

New England Bridge Conference of the American Contract Bridge League

Minutes
Board of Delegates Meeting
Granite State Regional
Nashua, NH
June 24, 2018

Attendance:

Officers: Lois DeBlois, President; Jack Mahoney, Vice President; Joseph Brouillard, Treasurer; Carolyn Weiser, Secretary; Robert Bertoni, Past President

Invited Guests: Mark Aquino, District Director; Jay Whipple, President, ACBL

Unit Representatives:

EMBA – Unit 108- 18

Curtis Barton, Maureen Bitler, Frederick Brown, Peter Clay, Kathy Clay (R. McCaw alt.), Steve Diamond, Lynn Duncan, Jo Megna-Wallace, Grace Lombardo (D. Aronson, alt.), Peter Lombardo, Brenda Montague, Neil Montague (S. Agranoff alt.), Dean Panagopoulos, Linda Robinson, Alix Taylor

Absent - Robert McCaw, David Aronson, Saul Agranoff

CMBA – Unit 113 - 2

Robillard, Jeanne Robillard, Joan Kublinski - *Absent - none*

CBA – Unit 126 - 13

Paul Burnham, Sandy DeMartino, Richard DeMartino, Susan Rodricks (A. Geaski alt.) Susan, A. Geaski, alt.), Susan Seckinger, (E. Watstein alt.) Michael Smith, Susan Smith, Sonja Smith, Michael Wavada, Susan Wavada

Absent - Phyllis Bausher, Larry Bausher, Ausra Geaski, Joyce Stiefel, Esther Watstein

RIBA – Unit 145 - 4

Linda Arens, Paula Najarian, Marshall Williams *Absent - Maureen Fahey*

NHBA – Unit 150 3 of 4

Wayne Burt, Krzysztof Jarosz, (B.L. Tysor alt.) *Absent - B. L Tysor, Sarah Widhu*

VBA –Unit 175 - 3 of 3

Wayne Hersey, Steve Randall, (R. Tracy alt.) Karen Randall Hewitt (P. Sharpsteen alt.)

Absent - Richard Tracy, Phil Sharpsteen

MBA – Unit 189 -3 of 4

Allan McRae, Dan Morgenstern, Jack Mahoney (Vice President of District); *Absent - Lance Kolkhorst*

WMBA – Unit - 189 - 3 of 3

Robert Brodner, Peter Samsel, Bob Sagor *Absent - none*

President's Opening remarks- Lois DeBlois

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 AM. President DeBlois stated that she is proud to be the President of District and that we have a lot to cover in this meeting. She recognized Wayne Burt for chairing tis tournament and Susan Burt for the outstanding job she did again at the Partnership Desk. Karen Randal did the legwork for the pro-am with her husband Steve Randall's assistance when she needed a break

. I apologize if I miss anyone else, but Sabrina Miles achieved her Gold Life Master rank at this tournament.

The Providence and Warwick Visitors Bureau gave Joe Brouillard special recognition for the Warwick Regionals and the Providence NABC. Together they have brought \$13.3 million in revenue to the city of Providence and the State of Rhode Island.

Welcome to ACBL President, Jay Whipple

I would like to present, our special guest today, ACBL President Jay Whipple.

ACBL President Jay Whipple

I am the District Director for Florida's District 9. I am returning to an area I know well as I want to Philip's Exeter Preparatory School. I would like to thank Mark for inviting me. I have been well schooled in the activities of this District, which is still referred to as my people in my daily walks with Rich DeMartino.

This is my year as President of the ACBL. I was elevated by my peers and I had to decide how I was going to use the time. I decided to keep the tradition the "meet and greet" and have time to listen to people. We are trying to make changes on the board to make things more efficient. I do not want to take up a lot of time. My priority is membership: new members and the retention of the members we have.

Our Colligate initiative is very important to me. We need to find people inside the colleges to initiate contact.

You have a busy agenda. Thank you for the great hospitality and the competition.

