

New England Conference of the American Contract Bridge League

Minutes
Executive Committee Meeting
Saturday, August 31, 2013
Warwick, RI

Attendance:

Officers: Ausra Geaski, President; Mark Aquino, Vice President; Donald Levy Treasurer; Carolyn Weiser, Secretary; Robert Erwin, Past President,

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

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

Absent: David Aronson (EMBA); Esther Watstein (CBA)

President Geaski welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM.

A motion was made to accept the Minutes from Sturbridge, 2013, as sent. Seconded and so voted.

Treasurer's report – Don Levy

All checks have cleared. Our total liabilities for the GNT's, and NABC as of this date are \$19,694.20 which agrees with the figures as compiled by the Tournament Manager. District Director DeMartino requested that a separate page be included supporting the final figures and that the NABC figures from 12/31/12 be brought forward for comparison. We show a net gain from 2012. This is due to the increase in table fees. The continued decline in attendance is troubling. Our available cash assets for operations as of July 31 are slightly below our acceptable threshold. A motion was made and seconded and so voted to accept the report as presented.

Director in Charge - Peter Marcus

Analysis of comparative attendance at Regionals 2010 through 2012:

The file of player attendance information from 2000 to the present has been completed. All Regionals except two from 2008 when P. Marcus was not present have been included. Three flags are provided for those who played: those who played, those who played in limited games, and those who played in KO's other than the top bracket. All individual biographical information from the last year a player attended and their current information are included. Non-members have been removed from the file. The file was sent to Allan Clamage who will analyze the data and make recommendations for the next steps.

Super Gold Rush Regional:

This is a one-time event, which will occur in conjunction with the NAP Finals in 2014 with a focus on the B-level players. The schedule was discussed with the Tournament Committee today and will be put into print as soon as time allows. The strats will be 2500 - 1250/ 750, 500, 200. Games will be at 10:00 & 2:00. There will be a horizontal Dinner-bell KO at 5:30 in the evening and another horizontal 3 session KO at 7:30. There will be Swiss on Thursday and Fast Pairs on Friday. Advertising will begin the day after the NAP's conclude for 2012. D. Panagopoulos agreed with the schedule. A motion was made and seconded to approve the schedule as described. The motion was accepted without dissent.

Warwick Attendance:

Attendance was down 25 tables on Tuesday and Wednesday but has been up every session since then. We are almost 40 tables ahead of 2012 and expenses are less as we have one less director. We had 53 tables in the Gold Rush Swiss. Some have moved to the Open game.

Sunday Swiss:

In the future, we will have bracketed teams on Sunday with the Top bracket held as a Swiss with groups of eight below. No one with more than 3000 MPs can play in the bracketed Swiss. In essence, it is the same as we are doing now. The change is more of a marketing tool. Teams will be stratified by average. Some districts such as the Mid-Atlantic have explored having an AX. The top for the AX would be 5000. The first time we can advertise this would be Cromwell. D. Rock asked if there would be a change in Friday nights. P. Marcus replied that in the past the 0-3000 (B) KO was 50 to 60 teams. Many have moved to the Gold Rush and AM games. At this tournament, the "B"s had 11 teams. The KO is currently four sessions and the event is dying. P. Marcus suggested that a possibility would be to leave the "A"s alone but change the Friday "B" KO to a CKO across Friday and Saturday PM. There would be a 2-session CKO Saturday for the losers. R. DeMartino noted that last year the "B"s had 17 tables in Cromwell and in Sturbridge and 20 tables here last year. Eleven teams is a low number but still viable for the event. No recommendation was made for any change in the KO's at this time.

District Director's report - Richard DeMartino

As time is limited, those interested in a report from Atlanta can look on the website. Nothing major has occurred since then.

