

New England Bridge Conference of the American Contract Bridge League

Minutes
Executive Committee Meeting
Crowne Plaza Hotel
Warwick, RI
September 1, 2018

Officers:

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

Unit Representatives: EMBA- Brenda Montague, Neil Montague (R. McCaw alt.) ; CMBA- Carole Seager; CBA- Michael Wavada, Ausra Geaski, (Esther Watstein alt.) ; RIBA - Paula Najarian; NHBA - Sarah Widhu; VBA -Karen Randle (Wayne Hersey alt.); MBA - Daniel Morgenstern; WMBA -Peter Samsel

Absent - Robert McCaw- EMBA, Esther Watstein- CBA, Wayne Hersey - VBA
Invited Guests (non-voting)- Mark Aquino, District Director; Sally Kirtley, Tournament Manager Trainee; David Metcalf, Tournament DIC; Helen Pawlowski, Tournament Manager; Peter Marcus, DIC

President DeBlois called the meeting to order at 5:50. She stated that Wayne Hersey (VBA) has been hospitalized again. Karen Randal has brought a card for everyone to sign and wish him well.

She continued that she had been remiss in not saying more about Allan Clamage at the last meeting. "He was one of a kind and I loved working with him. With his passing, D-25 lost a real soldier." P. Najarian and Linda Ahrens, will report on the changes in the bylaws, as he wanted them updated. She suggested as a tribute to Allan's many years of service D-25 might consider and Allan Clamage Day at Cromwell and that we might present something to his family. General discussion followed. VP J. Mahoney suggested that we might invite people to write tributes to Allan. D.D. M. Aquino reminded the ExCom that he had attended the internment. President DeBlois asked M. Aquino to work with her on this.

Secretary's Report - Minutes, Executive Committee Meeting, Nashua Regional. June 23, 2018- Carolyn Weiser

President DeBlois asked if there were any comments or corrections to the Minutes as sent. As there were none, the Minutes were accepted as sent.

Secretary Weiser asked the that the Executive Committee consider the Web Changes at the end of the Minutes of the Board of Delegates and asked that a motion be made to accept these as written. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the Web Changes as noted.

Treasurer's Report - Joseph Brouillard

Out total assets are down and our working capital is down. Our investments for the NABC Fund are up.

The Operating Income Statement shows that we have not made a profit on any tournament this year with a total loss of just under \$21,000. Expenses are up year to date with a new Income Loss of \$33,692. The GNT stipends have been paid. We have not received any Grass-roots Fund money from the ACBL as of July 1. We did receive a payment last week, but this was not reflected on this report. All the units and clubs who participated should be congratulated. When asked, Treasurer Brouillard attributed the loss primarily to Falmouth where we lost \$12,000. "We have lost over \$20,000 in the last two years at the Cape. Warwick, traditionally, is our best tournament. I hope we make a profit here." [Last year we made money at Warwick and Mansfield. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.

President DeBlois took a moment to introduce Karen Randall from Vermont who has volunteered to work on flyer distribution.

Tournament Manager's Report - Sally Kirtley

Summary: Nashua Regional

We did a 4-year comparison for Nashua. 2017 was a bit of an anomaly as we had the Free KO's. Comparing 2016 & 2018, expenses are up as is the loss. A. Geaski stated that she noticed that we have a lot of new Directors and queried whether we have always had to bring them in. S. Kirtley stated that salaries and transportation costs are up a little. P. Marcus added that we only have 3 New England Regional Directors and this tournament is a 7-director tournament. No one flew in. They came in from New York and New Jersey and Philadelphia. We try not to fly anyone in.

