

*New England Conference of the American Contract Bridge League*

Minutes

Executive Committee Meeting

Mansfield, MA

November 9, 2013

Attendance:

Officers: Ausra Geaski, President; Carolyn Weiser, Secretary; Robert Erwin, Past President,  
Unit Representatives: EMBA: Dean Panagopoulos, David Aronson; CMBA: Bruce Emond; CBA: Allan  
Clamage, Esther Watstein ; RIBA: Lois DeBlois; NHBA: Joe DeGaetano, (Wayne Burt alt.); MBA:  
Richard Budd; WMBA: David Rock

Invited Guests: Richard DeMartino, District Director; Joseph Brouillard, Co-chair Providence NABC;

Absent: Mark Aquino, Vice President; Donald Levy Treasurer; David Aronson (EMBA); Wayne Burt  
(NHBA); Helen Pawlowski, Tournament Manager/Co-chair Providence NABC

President Geaski welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 5:10 pm. Vice President Mark Aquino was unable to attend due to business commitments and Treasurer Don Levy is in Florida in his son's wedding. D. Aronson will give his report. D. Rock stepped in for Mark at the Tournament Committee meeting and President Geaski for the "B"s Needs Committee. Helen Pawlowski's father died suddenly Monday and she has been with her family. Joe Brouillard and Peter Marcus stepped in, as did many others.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the Minutes of August 31, 2013 from the Warwick Executive Committee meeting.

**Treasurer's Report - David Aronson**

Don came to Mansfield and worked with our previous Treasurer, District Director DeMartino to iron out some minor difference in the \$252.56 interest amount. This will be reflected in a corrected addendum. R. DeMartino added that this was due to a difference in when the interest was credited and that everything seems fine. D. Aronson continued that our cash assets for this year have increased by 13,342.52 over 2013, due to the increase in table fees. The figures as presented are through the first ten months. No bills for expenses for 2013 have been received from the Tournament Manager or Secretary. These will be reflected in the end-of-year report. Our Bank of American operating account now includes the money from the \$38,679.21 People's United CD that came due in October. Our available cash as of October 31, 2013 is \$52,001.90. The Bank of America CD of \$99,217.13 that will come due in January plus the District contribution of \$20,752.20 equal the \$119,969.33 that will be made available to the 2014 National Committee. A. Clamage asked how much we really need in the National Fund. Joe Brouillard responded that the District will contribute a total of \$130,000. R. DeMartino noted that we want to leave at least \$50,000 as seed money for the next Nationals. J. Brouillard added that as of now it seems likely that will get a sizable contribution from an additional source. D. Aronson continued that we need to discuss with H. Pawlowski and J. Brouillard when the District should stop contributing, which we could do at any time. E. Watstein asked where the money comes from. D. Aronson answered that it come from the table fees that are paid by the players. DeMartino noted that we put up \$86,000 for the last Nationals. Outstanding liabilities for GNT contributions and National contributions per tournament through October 31, 2013 amount to \$2,468 and \$20,752.20 respectively. Don Levy will compile the end of the year report as of December 31, 2013. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the report as presented.

**Treasurer's Report - David Aronson**

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addendum. R. DeMartino added that this was due to a difference in when the interest was credited and that everything seems fine. D. Aronson continued that our cash assets for this year have increased over 2013, due to the increase in table fees. The figures as presented are through the first ten months. No bills for expenses for 2013 have been received from the Tournament Manager or Secretary. These will be reflected in the end-of-year report. Our Bank of America operating account now includes the money from the People's United CD that came due in October. The Bank of America CD that will come due in January plus the District contribution will be made available to the 2014 National Committee as requested. A. Clamage asked how much we really need in the National Fund. R. DeMartino noted that we want to leave at least \$50,000 as seed money for the next Nationals. J. Brouillard added that as of now it seems likely that will get a sizable contribution from an additional source. D. Aronson continued that we need to discuss with H. Pawlowski and J. Brouillard when the District should stop contributing, which we could do at any time. E. Watstein asked where the money comes from. D. Aronson answered that it come from the table fees that are paid by the players. Outstanding liabilities for GNT contributions and National contributions per tournament through October 31, 2013 amount to \$2,468 and \$20,752.20 respectively. Don Levy will compile the end of the year report as of December 31, 2013. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the report as presented.

