

New England Bridge Conference of the American Contract Bridge League

Minutes

Executive Committee

Radisson Hotel

Nashua, NH

June 21, 2014

Attendance:

Officers: Mark Aquino, President; David Rock, Vice President; Don Levy, Treasurer; Carolyn Weiser, Secretary; Ausra Geaski, Past President

Unit Representatives: EMBA: Bob Bertoni (D. Aronson, alt.) Dean Panagopoulos; CMBA: Bruce Emond; CBA: Allan Clamage, Esther Watstein; RIBA: Lois DeBlois; NHBA: Wayne Burt; MBA: Dick Budd;

Invited Guests: Richard DeMartino, District Director; Joseph Brouillard, Co-chair Providence NABC; Helen Pawlowski, Tournament Manager/Co-chair Providence NABC Peter Marcus, DIC

Absent: EMBA: David Aronson, WMBA: Robert Derrah

Call to Order- President Aquino

President Aquino called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. He noted that the numbers were again down at the Regional and that it would be long road back to profitability.

Secretary's Report - A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting at Hyannis, May 3, 2014.

"B's" Needs Committee Report - Ausra Geaski

The B's Needs Committee has continued to meet at the regionals with representatives from most units. We hope VBA and MBA players will, also, join the meetings. We continue to review the list of Recommendations and Action Items for the Regional level, as well as, suggestions for activities at the club level. Some items have been implemented and the efforts have been well received. The Welcome Desk has received many favorable comments from the players. Thanks to Sandy DeMartino for kicking this off very successfully in Cromwell, Ginny Iannini who continued this at the Cape, and Wayne Burt, his wife Susan, and Sara Widhu for the great work in Nashua. Also, thanks to all who volunteered to help out at the Welcome Desks. Mike Wavada has continued to take pictures of winners at the regional events and posting them on the website. Joyce Stiefel and Mark Aquino have worked diligently to set up the lecture series, expert panel and lessons which are going well. Suggestions for improvements include making the times of the lectures more consistent at each tournament and ensuring that the speakers can be heard by all attending which might require a microphone at future tournaments. Helen Pawlowski has been posting and updating the Leader Board, set up a Suggestion Box, and displayed the Zero Tolerance posters provided by the ACBL. Everyone's efforts are very much appreciated since this can only be done if players are willing to volunteer to help.

Everyone can help by publicizing our events at the club level, particularly the new 0-4000 KO. Publicity for the October Regional, regardless of the final format that will be possible, is critical. We want to sustain the positive accomplishments for next year. Our first goal for next year is to find ways to transition players from the Gold Rush to the next level. We need to excite and bring in new players. Publicity is the best thing that we can do. Bring the Regional flyers to the clubs you attend. Announce upcoming Regionals there. We need to attract a broader audience. E. Watstein asked is we were using ACBL Blast. We are.

The B's Needs Committee welcomes any suggestions to help make the D25 regional tournaments more player-friendly and increase attendance. Anyone wishing to help out should join the B's Needs

Committee meetings at the regionals. The date/time of the meetings is posted in the Daily Bulletin during the regional.

Tournament Committee Report - David Rock

The Tournament Committee met today. We briefly discussed and revisited Allan Clamage's findings regarding the game times at the Senior Regional. Though we did not have enough time to discuss it in depth, it appears that the switch to daylight may have had a negative effect on room pick-up and attendance. We also discussed the "Egg"; but will be unsure as to what we can do until after the meeting of the Board of Directors in Las Vegas. H. Pawlowski explained that our original commitment at the hotel was for 5 days and that the room commitment would be the same for 4 or 5 days. Shortening the tournament would only increase the risk that we would not meet our room commitment. The committee unanimously voted to recommend a 5-day tournament. P. Marcus explained that changing the regional from 5-4 days rather than saving money would cause the reverse. We currently have flyers out with no events. The ACBL threw us a curve. This tournament does not have a chance without promotion. Here the 0-4000 KO had 17 teams and the event should be put on our schedule. This tournament was down 16.7% from last Sturbridge.

R. DeMartino stated that we must start advertising immediately and hard. M. Aquino added that we cannot promote what we will not know definitively until the ACBL Board of Director meets in Las Vegas in the middle of July. R. DeMartino continued that we can advertise the tournament as a Gold Rush tournament, and he was confident that the ACBL will allow it.

A motion was made that we run the October Tournament for five days as the room commitment is the same for a 4 or 5 day tournament. W. Hersey added that he has already received information on the tournament from Sue Miguel. The motion was seconded. B. Emond asked H. Pawlowski for confirmation that in fact the room commitment would be the same, and she confirmed this.

The motion was called and passed. (A motion was made that we run the October Tournament for five days as the room commitment is the same for a 4 or 5 day tournament.)

