



Minutes
Board of Delegates Meeting
Mansfield, MA
November 13, 2016

Attendance:

Officers: Bob Bertoni, President; Lois DeBlois; Vice President; Joseph Brouillard, Treasurer; Carolyn Weiser, Secretary, Mark Aquino; Past President and District Director

Unit Representatives:

EMBA – Unit 108 - 13 of 17

Curtis Barton, Don Caplin, Peter Lombardo, Grace Lombardo (C. Weinstein alt.), Neil Montague (C. Cooper alt.), Sabrina Miles, Brenda Montague, Dean Panagopoulos, Adam Parrish, Linda Robinson, Alix Taylor, Paul Tierney, Peggy Tierney (J. Smola alt.),

Absent: Saul Agranoff, David Aronson, Frederick Brown, Catherine Cooper, Zachary Grossack, Luke Gillespie, J. Smola,

CMBA – Unit 113 - 1 of 2

Jeanne Robillard, *Absent - Joan Kuklinski*

CBA – Unit 126 - 12 of 12

Phyllis Bausher, Larry Bausher, Richard DeMartino, (D. Benner alt.) Sandy DeMartino, Ann Hudson, (A. Clamage alt.), Joan Martin, Michael Smith, (E. Watstein alt.), Sonja Smith, Susan Smith (A. Geaski alt.), Joyce Stiefel, Michael Wavada, Susan Wavada *Absent: Debbie Benner, Allan Clamage, Ausra Geaski, Esther Watstein*

RIBA – Unit 145 - 4 of 4

Linda Ahrens, Maureen Fahey, Marguerite Gousie (P. Najarian alt.) Diane Lambert

Absent - Paula Najarian

NHBA – Unit 150 3 of 4

Wayne Burt, Sarah Widhu, B. L. Tysor *Absent- Robert Eachus*

VBA –3 of 3

Wayne Hersey, Karen Hewitt Randle, (P. Sharpsteen alt.) Steven Randle (R.Tracy alt.)

Absent Phil Sharpsteen, Richard Tracy

MBA – Unit 189 -3 of 4

Larry Kolkhorst, Dan Morgenstern, Jack Mahoney *Absent: Richard Budd*

WMBA – Unit - 1 of 3

Helen Pawlowski, *Absent: David Rock, Robert Derrah*

Call to Order - The meeting was called to order at 8:30 AM.

President's Opening Remarks

President Bertoni reported that Mansfield was shaping up as a great tournament. We are ahead of table count by the end of Saturday. The early week was light and we were down 85 tables. As of this morning we are up.

The NAP B/C was a success. The A-Flight NAP, held in Watertown was the largest turnout for this tournament we have had in many years. The District is ahead in every regional this year. The Sectional portion of the Cape Regional was down,

He thanked all the Delegates for coming and volunteering their time at the meeting. The District will require your continued help and efforts to “talk-up things” and “make things happen,” as well as to advertise how things at District 25 Regionals are changing. Your efforts are key to making the changes we have made and that are coming in the future, successful. Get the message to your clubs and Units and talk up the tournaments. We need you to energize the players and get them to the Regionals.

Secretary’s Report - A motion was made, seconded, and so voted to accept the minutes from the Board of Board of Delegates meeting held in Nashua, NH on June 26, 2016.

Treasurer’s Report - Joseph Brouillard

An Operating Income Statement and Statement of Financial Position have been prepared and distributed.

Tournament income as of October 31, 2016 was over &6,000 higher than last year. The Grass-roots fund received over \$15,000 from the ACBL. Our net income was three-times higher than last year at this time.

This year \$8,000 were given in GNT Stipends. Mansfield, in 2015 made a profit. The Sturbridge NAP Finals had a sizable loss.

We have changed our accounting practices. All stipends were taken from the Tournaments as expenses. This is no longer the case. They are now paid as administrative expenses by the District. This began in Nashua.

Our current assets have increased. The Executive Committee voted to move \$15,000 to the NABC 2021 account. The NABC Fund investments as of October 31, increased in line with what we anticipated. Our objective was to earn between 4-6%. A. Parrish asked why it cost us so much to hold an NABC as compared to other Districts. Treasurer Brouillard responded that D-25 has always invested about \$100,000 in our NABC’s. Ours is one of the smallest NABC’s and our hospitality and prizes are part of the draw. R. DeMartino added that the eastern cities decided that they wanted significant hospitality. Other Districts, such as San Francisco, provide no hospitality, as do other, destination cities, that are a draw in themselves. Historically the larger NABC’s do not do the same. The ACBL Board has never chosen to require the host cities to put up any money. S. DeMartino added that we have put up money to make out NABC’s better. We also provide better Section Tops and Registration Gifts. H. Pawlowski added that having a summer rather than a fall NABC will be a huge boost to our attendance. Our job is to make this a summer destination. If the table count is up, we get money from the ACBL. That will help us cover out variable expenses. A. Parrish countered that the people who come do not come for the food. J. Brouillard added that we feel that it is part of the player experience. C. Barton noted that we should advertise this fact. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the Treasurer’s report as presented.

