

New England Bridge Conference of the American Contract Bridge League

Minutes

Board of Delegates

New England Bridge Conference

Sturbridge, MA

Sunday, June 23, 2013

Attendance:

Officers: Ausra Geaski, President; Mark Aquino, Vice President; Donald Levy, Treasurer; Carolyn Weiser, Secretary; Richard DeMartino, District Director (non-voting) absent: Robert Erwin, Past President

Delegates:

EMBA - Unit 108 (17 of 17)

Jane Adams, David Aronson, Robert Bertoni, Cilla Borrás, Frank Caine, Frank Farrell (Polly Goedicke alt.) Michael Howard, Peter Lombardo, Grace Lombardo (M. Ayyagari alt), Brenda Montague, Neil Montague (Bill Hunter alt.), Dean Panagopoulos, Adam Parrish, Lisa Procter, Jan Smola, *Absent: Murthy Ayyagari, Carole Carlson, Polly Goedicke, Jori Grossack, Bill Hunter,*

CMBA – Unit 113 2 of 2)

Absent: Bruce Emond, Harris Jacobs

CBA – Unit 126 (9 of 12)

Larry Bausher, Phyllis Bausher, Allan Clamage, Sandy DeMartino, , Joan Martin, Sonja Smith, Michael Wavada, Esther Watstein (D. Benner alt.) *Absent:Debbie Benner, Burt Gischner, Janet Gischner, Joyce Stiefel, Bill Watson*

RIBA – Unit 145 (4 of 4)

Linda Ahrens (S. Erwin alt.) Joseph Brouillard, Lois DeBlois, Paula Najarian (M. Fahey alt.)
Absent: Suzanne Erwin, Maureen Fahey

NHBA – Unit 150 (2 of 4)

Wayne Burt, Robert Eachus (D. McGuire alt.) *Absent: Bruce Downing,Joe DeGaetano, Daniel McGuire*

VBA – Unit 175 (2 of 3)

Frank Hacker, Wayne Hersey, Phil Sharpsteen

MBA – Unit 189 (0 of 4)

Absent: Richard Budd, Kate Hewett, Dottie Kelleher, Allan McRae

WMBA – Unit 196 (3 of 3)

Helen Pawlowski, David Rock *Absent : Robert Derrah*

President's Report - Ausra Geaski

President Geaski welcomed the Board of Delegates members. She recognized Esther Watstein, the new President of Unit 126 (CBA). She then announced the appointments of several members of the Board of Delegates to ACBL and District positions. Sandy DeMartino has been appointed to a three-year term as the Chairman of the Goodwill Committee. S. DeMartino reminded all Goodwill members to wear their pins. Bill Braucher has resigned as Webmaster for District 25 after eight years. He has done a great job. We are happy to announce that Mike Wavada has agreed to take on the position. He has been posting the results of our Regionals. We had a successful election for Treasurer via email in February. Don Levy was elected Treasurer. Thanks to Sonja Smith who was willing to step in as interim Treasurer. The GNT/Rainbow weekend was a success. Thanks to Sue Miguel, Dean Panagopoulos, Helen Pawlowski and Peter Marcus for all their efforts.

Attendance at our Regionals has been down and required raising entry fees. We need to continue to focus on ways to increase attendance. We need to retain the players who are coming and find ways to get the players who no longer come to return. Mark Aquino is chairing the "B's Needs Committee. They have been reaching out to clubs and trying to find ways to improve attendance. Adam Parrish and Jim Rasmussen gave a presentation on New England Youth Bridge (NEYB) which had attendance from three Units. If anyone wants more information on the NEYB they can contact either Jim or Adam.