He asked if there were any questions.

S. Smith (CBA) asked about the college program. President Whipple answered that we had 15 teams last year and we will have 30 this year but there are 60,000 colleges in the United States. We need someone inside to initiate contact with the Colleges. The ACBL play a \$1,000 stipend and provides all the materials that are needed. The only requirement is that there must be eight players. It is very difficult to find people inside the colleges. If you have any leads, you can contact Stephanie Threlkeld (College@acbl.org) and give her the lead and she will follow through.

District Director Aquino added that trying to get any information from the outside the colleges is very difficult because of privacy concerns. This initiative must come from someone within the college, a student, alumni, or teacher. Once contacted, the ACBL can give help.

J. Kublinski (CMBA) There are no evening games anymore, certainly none in Unit 113. Isn't this a problem for college students.

(J. Whipple) There had been a big growth in the Common Game in the evening. The number of tables and clubs are growing. The common game expands the field. Most

are running 18 or 21 Board games. People want to get home. They receive the same masterpoints as they would have for 24. I am encouraged.

He asked how many supervised games there are in each week in your Units. We need to make the investment at both ends: a safe environment for the new players and partnership help.

Karen Randle (VBA) Is it possible to email members asking if they are college alumni who are active.

(J. Whipple) We could send to everyone but we do not know where they were educated. If we knew more, we would be more successful.

General discussion followed regarding possible sources of contacts.

R. DeMartino (CBA) stated that people are concerned with the CEO position. I know you can't tell us much, but can you tell us where it stands. We know the ACBL hired a CEO then we heard that he was no longer there.

(J, Whipple) I headed the Search Committee that recommended Bahar Gidwani. We universally felt that he should be hired. The vote was 25-0. Unfortunately, we had a parting of the ways in June. Joe Jones, our CFO, has taken over the reins. He has earned the respect of the membership. Things should run smoothly.

We had cut some number of projects. Calling lapsed members had stopped. These calls helped so much. We have a team at headquarters that will do a good job.

There is a Search Committee headed by Paul Cuneo (D-16). It is made up of 8 people. They will try to identify a new CEO.

K. Jarosz (NHBA) What about ACBL Score.

(J. Whipple) ACBL runs games, matchpoints the results and sends the information back to the ACBL. It was built in 1975 in Pascal. It was brilliant when it was developed. It is difficult now to maintain. We can't change anything inside, except the prices of events. We tried to revamp it and spent \$2,000,000 and failed. We have learned our lesson. It can't be rebuilt. There are 9 different engines out there. They all write to the same standard. One of these days windows will make an update that will kill us.

An alternative is for the ACBL to create the same standard. Every day clubs could send information to the cloud that would be sent to the ACBL, then back to the club. The necessary conversion would be made. We are testing this with 30 clubs. It will be easier for Sectionals and Regionals as these are run by ACBL Directors. We hope to have this into effect by the end of the year.

What will a club do without any internet?

Jay Whipple answered that some can't. We believe we can find a way.

D. Morgenstern (MBA) Which format will the ACBL purchase?

(J. Whipple) This is a competitive market. Those vendors will charge for their engines. We will not charge for the engine, but we will have to charge for ACBL Score. The strategy is not for us to pick but for the clubs to pick. It should be something you can learn in 5-10 minutes. I assure you that these engines are easy to use.

I will be here until the game starts if you have any more questions I will remain for a few minutes after the meeting is over.

Secretary's Report - Minutes, Board of Delegates meeting, Mansfield, MA, November 12, 2017, Carolyn Weiser- As there were no corrections, the minutes were accepted as sent.

Treasurer's Report - Joseph Brouillard

The Statement of Financial Positions shows that the District is in good health. The NABC Fund is on track. Our objective was to secure a return of between 4-6% per year for the NABC Fund. Our return is just under 2.5 % Year to Date.

We have no outstanding debt.