Election of Officers - Brenda Montague

The District Nominating Committee approved the following slate for 2017: for President, Robert Bertoni, for Vice President, Lois DeBlois. Each is for one year. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the slate as presented.

Tournament Manager’s Report - Helen Pawlowski

The Warwick profit was less than last year. The decrease was due to the number of hotel rooms we needed, which we up \$1,000. The hospitality costs were also up as we order hospitality based on the previous years. We expected a higher attendance. Some of the rooms reserved were cancelled close to game time.

Here we had a slow start. We were down over 70 tables on Wednesday and Thursday. Friday was up and Saturday had an increased. There were 108 tables in the NAP alone. The NAP B/C was a good fit for this tournament. This is the reason we are up 24 and ½ tables from last year. We have signed a contract here for 2017 with the right of first refusal for 2018, 2019 and 2020. We have to work on some details. Please let me know if something does not meet standards. President Bertoni asked if there were any questions, and there were none.

District Director's Report - Mark Aquino

It is great to see so many new faces. It is hard to believe that in 6 days I will be off to Orlando and meetings. If anyone has not gone to a NABC you should go. I am thrilled that we will have another here in 5 years. It is outstanding that it will be in the summer. We had many District players who have had success at the Nationals including the Smiths who won the under 1500 pairs. Adam and Zach Grossack teamed up with Doug Doub and Frank Merblum to win the prestigious Championship Flight GNT. Geoff Brod was on the winning Senior Swiss, and Sheila Gabay and Victor King were part of the winning team in the Mixed BAM. All in all, across all levels of competition, New England players are proving themselves to be second to none.

There will be many important issues under discussion in Orlando. The highlights include the consideration of a reorganization of the ACBL. This plan would consolidate our 25 District reps into 9 zonal reps and 6 at large members. This seems to be poorly planned and communicated. It appears to favor management, not the members.

Everyone is concerned with the cheating. It is mainly concerned with a handful of higher ranked, paid players. I am not convinced it should be the total focus of the organization. I am a member of the Boards Integrity Panel, chaired by Suzie Subeck. I am still the chair of the GNT/NAP, Special Events committee.

There are two motions of interest. One involves the Grass-Roots Fund. If approved, the subsidy for the 3rd place winners of the NAP in all 3 flights would be set at \$200 per player, 4th place finishers in B/C would receive \$100 each. These subsidies would be paid out of ACBL funds not out of the District. Statistics I compiled show that the ACBL made approximately \$400,000 this past year alone from NAP Qualifying games. More of that should be paid back to the players as subsidies, in my opinion.

There was a great write-up in the Bulletin praising Sue Miguel and H. Pawlowski for the success of the Rainbow weekend.

We have lots of work yet to do. I am standing on great shoulders as Richard DeMartino served for 15 years. The District is in better shape that it has been in many years.

R. DeMartino added that there is a motion by a small group including Directors Heller and Whipple that if a committee has 8 members and they vote for a motion unanimously, it would take a vote of 2/3 by the whole board to overturn this. I intend to vote against this motion. In any committee, there are usually 2-3 strong voices and the others tend to go along, for a variety of reasons. The power members would be able to dominate the decisions of the Board.

In the last few months I have visited many Units and clubs. I am continually impressed with what is happening at those levels. Ron Newburg, who recently passed away, was my mentor in bridge administration ever since he served as EMBA President in the early 80's. Mentoring is key for the sustained growth of our great game. What we all can do at the club level is so important to bringing someone along in bridge.