Secretary's Report - Carolyn Weiser

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to approve the Minutes of the Board of Delegates meeting held in Mansfield, MA, Sunday, November 11, 2012

Treasurer's Report - Don Levy

The report was prepared using generally accepted principles of accounting. It is in the format used by accountants when presenting financial statement to corporations and organizations. It contains a Profit and Loss Statement and a Balance Sheet. True comparisons with the figures provided in previous reports are not possible as the methodology used is different. Profits to date from all tournaments in 2013 are \$7803. We have received \$3,490 from the ACBL from Grass Roots Fund Games. Our accounts have been moved to the Bank of America. F. Caine asked why the two-year comparison requested by the Board of Governors was missing. As the methodology used to reconcile the accounts is different, the figures would not be true comparisons. In the future, they will be provided. The reports provided by H. Pawlowski are for managerial purposes. Expenses to be paid later and the GNT and National Funds are not separated but are recorded as charges against the tournaments. President Geaski stated that the Board of Governors had requested complete transparency and that was the purpose of the new format. She further suggested that, as time was limited, any Board of Delegates member who wanted the full details should contact the Treasurer and they would be forwarded via email. A motion was made and seconded to accept the report as presented. The motion passed with five opposed.

District Director's Report- Richard DeMartino –

As the next meeting will be at the August Nationals, the motions to be discussed are not yet available. R. DeMartino is the Chair of the committee responsible for adding new events. In the Schedule of National Events, changing even one event is significant. The introduction of a 0-10,000 Swiss, the winning of which would not qualify for Grand Life Master status, was already done in St. Louis, as planned. This was held opposite the Platinum Pairs and IMP Pairs. It was very popular drawing 81 tables. There will be a new 0-10,000 pairs in the Summer Nationals. The preferred date is the first Saturday, the day after the Life Master Pairs begins. For the Fall Nationals, a 0-10,000 Swiss will be held on the 2nd Saturday. Those who are eliminated from either the North American Swiss or Reisinger could enter the new 2-day 0 - 10,000 Swiss. A true mixed Swiss has been suggested to replace the open pairs. Three-fourths voted for the Open Pairs rather than the Mixed Swiss. There is also a movement to introduce a mini, 0-10,000, Vanderbilt. This would begin on the same day as the Vanderbilt. This is preferable to starting opposite the Mixed Pairs on Tuesday.

At our Regionals, the initial impact of the Gold Rush Pairs seems to be diminishing. The Gold Rush events provide a venue for more novice players with an opportunity to win a large amount of masterpoints faster. The Executive Committee is aware of the problem. Many of the players with 750 to 3,000 points are struggling to find events in which they would like to play.

Tournament Manager's Report - Helen Pawlowski

We were down 175 tables in Cromwell. Constant predictions of snow, particularly in the morning, cut into our attendance. We were 150 rooms above our guarantee in our room pick up before the storm. We sustained a \$6,150 loss due to the drop in table count. There was a turnaround at the Senior Regional from a loss of \$6,988 in 2012 to a profit of \$4,581 in 2013. This was due to a 75 table increase and the increase in table fees of \$2 per player. At this tournament, we took a huge hit on Tuesday and Thursday with the Gold Rush events. Many teams with one player over 750 stayed and played which is a good sign. Gold Rush events are now being included in other districts. Saratoga has added Gold Rush events which had an impact to D25 since Saratoga was back-to-back with Sturbridge. Next year the Summer Regional will be in Nashua and will be a week farther away from Saratoga. This should provide a different commuting pool for the Gold Rush Events. The Board of Delegates members were reminded to take flyers for Warwick and Mansfield back to their units and to the games in which they play. B. Montague questions the wisdom of having the Friday night ice cream social so late in the evening when most players have left for the day. H. Pawlowski answered that it was well attended and that it is the only evening hospitality. Any bridge player in the hotel was welcome. The coffee and something every morning was well received. D. Aronson asked if we were committed to Warwick, as it is not centrally located. H. Pawlowski affirmed that Sturbridge is our only truly central location. Warwick is our best hotel facility. It is popular with the Cape players. It is impossible to forecast how well it will be attended. S. DeMartino added that the Friday night ice-cream social is good to continue. She also noted that we refer to a \$2 increase, but that this is really a \$4 per day increase. Many have complained. P. Bausher suggested that, as our losses seem worse on Tuesday and Wednesday we might consider returning to the Wednesday to Sunday schedule. H. Pawlowski noted that the first day of a Regional, whatever it is, is usually the slowest.