C. Seager asked why hospitality went up for the night games. S. Kirtley answered that between '16 and '18 we added a lot of tables to the night games. We had a lot of extra tables in 2017 because of the giveaway. It was hard to anticipate the number who would come back. Why were the comp rooms up so much from 2016 (3500) to 2018 (2400)? H. Pawlowski answered that in 2018 the actual net was down. We had more because the room pick-up was higher. We usually get one room per 30 paid. "In 2017 we filled the house." S. Kirtley continued that P. Marcus paid for the Directors breakfast at their meeting with ACBL President J. Whipple. Some of the hospitality for the "Meet J. Whipple" morning was paid by him. We would be down \$1,800 without their contributions.

Update - Warwick Regional

We were up 20% yesterday but today we are down. To date, we are down 18 tables. We more than re-cooped the 28 tables we were down the first day. Last night was the smallest of the night games. As of this moment, we are off 18 tables, which I consider even.

Tournament / Scheduling Committee Report - Jack Mahoney

Vice President Mahoney stated that we would put the first day teams back next year, if there is no objection.

We has some difficulties in scheduling the 2019 NAP-A this year. The will be in EMBA in 2019 and we are already talking to CBA regarding good dates for 2020.

Regarding the Senior Regional, we made few changes. Games the first day will be at 1 and 6. For Saturday, we changed the language to Senior Team Championship. Sue (Miguel) will work on the language. It will begin with a Round Robin and then finish with a KO. This will guarantee everyone a full day of play the first day. P. Marcus noted that limited attendance events (NAP, etc.) only need a start time, as no new entries will be accepted for the second session. C. Seager asked why the time between the first and second session is so long as “we are likely to lose people if the break is too long.” VP Mahoney answered that, “the players want time to eat dinner.”

District Director’s Report - Mark Aquino

I am not comfortable talking about personnel matters. There have been several changes at ACBL headquarters in Horn Lake. CEO, Bahar Gidwani, has been replaced with the ACBL Chief Financial officer, Joe Jones, who has been appointed to serve as interim Executive Officer. Paul Cuneo is the chair of the Search Committee for a permanent Executive Director. Paul was pushing for a swift replacement, but I proposed that they delay because there are several new Board members starting their first year, and it would be appropriate to have the announcement of a permanent Executive Director at the Spring NABC in Memphis. My March 2019, we should have a new Executive Director in place. By March 2019, we should have a new CEO in place.

You all have received my District Director reports. I am proud of our NAP participation. With the changes I initiated that have been approved to take place immediately, district winners will receive more masterpoints and more gold. Part of this motion for a change was in reaction to the REACH experiment. The NAP-C will go from 10 mps with $\frac{1}{4}$ gold to 15 mps with $\frac{1}{2}$ gold. Flight B winners will be awarded 33.5 gold instead of 24, and Flight A will get 48 rather than 36. We should be doing anything we can to publicize this. Sue Miguel fills the seats. It is incumbent on us to do whatever we can to encourage the players to participate.

I resubmitted a motion I initiated two years ago to allow districts that get 8 or more teams in the District finals to send a second team in flights B and C. Peter (Marcus) Sue (Miguel) and Helen (Pawlowski) do wonders for the flight C. We get 30 teams where other districts with 20,000 members don’t come close. If we can get people to go to an NABC, they will go back. It is not fair that they get the same number of participating teams as we do. I lost by one vote. The Board of Governors has asked the Board to reconsider.

D-25 stands out in GNF participation. We are 4th in the country for Grass Roots Fund Reimbursement. Treasurer Brouillard asked if the GRF money can be used for other than the stipends. M. Aquino stated that it is raised to help and promote and to offset grass roots activities for the GNTs and NAPs. This would include hospitality, publicity, etc. The largest districts, Florida and D-17 get \$40,000 with no effort. Yes, we get something but it should be geared to support the districts that with teams. D-15 has no Flight C teams. I will have more information at the next meeting. The Minutes from the (Board’s) meeting have all the details.

P. Marcus asked is the ACBL Marketing team is doing anything to get the information out to the Flight C players about the big increase in Gold Points in the NAP/GNT. DD Aquino answered, “The shout answer is not yet.”

