



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

Minutes  
Board of Delegates Meeting  
Nashua, NH  
June 27, 2015

Attendance:

Officers: Mark Aquino, President; Bob Bertoni, Vice President; Joseph Brouillard, Treasurer; Carolyn Weiser, Secretary

Unit Representatives:

EMBA – Unit 108 - 16 of 17

Saul Agranoff (C. Cooper alt.), David Aronson, Cilla Borrás, Don Caplin, Jori Grossack, Peter Lombardo, Grace Lombardo (V. Iannini alt.), Brenda Montague, Neil Montague (M. Yesley alt.), Dean Panagopoulos, Adam Parrish, Joyce Pearson, Jan Smola, Alix Taylor, Paul Tierney, Peggy Tierney (J. Keegan alt.) *Absent: Catherine Cooper, Virginia Iannini, James Keegan, Marlene Yesley*

CMBA – Unit 113 - 1 of 2

Candice Matthews, B. Emond alt. *Absent: Donald Dreamer, Bruce Emond*

CBA – Unit 126 -6 of 12

Phyllis Bausher, Larry Bausher, Alan Clamage, Sonja Smith, Joyce Stiefel, Mike Wavada  
*Absent: Debbie Benner, Sandy DeMartino, Joan Martin, Bernard Schneider, Bill Watson, Esther Watstein,*

RIBA – Unit 145 - 4 of 4

Linda Arens, Lois DeBlois, Maureen Fahey, Paula Najarian *Absent - none*

NHBA – Unit 150 4 of 4

Wayne Burt, Robert Eachus, B. L. Tysor, Sarah Widhu

VBA –2 of 3

Wayne Hersey, Richard Tracy *Absent: Phil Sharpsteen*

MBA – Unit 189 -4 working - 2 of 4

Richard Budd, Dottie Kelleher *Absent: Two to be named*

WMBA – Unit - 2 of 3

Helen Pawlowski, David Rock *Absent: Robert Derrah*

===

President's Opening Remarks

The meeting of the Board of Delegates was called to order at 8:30 am by President Aquino. He began by reviewing the reasons for the formation of the Ad Hoc Finance Committee Report and reviewing the findings. The Committee included Treasurer, Joe Brouillard, our Finance and Audit Committee Chair, Linda Robinson, Past President Ausra Geaski, our Tournament Manager, Helen Pawlowski, and our Director-In-Charge, Peter Marcus and me. We reviewed the past 12 months from Cromwell tournament in February 2014 and ending with the Newton tournament in January 2015. It highlighted ongoing activities that our Tournament Manager and DIC, as well as our B's Needs Committee as a group have initiated to save money, help avoid costs, increase attendance and associated revenues. A partial list of cost savings showed more than \$30,000 saved last year alone, as well as over \$45,000 of cost avoidances.

The goal of the district is to break even or show a slight profit each year to sustain operations. The loss represents about 1.9% of our total revenues for that period. Our income is generated by table fees. Many of the expenses are not within our direct control, such as those associated with Director expenses. We can control those associated with hospitality and hotel expense. An annual drop by only 10% would cover our losses. 2016 will be the last year for the Newton Individual. This will make a significant dent in our losses. H. Pawlowski is looking into alternate dates for Cromwell, which has been hurt badly by storms the past two years. This is not a catastrophic situation, continued cost savings and cost avoidance techniques will go a long way. Ultimately, we need to attract more players to our tournaments.

A. Parish stated that there is too much hospitality, President Aquino explained that the basic business model we operate under requires that we promise to spend a minimum room block and spend an amount on money on hospitality. We receive the playing space in return. If players do not book sufficient rooms, we must make up that amount in hospitality money spent at the hotel or pay for the playing areas, which would be prohibitive. H. Pawlowski does a wonderful job handling the money and keeping our players happy. It is a trade-off.

**Secretary's Report** - - Carolyn Weiser- A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the Minutes from the Board of Delegates meeting in Warwick, RI, August 31, 2014. So voted

**Treasurer's Report** - Joseph Brouillard

Year to date we show a significant loss. We need to look for ways to cut expenses and increase attendance. The Board of Delegates can help by encouraging players to come to our tournaments.