The Operating Income Statement shows a tournament loss. We had a gigantic loss in Falmouth. There was a drop of 140 tables. Our expenses are just about where should be, though slightly higher than last year. We show a current loss of almost \$16,000.

Treasurer Brouillard asked if there were any questions.

Joan Kublinski (CMBA) Do you expect that after Warwick and Mansfield it will be possible that we will be back in the black?

It is possible that we will make a profit here. Warwick is our most profitable tournament and we made a profit in Mansfield last year. We have not received any Grass Roots Fund Money as yet this year. I am not overly concerned with the numbers to date.

(Kublinski) Do you have any ideas of why the number of tables is down at all three tournament?

There are a number of factors. H. Pawlowski added that at the Cape, we moved back to Falmouth from Hyannis. A large number of Cape players prefer Hyannis. The weather was also a factor. Many of the snowbirds postponed their return and others who came back for the spring holidays, did not stay. The rain kept players away and many of those who came took the one sunny day off to see the Cape. There was the issue of the backup at the bridge because of construction. This caused many players to decide not to come down. We also had changed the schedule. We reformed the Gold Rush games to the "Not Your Average Gold Rush. We did not market this well. Adding all this together, we were 140 tables down. There were possible other factors too.

J. Brouillard added that the traffic was backed up 2-3 miles. Many came once and decided not to do it again.

Treasurer Brouillard continued that the GNT Stipends will be going out next week.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.

Election of Officers - 2018 - Brenda Montague

The District Nominating Committee approved the following slate for 2018:

President	Lois DeBlois	RIBA
Vice President	Jack Mahoney	MBA

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to approve the slate as presented.

Tournament Manager's Report - Helen Pawlowski

Senior Regional

We had a large loss at the Cape. The analysis on the last page shows that gross revenue is directly related to table count. Table count was down 139 tables. The directors did a great job trying to cut expenses. Some directors were sent home, Their efforts are what kept the tournament costs so low. (-\$4,707) In 2017, Director and TA costs were rich relative to 2016. Last year we added the GNT's. This required that extra staff be brought in. Staff rooms and comps were short. The number allowed is based on the total number of hotel rooms that are booked. Total loss was \$4000 more than in 2017.

Update: Nashua

A direct comparison with 2017 will be difficult as we gave away the KO's last year. Table count for Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday were relatively even with last year. We did very well, but it is hard to compete with a "free KO." We will get the numbers out as soon as possible. A lot will depend on the number who stay to play today and tomorrow. As to the KO's, suffice it to say, they exceeded our expectations.

New Tournament Manager

The Search Committee, and the Board have selected my replacement. There were three wonderful candidates. Sally Kirtley was selected. She is a director at the Hartford Bridge Club. She runs a small game of her own. She will have no trouble with our contracts as she is a practicing lawyer. She is familiar with all of our sites.

Tournament / Scheduling Committee Report - VP Jack Mahoney

Cromwell did very well. The proposed schedule for next year will be very similar.

As to the Cape, we are envisioning major changes. We will get rid of the Not Your Average Gold Rush, which according to Peter had a negative effect on our attendance. The Gold Rush players were unhappy with the higher top. There will be a major rewrite.

There is an experimental format for KO's that will probably be passed in Atlanta. The first day will be run as a Swiss, then as a bracketed to move on to the KO phase. I think it is a brilliant format that will be embraced by the players. We hope to incorporate this into the schedule for the Cape. I have asked Lois to talk about the New Non-life Master Regional schedule for Sturbridge in 2019.

(President DeBlois) We already have our Rainbow Weekend. We will be able to add days and make it a true Non-Life Master Regional. Sue Miguel has renamed it the Gold mine Regional. It will be heavily marketed and could be huge. Sturbridge can't give us the full week in 2019 but we will be able to start on Thursday. We would still continue to hold the GNT's on the weekend and will add events for any out of district players who can't participate. This will be the Rainbow Weekend plus.