President DeBlois announced that there would be a break in the agenda. A Thank You note was received from Susan Burt for all her work at the Nashua Regional.

A cake was presented the Helen Pawlowski, which was shared by the Executive Committee, President DeBlois read a note from David Rock and presented H. Pawlowski with an envelope as a parting Thank You for all her work for District 25 over her years as Tournament Manager.

Old Business-

Bylaws review - Paula Najarian

P. Najarian, with Linda Ahrens, has been reviewing the current bylaws based on the work of Allan Clamage and Bernard Schneider. She had corresponded with A. Clamage on this matter. The work to date was sent to Vice President Mahoney, who had volunteered to proof, and was being presented to the Board for comments. A formal document with the proposed changes would be presented to the Board of Delegates for their approval. As P. Najarian began to review her notes, there was general agreement that the issues were such that that Executive Committee could not properly analyze or digest them in the time that was available for the meeting. It was agreed that the final presentation to the Board of Delegates would be postponed to Nashua and that P. Najarian and L. Evens would prepare and send the material to the members of the Executive Committee before the Mansfield meeting so that they would be better prepared to discuss the contents there. P. Najarian has provided a copy of her notes, which is included as an addenda. They do not represent the formal document that the Executive Committee will receive before Mansfield.

Finance Advisory Committee Report -Curtis Barton

The Financial Advisory Committee, consisting of Lois DeBlois, Jack Mahoney, Joe Brouillard, Carolyn Weiser, Curtis Barton, Bob Bertoni, Helen Pawlowski, and Sally Kirtley, met on Wednesday evening. The two major issues were whether the District should raise table fees and the negative roll that the Senior Regional has had on the bottom line as well as the factors that have contributed to the consistent losses at the Cape over the last several years. C. Barton's full report appears as an addenda.

We have not raised fees since 2012 and costs have continually risen. The change in the Daily Bulletin will help save some money, but not close to what is needed. After a discussion, the committee voted to recommend a fee increase to \$16.00 from the current \$14.00 with relative increases for the rest of the fee structure.

There was a long discussion regarding the Senior Regional. Attendance is down and costs have continued to go up. H. Pawlowski and S. Kirtley looked at the attendance by city location. Cape player participation was lower at Falmouth than at Hyannis. We are contractually locked in for 2019. If we decide not to continue the tournament after that, we have to inform the hotel before the tournament begins of our intention not to return in 2020 or we would be faced with a huge penalty. The committee voted 402 to kill Falmouth in 2020. We were aware of the fact that this is a grandfathered tournament and that there are only 2 Senior Regionals still in existence. Once we ended this tournament, we could not change our minds.

Vice President Mahoney suggested the possibility of securing outside sponsorships to help defray the costs. He will work on developing a possible set of

sponsorships, such as a named day, event, similar to what is done at some other Regionals, and the pricing structure. The Board was asked to send him any potential contacts or suggestions. C. Seager asked if this would interfere with the work of the Providence NABC, as they would be taping the same pool. The sponsors for Regionals would be more regionally based.