Scheduling Committee Report – Bob Bertoni

I have heard of problems with bridge professionals who do not like our schedule or the early start times. If the ACBL Board votes in Las Vegas to allow a change in the number of strats allowed, this will be a great help to us in attracting players. Cromwell would be the first tournament at which we could make any significant changes. The Committee has two recommendations. There was a vote in the Executive Committee to allow pairs to be stratified at 3000 and 750 by average. This change should be instituted. The 0-4000 KO was not a disaster. We did not get the hoped for 3 brackets but we did get two. The point awards were good. People liked the event. The Committee recommends that we continue this in Cromwell. It should consider putting a Flight A on top. With 4000 as the break point, it would become a safe haven for those leaving the Gold Rush. If we had 4 strats, it would work. The Friday-Saturday KO is A-open and B-Bracketed should continue. Discussion followed regarding the potential problem of reintroducing an early week KO too early, before we are sure we can populate it. If the pros come back and find events cancelled again, it would be a long, hard road to get them to return again. R. DeMartino added that we do not tamper with Friday night and strongly suggests that we do not put in a schedule unless we are sure it will run. We can't have players come and then not have an event. If we tinker with Cromwell, we could kill that too. R. DeMartino suggested that B. Bertoni ask the Delegates for their opinion in Sunday.

Treasurer's Report - Don Levy

I am working with Linda Robinson to create better financial reports. We had a profit in Hyannis of which is deceptive as it is over \$5,000 less than the profit in 2013. Losses for the first three

tournaments are over \$12,000, despite our raising our rates. We continue to lose table count. Net assets have dropped over \$20,5000 from January 1.

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

D. Levy passed out the Massachusetts Attorney General's Guide for Board Members of Charitable Organizations, pages 9-10, which emphasizes the need for a budget and financial oversight. The members of the Executive Committee were asked to review this for further discussion in Warwick. President Aquino added that this is what he has been advocating for a long time, It is not meant as a constraint but as a guideline and means of tracking progress. It would allow us to make projections of potential profit or loss.

District Director's Report - Richard DeMartino

To save time I will not give a report. I will be giving the same report to the Board of Delegates meeting in the morning which you all will attend.

Tournament Manager's Report - Helen Pawlowski

No report

NABC Providence- H. Pawlowski, J Brouillard

The ACBL has sent out a mass email on May 15. The feedback has been positive. Hotel reservations opened on May 15 and we are already at 26% of capacity. The Restaurant Guide from the Providence Convention Bureau includes over 100 restaurants. Paul Nagerian is taking over and refining it by adding descriptions and contacting each for discounts for players. Days and hours of operation will be included. The Mall will be open Sunday. A promotional packet to be sent to the top 50 clubs in the ACBL East of the Mississippi has been prepared. Pre-Tournament tours are set. Monday will include a trip to Newport and the Breakers at \$13.00, if we get a minimum of 20. Lunch will be at the Newport Tennis Hall of Fame. The Tuesday tour of Providence will include lunch at a restaurant on Federal Hill. R. DeMartino added that we must convince the "C" players that the Nationals if also for them. He asked if the committee has decided, what perks will be given to whom? J. Brouillard said that this had not been determined. R. DeMartino continued that this has always been determined and specified long before this in the past. J. Brouillard said that the committee did not think it was necessary. As of now, but will have this for the Executive Committee in Warwick at the latest.

The Nationals Committee decided not to accept David Porris' proposal to have the NABC subsidize the cost of convention cardholders with the Providence NABC logo that he would then sell.

Old Business - none

New Business

Charity Committee - M. Aquino for Phyllis Bausher

President Aquino said the Charity Committee has worked hard and done a very good job. The Committee has representation from across the District. It decided to focus on those agencies that support the homeless. The money will be split among the states. Each will get an equal amount. The final report will be given in Warwick. We will make an announcement at the NABC. E. Watstein suggested that we should have press releases ready for each state. D. Rock expressed some concern about the allocations within Massachusetts. President Aquino suggested that any questions should be directed to P. Bausher.

Use of Grass-Roots Fund Money - Dean Panagopoulos

The Grass-Roots fund money comes from the ACBL from fees paid in Grass-roots fund games within our District. It is meant to support the NAP's and GNT's. Some states use the money to subsidize the teams, but we already do this. We would like the money to go to those who participate. It may serve to encourage players to enter in the future.

I propose that we give up to \$200 to each team that makes the final in Super-flight A, and B to be spent towards rooms in the hotel Saturday night. As C-flight plays only Sunday, we would give special hospitality to them in a like amount. This would cost about \$3200 which is about half of what we currently have in the account. E. Watstein stated that we need advanced publicity on this if it is to have any effect. A. Geaski reminded D. Panagopoulos that Sturbridge attracts a large commuter group that would have no use for the hotel money. R. DeMartino suggested that we pay the entry for all the teams that make the finals in Super-flight, A and B and provide equivalent hospitality for the C-flight players on Sunday. B. Emond suggested a voucher that could be used at the hotel or a gift certificate. After discussion a motion was made, seconded and so voted to provide free entries for those who make the finals on Sunday for the Super-flight, A and B flights and equivalent hospitality for the C-flight

Nominating Committee- Wayne Burt

Five representatives came to the meeting today. MBA, WMBA and VBA were absent. No decisions were made. C. Weiser reminded W. Burt that the bylaws require the notification of the slate of candidates for election no later than 40 days before the election, which will be held in Warwick on Sunday, August 31.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Weiser
Secretary, District 25

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Proposed Web Changes

Treasurer's Report - Don Levy

I am working with Linda Robinson to create better financial reports.

(cut: We had a profit in Hyannis of \$1,188.52 which is deceptive as it is \$5,191.86 less that the profit in 2013.) Losses for the first three tournaments are (cut: \$12,020.44) over \$12,000 despite our raising our rates. We continue to lose table count. Net assets have dropped (cut: \$20,525.92) over \$20,000 from January 1.