



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

Minutes

Executive Committee

Raddison Hotel
Cromwell, CT
February 13, 2016

Attendance: Robert Bertoni, President; Lois DeBlois, Vice President; Joseph Brouillard, Treasurer; Carolyn Weiser, Secretary; Mark Aquino, Past President & District Director
Unit Representatives: Brenda Montague, Neil Montague (D. Aronson alt.) EMBA;
Shirley Wagner, CMBA; Allan Clamage, Esther Watstein, CBA; Maureen Fahey, RIBA;
Sarah Widhu, NHBA; Wayne Hersey, VBA; Dick Budd, MBA; David Rock, WMBA;
(Absent: David Aronson, EMBA)

Invited Guests: Helen Pawlowski, Tournament Manager; Peter Marcus, DIC; Mike Wavada, Communications Committee; Chris Soares, "B's Needs"

Call to Order- President Robert Bertoni

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 PM by President Bertoni who thanked everyone for their volunteerism, without which the District could not succeed.

Secretary's Report – Carolyn Weiser

A motion was made and seconded and so voted to accept the Minutes of the January 9, 2016 Executive Committee meeting from Newton, MA as sent.

Treasurer's Report - Joseph Brouillard

Our losses at Newton were under \$3,300, though the number of players was up. The treasury is still in good shape, well above the minimum threshold. We have no outstanding liabilities. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.

J. Brouillard continued that the resident agent has been changed from Helen Pawlowski to Carolyn Weiser. The IRS 990 has been completed and will be submitted next week.

Tournament Manager's Report - Helen Pawlowski

The 3-year comparison of the Newton tournaments shows that the table count this year increased by 61 tables. The total table count for the Individuals themselves almost tripled. We saved \$1,800 on the loss side but still did not break even.

The Cromwell site was sold about a year ago to the Raddison Cooperation that will be making changes and improvements and the rates will rise. We have one year on our contract. I had to reduce our space because our room pickup has been small. We did

not have enough (500) nights, to get the number of comp rooms but there has been no attrition during the tournament. In fact, the numbers actually went up. We have 476 room nights to date and I will renegotiate the rooms. In the future, we will be prepared with overflow space overflow down stairs, because of to the handicap bathroom situation. The problem that developed on Saturday was because we had a much larger crowd that anyone expected. P. Marcus was giving a lecture and was unavailable to make an early decision regarding the developing overflow numbers. We had 100 more people than we reasonably could have expected. We will be prepared with extra tables already set up, the future.

H. Pawlowski asked for permission to lock in two years at our pre-renovation rate. General discussion followed. She reminded the Executive Committee that any tournament in the winter in New England is subject to the weather, regardless of the site. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to approve negotiations for a contract here for two additional years.

There are still issues with the lighting in Nashua. Here they installed LED lights, using a state grant. She suggested a similar solution for the Nashua site. She will continue to work on this issue.

Tournament/Scheduling Committee Report - Lois DeBlois

The committee met Friday evening and we are on target for Nashua, Warwick, and Mansfield. Sue Miguel will continue to work on our *Bulletin* ads and flyers. We have renamed the Warwick Regional the Ocean State Regional. We also would like to rename the Mansfield regional. The name, Master's Regional, is confusing to some players who felt that you had to be a Life Master to attend. We would like to rename it to reflect the location or time of year. If you have any ideas, please contact me.

We would like to establish a special event to enhance the players' experience and make Thursday "Prize Day," providing Section Tops prizes to the winners in all three flights, approximately 120 prizes. We also would like to give the winners of each event a free play for a session on the weekend. We will continue this discussion in Nashua. We estimated that it would cost between \$200 and \$300 for the section top "grocery bags" that would advertise our schedule for 2017.

M. Aquino received the requested guidance from the ACBL of the new allowed game formats. We had only one adjustment to make for Warwick and our Nashua Schedule is fine. B. Bertoni explained that we had to change from Open & 5000 rather than Open and 4000.

Communication Committee - Mike Wavada

President Bertoni stated that Mike Wavada will be a regular, non-voting attendee of the Executive Committee meetings. The Communications Committee is designed to pull all our communication vehicles together: web, email, Facebook, twitter, etc.

M. Wavada handed out charts for the Communications Inventory: the Timing Chart and Vehicles Chart. Our communications with our members should focus on consistency, accuracy, quality and the quantity. The Timing Inventory shows that what we are currently doing is very spread out. We need to emphasize social media more than we have in the past. Joan Brault will help with our Facebook postings. We need to review

our current time-line to make sure that we get our information out at the right time and meet all deadlines.

“B’s” Needs Committee Report -Chris Soares

C. Soares said that we had our first meeting and the committee helped to bring me up to speed with what had been accomplished. Each member was asked to send a list of the 5-6 things that they would like to see the committee pursue and prioritize them. I will see what the consensus is.

District Director’s Report - Mark Aquino **District Director’s Report** - Mark Aquino

I had my first meeting as a Board member three weeks ago in Reno. There are many challenges that we will have to meet. We are nearing a budget crisis. We were in the red over \$61K last year. The current budget is very high as is the cost of technology. We cannot change what has already been done.

The cheating scandals are a concern. Mike Passell had a hearing and was given a lesser punishment, after pleading guilty to a lesser infraction. He was given a two-week suspension with no probation. Bobby Levin was given a two-month probation for behavior away from the table. It will be a busy year for me as I am chairing one committee and will serve on five others.

I went to a three-day orientation last month at Horn Lake and was apprised of the legalities of the position. We need to find ways to save money.

E. Watstein asked M. Aquino to explain what had problems of Invitational clubs and NAP that had occurred. M, Aquino explained that after he investigated the issue he found out that the situation with the NAP's and STaC games are different. In Denver, the Board voted to not allow Invitational games to be run as open games for the STaC. This matter is being reconsidered in Reno, and Mark will keep everyone apprised on any changes.

For NAP’s, the clubs get ½ red and ½ black points as they pay extra money. If a club gets Unit approval, an Invitational club can be run as an Open game for the event. A special ACBLScore code must be used, however.

A. Clamage asked if the on-line masterpoints will count for rank change. They will. He also asked how the updating of ACBL Score was progressing. Mark answered that J. Whipple is heading the Board's Technology committee, and he is working closely with the ACBL's new IT Director, Mitchel Hodis to make progress in this area. Time will tell.

Old Business - none

New Business -

President Bertoni noted that in the past we have had five Executive Committee meetings a year. With Newton gone, the number would be four. He asked if the Board felt we should add a meeting at the Senior Regional in 2017.

A motion was made and seconded to add a meeting of the Executive Committee at the Senior Regional starting in 2016. There was a tie vote. B. Montague suggested an amendment that would change the start date from 2016 to 2017. The amendment was seconded. The amended motion was called and passed with two against

President Bertoni has established a Committee to develop a policy regarding salaries and stipends. The purpose is not to make any changes or to give people less for their work, but to be completely transparent. He said, "I doubt that everyone here knows which positions are currently paid or, if so, how much." Linda Robinson and Joe Brouillard will be on the committee and we need one more. C. Weiser will be added.

B. Montague asked how much the meal for the Executive Committee costs. H. Pawlowski answered that it is about \$1,000, which becomes part of what we must spend at the hotel at every Regional.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:00.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Weiser, Secretary