assets are \$16,000 lower than last year. The Grass Roots Fund is also approximately \$6,000 lower than last year. The National Fund is up \$15,000 from last year at this time.

There are still unpaid sanction fees from the last District STaC. I am still chasing clubs. The unpaid sanction fees are shown as a liability because we have collected the money but not paid any, therefore the cash position is not overstated.

There are no final numbers in the Operating Income Statement for the GNTs that were held in June. I hope to have them soon. The numbers will be updated in November. Tournament Income stands at \$4,308. Non-tournament Income, including dividends is up \$6,000 from last year. We receive 4.98% in our Fidelity cash account. We received \$4,331 in Grass-roots money from the ACBL. We paid out over \$10,000 in stipends. We cannot continue this for more than one year. We need to encourage the Units to hold Grass-roots fund games at the sectionals. This increases the masterpoint payout to the players considerably. The STaC made \$5,199 from which the ACBL fees and other expenses must be paid. Total Operating Expenses to date are \$18,639. The bottom line shows a loss of \$3,041 for the year to NAPs, GNTs and stipends. The National Fund earned \$9,635 at Fidelity as it earned a 14.5% return.

(RD M. Aquino) Historically there has been a correlation between Unit 10 and D-25 as to the GRF money that was received from the ACBL. Prior to covid, both districts received approximately \$15,000 per year. During the covid lockdown, this changed. In 2021, they received \$1,600 and we received only \$600. In August 2023, they received \$10,900 and we receive about \$4,500. The differences may be due to the warmer and longer bridge season they enjoy and the differences in the decline in the number of clubs and the money received from clubs and sectionals holding GRF games. What's noteworthy is that their district has only 5,000 members, whereas ours has 7,000+.

(J. Brouillard) We need to run more GRF games at both clubs and sectionals.

(M. Wavada) We (CBA) used to run two on Friday. At the last two sectionals, Friday was bigger than Saturday or Sunday.

(President Barton) Can the District run them?

(D. Metcalf) Yes, our evening games are GRF Games.

(J. Brouillard) Who is responsible for chasing the STaC money?

(Pres. Barton) The Treasurer with help as required.

Discussion followed.

(C. Weiser) EMBA sent letters to delinquent clubs setting a deadline for payment after which a club would be barred from the next STaC. This worked quite well.

(P. Marcus) CBA picked up the fees for their clubs that participated.

(J. Brouillard) Detailed instructions were posted on the website and linked to the payment form.

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

**Old Business-** none

**New Business**

ACBL Lapsed Member Initiative

Pres. Barton – The response to the message I sent to D-25 clubs as requested by the ACBL was very small. The current list appears not to be up to date.

ACBL Charity Foundation – President Barton

D-25 received a \$10,000 grant from the ACBL to disburse to charities within our District. I requested suggestions. Five were received. The selection is Gifts to Give.

Sponsorship

Joe (Brouillard) paid the sponsor fee for tomorrow. We need a chair to handle this. It will never bring in big money, but it will bring in some.

Pro-Am Games

M. Wavada suggested that the TSC should consider Pro-Am games at the regionals at night. We tried it in the past and it was well received. General discussion followed. No decision was made.

A motion was made, seconded and so passed to adjourn the meeting at 7:10.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carolyn Weiser, Secretary, District 25