Tournament / Scheduling Committee Report - Lois DeBlois

The Executive Committee voted to have the NAP events for 2017 the same as for 2016. Again, the Flight A will be at the October EMBA Sectional and the Flight B & C at the Harvest Regional in Mansfield. Previous to the meeting, the President requested that all proposals be submitted by email. No others were submitted. This approval is for one year. The Side-Game Series at Regionals will be upgraded as a Charity or Grass-roots game. This will increase the point awards thus increasing

attendance. If a player wins one game of the Side-Game series and plays in another, they will receive gold. At the last Board of Delegates meeting, the Board of Delegates voted to make Student Discounts \$2.00. The Board feels that having the students come is more important than the \$2.00. They voted to eliminate the fee. They would like the Board of Delegates to vote to eliminate all entry fees for full time student, under the age of 25, with valid Student ID's, and non-Life Masters. A motion was so made, seconded and approved, without dissent. We need the members of the Board of Delegates to help distribute flyers. Small quantities are sent to club owner by the I/N Chair, but we need individuals from each Unit to receive copies for distribution. If anyone is willing to help, please let me know, in person or via email, and I will send copies to you for Unit distribution. President Bertoni added that the need for the Board of Delegates members to help distribute flyers is one of the ways that everyone can be active in increasing attendance at the regionals. They are very expensive to mail. It is more important to have the person-to-person contact.

President Bertoni continued. In the past few years we have made many changes in our schedule. All have been for the benefit of the 0-2500 players. It is our belief that the lower masterpoint players must be brought in and made happy. These players have no KO experience. Over the last 5-10 years, the KO's have dropped out of the mainstream of New England bridge experience. An analysis of the Districts in the ACBL indicates that the District Regionals that are growing have successful KO's. Those that are declining, do not. 61.7% of the attendance at Gatlinburg are KO's. Richardson Texas, with the same membership as ours, had attendance of 2200 tables. They are steadily declining. They had 1637 tables this year. We have only 2% of our attendance in KO's. Brereton, Oregon, with a total of 3009 members, had 36% of their tables as KO's. People here say that KO's are not for them. We have missed the boat and made the KO's seem elitist. We had a night centric schedule. We changed to day centric, but kept the KO's at night. The Executive Committee, in response to a recommendation by the Tournament Committee, voted to move the KO's in 2017 to Saturday-Sunday, with no other Team game scheduled against them. (on Saturday). We anticipate brackets no bigger than 16. We stopped all seeding in 2015. Seeding was a barrier to entries as the lowest team was guaranteed that they would play against the highest team in the first round. Within the brackets, the pairings will be by random draw. Because the schedules were published, we will retain the 0-4000 Swiss in Cromwell. This will be the "soft opening" for the new KO schedule. Please help us to make it a success. To this end, the Executive Committee voted to make the Saturday, Sunday KO free. Think of this concept as an investment. We want to demonstrate to the newer players how exciting a KO can be, The bottom bracket will be below the Gold Rush level. This will be a defining moment for District. At most Regionals and Nationals the KO's main events. The Executive Committee wants to give something to the A players that they deserve, and that again should become as popular with the other players as it always was. District Director Mark Aquino, the entire Executive Committee and all the directors are fully committed to making this an exciting and successful event. We will do everything we can to advertise this and want each of you to spread the word that the KO's are back. If you have never played in a KO, ask someone who has. Players will only be playing against their peers. In the future there will be no Swiss on Saturday. It will cost the District the sanction fee, and the other administrative costs. Altogether, it should cost no more than two Bulletin adds. Some will come, just because it is free. Other will come and stay. Worst-case scenario, we will lose \$4,000 in Nashua. Even that would not be the end of the world. We are making an investment in the future of bridge in New England. A motion was made to hold KO's Saturday and Sunday free at the Nashua Regional. The motion was seconded. A. Taylor commented that in Canada, Regionals of the same size as ours have KO's every day. The B & C flight players love them. W. Burt added that the Halifax Regional has overlapping KO's every day. The motion was called. The motion passed without dissent.

New Business

The Executive Committee approved the chairs for the 2021 NABC in Providence. They are Lois DeBlois and Joe Brouillard.

The printing of the Daily Bulletin is an expensive proposition. At some hotels we can print at hotel expense, at others, we must go outside. The editor is paid \$100 per issue. We print 150 copies. Analysis indicates that only about 50 copies are picked up. Total cost for the year is about \$4,000. Results can be sent to a players email. Full results are available on line. The Executive Committee is considering dropping this publication. Discussion followed. S. Widhu stated that many read it for the for specific information and leave it on the tables. Others added that they look for other information such as past winners, meeting sites, hospitality, as well as schedules and past winners. S. DeMartino suggested that the total cost is about \$1,000 per tournament. When Lancaster stopped printing the Daily Bulletin it caused an uproar. It was reinstated. It was questioned as to how this would affect the Editor financially. No decision was made.

R. DeMartino noted that there is a Board of Governor's meeting at the upcoming NABC and a signed proxy is needed. This Board provides oversight to the ACBL Board. One had been obtained.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:32 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Weiser
Secretary, District 25.