The District authorized the Providence NABC to spend up to \$103,000. Approximately \$35,000 of District funds were used. The remainder came from sponsors and donations. L. Robinson interjected that the 2008 NABC spent \$90,000 with \$7,000 in sponsors and the 1999 spent \$122,000 with \$6,000 in sponsor contributions. CD's do not increase in value as they have in the past. R. DeMartino noted that the District, historically, has had a goal of having \$50,000 remaining in the NABC fund after each event. J. Brouillard continued that the Annual Report had been submitted to the IRS and the 990 had been filed and received by the IRS. D. Aronson questioned the drop in Grass-roots money. R. DeMartino answered that there was a switch in the Grass-roots month from December to May. President Aquino added that any Unit can have up to a 2-session event designated as a Grass-roots Sectional, which would increase the point award. There will be a \$4.00 per table fee increase, but the money would go to the Grass-roots fund. Almost 100% is returned to the District.

W. Hersey asked if the venue for this tournament can be changed. With the numbers dropping, do we need to change venues and schedule facilities for a fee, without rooms, such as a convention center. It is difficult to find space big enough, with the features we need. We must supply rooms for the staff and directors. Hospitality would become an issue. J. Smola noted that EMBA still has local club holding games opposite Sectionals. R. DeMartino answered that though this is a problem, the ACBL cannot force a club to close. They have specified that such a club cannot have a special game opposite a Sectional if they are within 50 miles of the site. W. Burt suggested that we might be able to get sponsors for our Regionals.

**Audit Committee Report** - Linda Robinson

The Audit Committee, Linda Robinson, David Aronson, and Dan McGuire; met and reviewed the financial records of District 25 and the Providence NABC and found to be in good order. Don Levy, the former Treasurer, Joe Brouillard, the current Treasurer, Chris Soares, the NABC Treasurer, and Helen Pawlowski, the Tournament Manager are hereby thanked and commended for their high standards and excellent work.

We suggest that it would be in the best interest of the District to establish a small Finance subcommittee of the Executive Committee to support and advise the Treasurer and Tournament Manager on financial matters.

### **Nomination/Election report- Wayne Burt**

Slate of Candidates for 2016 are: President: Robert Bertoni (1 year), Vice President: Lois DeBlois (one year), Treasurer: Joseph Brouillard (two years), Secretary: Carolyn Weiser (two years). The election will be held at the Mansfield meeting of the Board of Delegates on November 8, 2015.

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

The table count in Cromwell was down 35 tables from 2014. As you may remember, we were hit with a major blizzard during the tournament. We were able to cut vender costs. As a cost cutting measure, I decided to forego an ad in the Bulletin, which cost \$935. to see if it made any affect. The loss was \$2,600 less than the previous year. I may continue not to buying Bulletin ads in the future.

The GNT/Rainbow weekend was a loss. Director fees were up as were forced to use directors rather than TA's, which are cheaper. D. Panagopoulos and I will try to tune up the hospitality decisions in the future and keep it within the \$1,600 to \$1,800 range.

Revenue continues to shrink with table count at the Senior Regional. Total expenses were cut and leaving us with a nice profit as compared a loss in 2014.

Thanks to Ausra Geaski and the Pro-am, table count is up for the tournament. Congratulations to all who brought a friend. We have a list of issues with the hotel. Last year I sent a 4-page email to the hotel listing all the issues. The hotel has a new General Manager who has hired all new area managers. The lighting had not been addressed when we arrived and they changed every bulb in the ballroom to a higher wattage. When that was not enough, they paid to have separate lights brought in. They have asked for another chance to make everything right. We do not have a contact here moving forward. Whenever we move a tournament there are risks. As of now, we do not have a location for this tournament in 2015. Sturbridge is holding a reservation for us for one year. If we do not meet our room block guarantee in Sturbridge we may have to pay rental for the function spaces with is \$5,500 for the large space. We are under contract there for the GNTs for one year. The rooms will cost \$110.00. D. Panagopoulos and I are reviewing alternative choices for the NAP's and GNT's that may include having them at a Sectional, in which case the Unit will get the revenue. President Aquino emphasized the need to get the sites for the Rainbow/GNTs and NAPs settled for the future. H. Pawlowski continued that we have no site for the NAPs in 2016. B. Bertoni added that the \$110 room rate and the \$5,500 cost is punitive because we no longer have a summer regional there. R. DeMartino commented that the GNT's and NAP's do not need to have rooms. A. Clamage stated that he felt that discontinuing the add was a mistake as many people use the adds. H. Pawlowski countered that only 4-5 tournament have ads. Most depend on the list of Sectionals and Regionals that is always printed. D. Caplin asked if there was a correlation between room rates and attendance. H. Pawlowski answered that our most expensive rooms are in Warwick and this is our biggest tournament. Time of year and location are the factors. The price listed on the flyer for Warwick of \$99 was in error. The correct price is \$103. Unit representatives were reminded to take flyers for their home clubs and Unit Sectionals. Flyers for our Regionals will be included in the I/N packet of information sent to all club directors. H. Pawlowski will make sure that D-3 gets flyers for our Regionals. Directors will be asked to take them to the Sectionals they direct.