P. Najarian noted that about 60% of our losses come from the Cape. There were 1100 tables in Nashua and Falmouth had 646, which was down 140 from the previous year. Treasurer Brouillard stated that the Cape players do not support this tournament. Last month there were 21 open tables at the Cape Cod Sectional and half of those were from off Cape. On Mondays at the Cape, there are 3 games that overlap, making it impossible for a player to play in more than one of these games: Hyannis has 15+ tables, Harwich has 10+ and Willow Bend has 20+. On one Monday, there were 45-50 tables of pairs on the Cape. Only 10 showed up at the Regional. Next year, Falmouth will be abysmal. They will be working on the Bourne Bridge, which has been rescheduled for the spring of 2019. It is being held the same week as Gatlinburg. D. Morgenstern asked what the average tournament attendance was. Average tournament attendance is about 1,000-1,300 for Cromwell, 1,350 for Nashua, 900-1,000 for Mansfield. Without the Cape we have about 4,500 tables, or \$18,000 (\$14.00 x tables, x 4). A question was asked as to whether if we raised card fees for the Regionals would we also have to raise card fees again to support the NABC. J. Brouillard answered, "No." As of the end of August, we had \$103,000 in the NABC Fund. P. Samsel asked if this would kill the Senior Regional. J. Brouillard answered, yes; the Senior Regional would go away." It is tied to the Cape and grandfathered there. B. Bertoni stated that he thought that our last year in Hyannis made a small profit. J. Brouillard noted that we have lost \$20,000 in the last 2 years at Falmouth. R. Bertoni continued that, "Mansfield has only 900 tables. I think we should try to resurrect the Senior Regional." President DeBlois added we are going to have the new Non-Life master Regional in April and that Gatlinburg and the Senior Regional are also scheduled in April. There are often religious holidays. It is a very busy month. It is hard to see how the Cape could succeed. Treasurer Brouillard again reminded the Executive Committee that there was light participation for the EMBA Cape Sectional and that there will be lots of commuter problems. We can't get out for 2019. The earliest we can cancel is 2020. District Director Aquino stated that tournaments are in trouble everywhere. The issue is how to get the players to come. Nothing will save 2019. There is a movement to kill 1/3 of the tournament in the next 4 years. We are generally in a good situation. We should at least give 2020 a try. S. Widhu stated that she disagreed. "There are very few tournament dates. There are so many tournaments in April and there aren't enough players. We will have a Non-life-Master Regional competing with the Regional. I think having 4 Regionals is plenty."

President DeBlois asked for a straw vote.

H. Pawlowski said that she would like to have the Executive Committee get more information on the alternate hotels from Sally first. We would like to see the two properties in Hyannis. "The Cape Codder is a possible property. Peter (Marcus) and Joe (Brouillard) could work on it if Hyannis is the issue. I do not think there will be any cost savings as it is a different type of hotel. The hospitality would be more expensive. It is only useful to move if it will put more people in the seats. Sally (Kirtley) can find out if a one-year contract for 2020 is even available. The Cape Codder and the Hyannis

Convention Center are possibilities. We must let the Seacrest know a day and a year before the start of the next contract. “We need to know if there is a viable alternative available. “B. Bertoni made a motion that the cancellation of the Senior Regional be tabled. The motion was seconded and passed.

J. Brouillard made a motion that affective in Cromwell, table fees be raised to \$15.00. A question was asked as to why not in Mansfield. The issue was the fact that the fees are on the flyers that have already been sent out. A discussion followed regarding the possibilities and problems. DD Mark Aquino suggested that it be brought to the Board of Delegates in Mansfield. The rest of the fee structure was queried. J. Brouillard amended his motion to: increase all table fees by \$1.00. The amendment was seconded and passed. President DeBlois will send out a Presidents Message to the members of the Board of Delegates explaining the situation.

New Business-

President DeBlois stated that District 3 has requested that as Danbury, a D-3 Regional, is held in D-25, the Code of Disciplinary Conduct required that all disciplinary actions be handled by D-25. D-3 has requested that, for Danbury, they would like to handle such actions. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to allow D-3 to handle all disciplinary actions that are related to the Danbury Regional, even though it is in D-25.

Vice President Mahoney said that he would like to hear more from Bob (Bertoni) and Helen (Pawlowski) regarding the history of the Senior Regional location.

H. Pawlowski answered that we held the Senior Regional in Falmouth for about 15 years until the property was sold suddenly. Because of the contract, we received compensation and used the money to move the tournament to the Chatham Bars Inn. Then we moved to Hyannis while the new hotel in Falmouth was being built. We remained at the Hyannis Convention Center until 2017. There were many issues with the structure of the convention center and other things. We returned to Falmouth in 2017 in response to them.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Weiser
Secretary, D-25