### **District Director's Report - Richard DeMartino**

I will ask the Delegates for their input regarding some proposed changes in the National schedule of events. There will be discussions regarding Directors responsibilities. These differ around the country. In some places, such things as the number of boards played are determined by the Directors. There is a question as to whether they should be determined by the Districts. This will be decided in the summer. We are fine here.

ACBL Score is a bit behind schedule, but we have been assured that it will be ready in 2014. The old system will still be valid through 2015. Anyone interested in being part of the testing should contact Rich.

### **Tournament Manager's Report - Helen Pawlowski**

Note: Financials for Mansfield were send earlier by H. Pawlowski and forwarded to the members of the Executive Committee and those Delegates who requested a copy.

President Geaski noted that though the bottom line has improved, we should be cautious and watch the trends over the next year or two.

P. Marcus introduced Marilyn Wells, who has been running the tournament so that she will have the experience needed to take over should it be necessary.

To date we have 801 tables, which is up from the total of 875 for last year. If tomorrow matches last year we will be up 60 tables or 8 ½ %. We need to remember that we had a snowstorm last year that affected attendance. We had an issue with the Compact KO yesterday. There were five real "A" flight teams with a drop off from 21,000 mps to 8,700 from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> place. The developed after game time. After much consideration and discussion, the "A" flight event was not held. Four (of 6) pairs of the "A" teams played in the pairs game and one withdrew. Both the "A" and "B" teams brought up valid items to consider. The top teams were promised a game and the "B"s were promised that they would play equivalent teams. This situation is not sustainable. P. Marcus made two suggestions: that the Tournament Committee make a policy statement that the Director will do the best they can to run events or that all KO's will be flighted. That way not "B" team will ever play a top team or that the Executive Committee make a unanimous recommendation that, effective immediately, all KO's (CKO's) be flighted. D. Aronson, who was present during the problem, stated that he felt that P. Marcus did the best that he could do under the situation. R. DeMartino cautioned that the Executive Committee should consider any decision carefully. It would results in our having "A" events on the Schedule and having no game. We have an enormous problem in this area and need to work it out. The number of tops teams that come to our Regionals diminished to almost nothing. This could mean the end to weekday competitive KO's. If we lose the "pro's" this will be a real loss. President Geaski stated that the Executive Committee needs to consider the options. To guarantee that players never play against "A" players is impractical. We have

tried different suggestions over time and have not found a solution. P. Marcus added that the problem occurs at every tournament. Newton is flighted already. All the rest have had some issues. He added that as DIC he cannot run these events and be subjected to what happened yesterday. President Geaski stated that we need to come up with a policy that will work for our Directors. There is no perfect answer. R. Erwin noted that Long Island has only Swiss. We alternate KO's and Swiss every day. Has the Tournament Committee considered converting to all Swiss?

### **Tournament Committee Report - David Rock**

The move to all Swiss was suggested. Every day has a pair and a team game. For example, the Gold Rush Swiss has an A/X Swiss. Every event opposite a Gold Rush event should have the stratifications changed to reflect the fact that most 0-750 players are in the Gold Rush. We should move the "C" stratification to 1500 and keep the "B" at 3000. This would help the players with 750-1500 mps. It was suggested that an analysis of the current stratifications be undertaken as the mix of players changes as the tournament progresses. A motion was made by R. Budd, seconded and so voted that:

in those events that are played opposite a Gold Rush event the "C" stratification of should be changed to 0-1500, effective in Nashua. The stratification limit should be reviewed after two tournaments.

We should establish a policy to support our directors on how to handle the KO issue. This does not have to be made until Newton, as there are no KO's in Newton. There will be a meeting of the Tournament Committee in Newton. We should make a decision to flight the KO's, give the Director the authority to make the decision, or eliminate the mid-week CKO. P. Marcus noted that the place it will be a problem is Cromwell. If we make the decision today, we will have time to publicize it. if we wait until January, it will be more difficult. D. Rock made a motion that the Executive Committee authorize the DIC to do what he feels he need to do until such time as the Executive Committee makes a specific decision on how to handle these events. The motion was seconded and so voted.