The Senior Regional will be at the Conference Center one more year and the we will be moving back to the Seacrest in Falmouth in 2017.

The Executive Committee has directed The Tournament Manager and President to decide whether to move or stay here, after the exit interview with the hotel.

### **"B's" Needs Committee Report - Ausra Geaski**

The Pro-Am exceeded all expectations. Thanks to everyone who played or helped. We had 5-6 pros on standby if any unmatched Am's arrived. Publicity and word of mouth are what get people out.

We are considering another Pro-Am in Cromwell. Valentine's day may be an issue. A show of hands indicated that only one Board of Delegates representative felt that it would be. President Aquino added that the word of mouth and energy associated with this event is what we need for all of our tournaments. This is what Peter Marcus did for the EGG and Wayne Burt and Sarah Widhu did for this tournament. Individuals can make a big difference.

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

The ACYL has had difficulty getting the updating of ACBLScore done. We have a group of people working on it including Uday Ivatory, Greg Humphreys from Bridge Base On-Line, Greg Humphreys from Bridgewinners, and Ralph Lipe, formerly from Microsoft and Google, who are working with Jay Whipple. These are top systems experts. The Nicolas Hammond program appears not to be as bad as it was purported to be, They will know within the next month or two. They will take what works and plan to improve the program for the clubs and the process for Swiss Team events.

We are working on a plan to have ScorePad useful for Swiss. Players will input the scores and Score pad will be able to tell them what their next table assignment will be. I am hopeful. The masterpoint changes for 2015 are still not programed 100% correctly.

The Delegates were asked if they were familiar with the ACBL Partnership Desk and the one designed by J. Whipple as well as Fast as compared with that provided by the ACBL. Using Fast results, overall winners cannot be seen. D. Rock commented that he uses both and they both have plusses and minuses. W. Burt stated that he did the partnership for this Regional and almost everyone had problems with the ACBL partnership desk. It was not easy to use, especially for I/N Players. In the end he had to go back to pencil and paper matching. M. Wavada stated that he did a comparison and will email the results to everyone.

There is nothing coming up on the agenda for the Chicago meeting that requires input from the Board of Delegates.

Some of the Board members think that there needs to be changes in Swisses At a National Swiss, if you play ½ the time, you get the full masterpoint award. Several feel this should be changed for Regional KO's so that those who play part time do not get full credit. R. DeMartino stated that he is opposed to reducing KO awards. This is directed toward pros and clients. Volunteers want to be on a 6-person team. R. DeMartino closed by saying that "There were years then I remember these meetings as being like World War II. This group, over the last few years has worked well together and I commend you all."

There is a motion to charge for the screens that are used. Top players are against this. I will vote against it. In the past, the rules were neutral regarding the pro/client group

### **Old Business - none**

### **New Business-**

President Aquino stated that money for the District subsidy for the GNT winners comes from the KO Teams. Because KO numbers are way down we do not have enough in the fund to pay the usual subsidies. Last night the Executive Committee voted to augment the current District money to \$1,200 per team. All the winners are congratulated and wished the very best in Chicago.

Congratulations and thanks to Sarah Widhu, Wayne Burt and Sue Miguel for their work in promoting this Regional and to Herold Feldheim, Glen McIntire and Wayne Burt for their willingness to help as lecturers.

A. Parish brought up the issue of the cancellation of the mid-week A-flight KO. President Aquino related that the issue had been brought up at the Executive Committee meeting. D. Rock reminded the Executive Committee that it had voted to give the authority for last minute decisions regarding such situations to the DIC. We also noted that every event should have detailed Conditions of Contest, something that we have historically not done for the events at Regionals (excluding the

GNT's and NAP's) This oversight will be taken care of in the future. The District has the final authority on this matter. Currently, the DIC has full discretion to make last minute decisions. R. DeMartino added that the ACBL has stated that how this is handled is a District option.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to adjourn the meeting of the Board of Delegates at 9:53 AM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carolyn Weiser, Secretary, District 25

Addendum:

Due to time constraints, the Tournament / Scheduling Committee Report was not given. Copies of the flyers for the January Individual in Newton and the schedule for February regional in Cromwell were passed out.