R. DeMartino is working with Adam Parrish and Chair, Alan Applebaum on the schedule for the Providence NABC. The ACBL determines the National Events but the District chooses the Regional events. One issue is the number of Gold Rush games. The Committee wants Gold Rush games every day. This leaves the 750 to 3000 with very small groups of players. The Executive Committee should decide on the number of Gold Rush games to be held. R. DeMartino recommends that we not have one every day. H. Pawlowski reminded the Executive Committee that the preliminary schedule will be printed by the ACBL after Phoenix. R. DeMartino reiterated we have a responsibility to the 750-3000 players and that most Nationals do not have Gold Rush events every day. H. Pawlowski added that this is Ok if there is a safe place [another event] for them to play such as Non-life Master Pairs. On such days, there is no need for Gold Rush events. Anyone with any comments should contact Alan Applebaum. R. DeMartino added that there will be no Senior Events as this is consistent with our usual Regional schedules. Most other Nationals do not have Senior Events anymore.

Tournament Manager's report - Helen Pawlowski

Table count continues to drop, which is a significant issue. The increase in table fees by \$2 has changed our profitability. Table count was down 177 in Sturbridge as compared to 2012. With the increased fees, we were able to show a nice profit.

NABC Budget - Helen Pawlowski

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The NABC Budget is based on the following assumptions from the NABC in Boston 2008. We estimated that because of attendance, our table count will be 83% of Boston. We added 3% annual for inflation. We will receive \$1.50 more per table than Boston from the ACBL. The ACBL is picking up the cost for the hospitality for the first night. Other hospitality expenses should be neutral. Because volume of attendance will probably be less but inflation brings the costs up, there should be a wash between the two. Other items are not affected by attendance such as the Spouses Tours. For some items, such as registration gifts, volume is a factor. As the numbers go down the costs go down. The Volunteer Dinner will be provided by the ACBL. The ACBL is also providing \$8,000 for prizes. Overall, Providence is asking for .2% less than Boston.

The NABC has already received a sizable contribution. We are asking for sufficient additional money so that we will be able to leave seed money for the next New England National. R. DeMartino noted that the District is

not required to bring any specific amount on money forward for the next Nationals. D. Rock added that he would like to have money left over as Boston did not spend its budget.

D, Panagopoulos made a motion that we commit the amount requested for the Providence NABC. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Nomination/Election Committee - David Rock

The Nominating Committee has agreed on the following slate of candidates for 2014:

President- Mark Aquino
Vice President - David Rock
Treasurer - Don Levy
Secretary - Carolyn Weiser

D. Rock agreed to run for Vice President as an interim candidate with the hope that someone else would come forward to assume the position for next year.

Scheduling Committee- David Rock

The work of the Scheduling Committee was covered in the presentation by Peter Marcus. The committee supported the Sunday Bracketed Swiss with an AX to begin in Cromwell. There was no agreement on starting a horizontal flight "B". H. Pawlowski promised to compile per-event attendance from 2011 for Mansfield. The discussion was tabled until Mansfield.

Providence NABC - Joe Brouillard

We will be signing a contract with the Providence Convention Bureau soon for Waterfire. We hope that we can find a sponsor, hopefully the ACBL. If not, we hope that the Units will consider co-sponsoring the event. We hope to secure \$1,600 from the Units and \$5000 from the ACBL. We will have a new banner for Phoenix. Erin Degulis from the Providence Convention and Visitors Bureau will be in phoenix where will have an AV. There will be a one-year out meeting with Jeff Johnston and Wendy Sullivan on October 3. All Committee Chairs are invited. There will be a walkthrough of the Convention Center. The Providence Visitors Bureau will try to get some discounted rooms if any would like to attend Waterfire on October 5th. We will get the information out as soon as possible, if it comes through. Tee shirts will be on sale in Mansfield. We will also have bookmarks and a polo shirt with the logo.

Tournament Committee - Mark Aquino

Everything from the Tournament Committee meeting has been discussed. We have a two year commitment to Nashua and the Sturbridge Host hotel for the NAP's and GNT's.