Tournament Committee Report - Mark Aquino

The introduction of the Grass-Roots Fund games has generated \$3,490 in its first year for the District. Our task is to determine how to apportion it and link it to the support of the GNT's and NAP. District 25 gives financial support to the winning teams in all 4 flights of the GNT, as well as to the 3rd place finishers in all 3 flights of the NAP. Thanks to the Presidents of the Units for their support of the "B's Needs Committee over the past months. We had a very productive meeting yesterday. I want to give special recognition to Lois DeBlois and Cathy Sallar who visited several clubs in their Unit to discuss ways to increase attendance at Regionals with their club owners and directors. Wayne Hersey, from Vermont, makes individual phone calls to players. We all need to develop methods to increase our bridge base. We need every Delegate to participate in this effort. We need to be more active in recruiting within Senior Centers and encouraging A-Flight players to contribute through columns and lessons. In the interest of time, I will consolidate the information shared at the meeting and make the full report available to everyone.

J. Smola suggested that this could be put in the Bulletin. S. DeMartino remarked that she thought that the "B's Needs committee was going to focus on the 750-3000 players. M. Aquino answered that their needs will still be a focus but that the committee has expanded its horizons. We need to address those players who have abandoned the Regionals, have never come to a Regional or have never been members of the ACBL.

Scheduling Committee Report – David Rock

The Committee discussed declining attendance and what scheduling could do to reverse the trend. The Committee recommended three changes. At the Senior Regional, we should add a Side-Game Swiss opposite the second session of the Compact KO. We should eliminate the horizontal Compact KO which was poorly attended. Team events are currently flighted by the highest Masterpoint member but then stratified within the flights by team average. The committee

recommends that we do the same for pairs, flighting by the higher partner but then stratifying by pair average. S. DeMartino stated that she did not think this was correct. D. Budd objected because it seemed to be too complicated. D. Rock answered that it is the same as we do for teams now and that it can be handled by the Directors.

Nominating Committee: David Rock

The Nominating Committee met to begin the discussion of candidates. All officers are up for election this November. Each of the incumbents has been contacted to see if they are interested in running. The incumbent Treasurer and Secretary have expressed interest in returning and M. Aquino in running for President. We took a straw poll. Because this would give us three officers from one Unit, we are looking for a candidate from Vice-President that is from a different Unit. This would be for a two year term as Vice-president then a two year term as President. If you know of any good candidate, please contact your Unit Nominating Committee representative. Their names have been sent to each of you.

H. Pawlowski interjected that the ACBL Longest Day Fund Raiser for Alzheimer's was not very successful. We collected only \$311 over 2 days, even with the promise of matching funds up to \$1,000. Funds will continue to be collected during the Sunday Swiss event and the District has agreed to contribute the difference up to \$1,000, if necessary.

Nationals – Joseph Brouillard

We had a meeting Saturday morning. The tag line for the logo has been changed from Trump your Expectations to Double your Expectations. The preliminary budget was presented to the Executive Committee. We are currently working on promotional materials and items for distribution at other Nationals. The 2014 banner will be available for Atlanta. We will have "Waterfire" on Saturday or Sunday. This is Providence's signature event. We need sponsors to defray some of the costs. This is a District 25 sponsored Nationals and anyone with an idea, please submit it to any of the chairs. W. Hersey remarked that the clubs need to be encouraged to have NABC Fund Games in August. The website framework has been completed by B. Bertoni and it will be up and running soon.

Old Business

Attendance at Regionals – Allan Clamage

The questions and script for a telephone survey of players who used to attend our Regionals, but now do not, have been completed. Each member of the Board of Delegates will be asked to make a phone call to 5-6 players. As soon as P. Marcus has completed his database list, each Delegate will be given a small group of names.

Website - Bob Bertoni

We advertised seven positions on the website. Mike Wavada has agreed to be our new Webmaster. He has been posting the results of the Regional events. Elizabeth Brian has agreed to be trained as a backup for posting. Allan Clamage will be the interim Editor-in-chief. We need contributors. If you have any interesting stories, articles of interest, or bridge news that you feel should be on the website, please forward it to Allan Clamage. The I/N Website is not being attended to. We have asked for volunteers and none have come forward. We need volunteers to keep the I/N Website current or we will have to shut it down.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:55. Seconded and so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Weiser
Secretary, District 25