Larry Weiss Award Presentation- Michael Wavada

The Larry Weiss Award is not necessarily an annual award. It was given to me last year. There are three criteria: a presence in the District, some skill at the table, and with superior behavior at the table. Nominations were solicited from everyone, via email, at clubs, through Units and the District. The committee was made up of members from every Unit, plus me. There were 4 men and 4 women. It included relatively new members and grizzled veterans. The process was completed via email. There were 13 nominees. On the first ballot everyone was asked to vote for 5. This narrowed it down to 3. I am

100% certain of the individual chosen as he was named on all ballots. I present the Larry Weiss award to my friend, my mentor and my hero and guru, Robert Bertoni.

(Robert Bertoni) “Thank you very much. My skill level must have dropped if this tournament is any indication. This award means more to me than anything else I have achieved in bridge. I love you all.”

District Director’s Report - Mark Aquino

“Congratulations Bob.”

As District Director, I have the opportunity to distribute \$1,000 annually to a charity in the District. Last year the money was distributed to Emmaus of Haverhill that was originally recommended by Bob Bertoni and the City Mission of Boston, which was recommended by Fred Brown, the first African American to be appointed as an appellate judge. He is a member of the EMBA Board, as well as a Trustee of Northeastern and the Dana Farber Cancer Institute. This year I designated the entire sum to the Lymphoma and Leukemia Society in honor of Alan Watson’s teenage daughter.

When I took over as District Director, we were told that we would never have an NABC north of Philadelphia again. When Chicago cancelled, I was able to successfully lobby to get Providence as the site for our 2021 Summer NABC. It will be co-chaired by Lois DeBlois and Joe Brouillard.

Our District regularly blows the socks of every other District in its attendance at the GNT District Finals. The people most responsible for this are Sue Miguel, Helen Pawlowski and Peter Marcus. I have pushed with the Board to try to have an extra team qualify to go to the NABC final for any District that has 8 or 9 teams in their final. I was particularly interested in the B’s and C’s because if they go to an NABC, they are more likely to go again. The motion failed by a narrow margin, but I have been asked to resubmit it in Atlanta and I am hoping we will get it passed this time.

“It is great to have Jay Whipple here. He is a brilliant guy, hardworking. He personifies someone with brains who never lets it go to his head. “

Old Business- none

New Business-

New Business-

Sandy DeMartino (CBA) “As a member of District 25, every year I come to his tournament which includes the ACBL ‘Longest Day’ for the Alzheimer’s Foundation. In the past, we made some attempt to raise money through a jar left for donations. The ACBL has vetted this association and partners with it. In clubs, we can participate, but I am here. I can donate myself. I would like to feel that the District supports the ACBL in this endeavor. A lot of money goes to this endeavor. I would like to make a motion that District 25 donates \$500 to \$1,000 to the Alzheimer’s Association through the ACBL Fund.

President DeBlois noted that this was brought up at the Executive Committee meeting last night. It was discussed honestly and passionately. The Executive Committee

felt that we are a District of Clubs and Units. So much is done at other levels. Many have been touched by this. After a thorough discussion, the Executive Committee chose not to continue the discussion.

Discussion followed in which many delegates expressed their opinions.

S. DeMartino (CBA) I would like to redo my motion and remind everyone that this is to support the Alzheimer's Association and the ACBL in its partnership with it. I would like to move that D-25 donate \$1,000 to the longest day. The motion was seconded

The discussion continued in which the delegates expressed their candid opinions.

A motion was made to table the motion. It was seconded.

S. DeMartino (CBA): " I withdraw the motion. We should look into this next year and designate a day." Someone said second.

President DeBlois -We have two motions, the motion to table and the motion to withdraw. President DeBlois stated that the Executive Committee would review this for action for this regional next year.

A motion was made, seconded and so vote to adjourn the meeting

President DeBlois thanked S. DeMartino for engendering the discussion.
The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 AM

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Weiser, Secretary, District 25