B-Flight Committee ("B's Needs) – Mark Aquino

The report on the "B's needs committee has been posted on the web. The next meeting is Sunday morning at 8:30. We need to develop an action plan across the District. Tomorrow we will be looking at a mentoring program.

H. Pawlowski interjected - We need to get your approval for a co-chair for the Registration and Section Top committee. Sandy DeMartino would like Phyllis Bausher added as her co-chair. R. Erwin asked if there was a conflict of interest for Sandy DeMartino because of her current position with the ACBL. H. Pawlowski stated that the ACBL had been asked and there was no conflict.

Website Committee- Bob Bertoni

The Committee after discussion voted to eliminate the I/N section of the website. It will be replaced by an I/N page. We do need to find someone who will be responsible for this page. This will be much less difficult as it is only one page. We voted to end the Partnership Desk and the Discussion Board as well. We will replace the I/N link on the top of the opening page with a link to the Providence NABC. Our new Webmaster, Mike Wavada, is doing a great job. Allan Clamage added that John Stiefel and Harold Feldheim have agreed to let us post their old articles from the CBA publication at two-week intervals.

New Business -

Dean Panagopoulos reminded the Executive Committee that the District has received over \$3,000 from the ACBL from the Grass Roots Fund games that was allocated for the use of the GNT's and NAP's. He would like to use that money at the NAP's and GNT's to give the events more of a fun and party atmosphere. He requested a vote from the Executive Committee to approve the use of the money for a lunch hospitality at these events. He had no figures on the anticipated costs or the number that would attend. The Grass Roots FUNd games will be run again next December. There is no idea how much money we will get as this depends on the number of clubs that run these games and the number of players who attend them. R. DeMartino stated that the Executive Committee needed more notice and a budget before they could make any decision. We are already supporting the winners with additional money. H. Pawlowski suggested a one year lag. We could hold the money until we find out how much we get from the next installment. This would give us a trend and we could use this year's money next year and have a better idea of how much we had for the future. D. Panagopoulos stated that last year we had 45 tables at split sites. President Geaski stated that we need more information to make this decision. She suggested that perhaps we could discuss this via email and table the final decision until Mansfield.

R. Budd made s motion that the meeting be adjourned. It was seconded, and so voted. The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 PM

Respectfully submitted:

Carolyn Weiser
Secretary, District 25

Addendum :

As stated at the end of the Warwick meeting of the Executive Committee the following email was sent to all the member of the Executive Committee regarding the use of the Grass-Roots Fund money:

Dear Members of the Executive Committee

During the Executive Committee meeting in Warwick, we began discussing suggestions for the utilization of the Grass Roots money allocated to our District for the NAP/GNT. This year we received over \$3,000 but future amounts will vary each year depending upon how many clubs run qualifying game and the attendance at such games. Although we seemed agreed that this money should be spent to promote and support the NAP/GNT events, we also agreed that we need to be thoughtful about how we do this and be careful not to set any precedents that we may not be able to continue in future years.

Suggestions that were made include the following:

1. Use the money we have received this year to provide a buffet supper for the players at the NAP and GNT events. Concern was now to plan for this since we do not know the table count ahead of time and we may not be able to sustain this in the future years since we do not know how much money the District will receive.

2. Use some portion of the money to provide increased hospitality during the NAP/GNT events and reserve the remainder until we know what funds will be allocated next year. What would be an appropriate amount to allocate to hospitality? As a starting point, I would suggest we consider 50% of this year's funds and reserve 50%.
3. Reserve all of the funds until we can see the trend for future funding and then determine how to best use the money.

Since the NAP will be held on October 19-20, before the Executive Committee meets again, we agreed to discuss this issue via email. Please consider the suggestions mentioned above and any others you would like to include. Send your feedback to the Executive Committee members on or before September 20 so we can provide direction for the upcoming NAP weekend.

Sincerely,

Ausra

AG/cw

Thanks in advance for your comments and quick reply on this.
Please note that as of September 29 only 4 votes were submitted. These favored option 2.