The Tournament Committee discussed the issue of "0" tolerance. It recommends that the Directors make an announcement regarding "0" tolerance before each game. The committee felt that if the Director is called to a table it should "in general" be referred to the Recorder. D. Budd reminded the Executive Committee that he does not act until he gets something in writing. P.M. agreed.

P. Marcus compiled a great deal of data that was sent to A. Clamage. B. Bertoni will transfer this file into Access where it can be more easily made into useful reports. He will try for Newton. We can then send a named and dated certificate for a free play at a specific Regional to those who no longer come in an attempt to entice them to return. We will ask the Directors to greet these returnees appropriately, when they present their certificate. Follow up is needed. The committee recommends that the National Goodwill Chair (Sandy DeMartino) be asked to do this job. R. DeMartino suggested that she will agree. we need to do much more regarding volunteerism and welcoming of players. A. Clamage added that Peter's information covers many years. He suggests a simpler alternative, which will be discussed later.

The Tournament Committee also looked at the possibility of having a Regional in the northern tier. R. Budd stated that the Portland site would only be feasible in the Fall. Dan McGuire suggested North Conway that would be marketed for its shopping. President Geaski asked that the representatives from the northern tier let their players know that we are trying to find a site.

### **Use of the Grass Roots FUNd money - Ausra Geaski**

We discussed possible used of the Grass Roots Fund money that we get from the ACBL. As time was so limited, we decided to survey the members of the Executive Committee on-line to see if there was any consensus. Every year we will get some money, but the exact amount will depend on many factors. D. Panagopolous stated that he would like to spend some of the money we have received on a mailing to those who played over the last five years. This is an ideal time to do this, as the event will be held on march 1<sup>st</sup> this year, which is very different. He estimated that he would need between \$500 and \$750 to do the postcard mailing. As a club manager, he knows that when he asks his players to add a dollar, most players do care where it goes and want to know what it will be used for. A. Clamage asked if the website is up to date on the change. D. Panagopoulos made a motion that for this year the Executive Committee

authorize the spending of up to \$750 for increased publicity for the GNT's. The motion was seconded and so voted.

**NABC Providence- J Brouillard**

We had our one-year-out meeting with Wendy and Jeff on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. It was very productive. They were both very helpful. The ACBL has also agreed to be a sponsor for Waterfire. We will also receive \$2,500 toward the pre-tournament entertainment for the ACBL . We will also receive \$2,500 toward the pre-tournament entertainment for the ACBL Board. The Volunteer Dinner will be held at the Biltmore. We did a walkthrough of the Convention Center and playing areas. We had a committee change. Kathy Sallar resigned from the Finance Committee. Linda Ahrens will take that slot. Arlene Seguin will handle Tours. She is a retired school teacher whose sister and brother-in-law have run a tour business for over 20 years. Magnets, book marks, and various promotional materials were handed around. The purchase and wearing of tee and polo shirts was encouraged. Anyone going to Phoenix was encouraged to purchase one and wear it when there. Lois DeBlois, Helen and Joe are going to Phoenix to publicize the NABC and the Providence Visitors Bureau will also be there. The Committee is producing a new banner, as they did not like the one that the ACBL had done. Phyllis Chase is trying to secure sponsorship from the well-known Providence firm of Alex and Ani. The website is up and running. It is 80-90% complete thanks to Bob Bertoni. All the promotional material has the website address on it. The schedule is just about complete thanks to the work of Jay Appelbaum, Richard DeMartino and Adam Parrish. Once the schedule is on the ACBL website, we will link to it. E. Watstein asked the Committee send something to the CBA so that they can put it on their website.

National Goodwill/ Charity selection - Richard DeMartino

Suggestions for this year's selection were solicited. A decision will be made later. I also would like to acknowledge Bob Erwin for his incredible contributions to the District and ask that be recognized, as this is his last meeting as Past President.

President Geaski ended the meeting by thanking everyone for their help during the past two years. She promised to continue to be active.

R. Budd made a motion that was seconded and so voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carolyn Weiser  
Secretary - District 25