



New England Bridge Conference of the

American Contract Bridge League

Minutes

Executive Committee
Keohane Senior Regional
Sea Crest Beach Hotel
April 27, 2019

Officers:

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

Unit Representatives: EMBA- Steven Diamond (B. Montague alt.), Curtis Barton; CMBA- Carol Seager; CBA- Michael Wavada, Sally Kirtley (Esther Watstein alt.); RIBA - Marshall Williams; NHBA - Wayne Burt (Sarah Widhu alt.); VBA - Kim Likakis (Wayne Hersey alt.); MBA - Daniel Morgenstern; WMBA -David Rock (Peter Samsel alt.)

Absent - Brenda Montague, EMBA, Esther Watstein, CBA; Sarah Widhu, NHBA; Wayne Hersey, VBA; Peter Samsel WMBA

Invited Guests (non-voting)- Sally Kirtley, Tournament Manager; Marilyn Wells, ACBL Area Manager (3,4,24,25)

Call to Order-

President DeBlois called the meeting to order at 5:52 PM. The attendees were asked to identify themselves, as there were several alternates at the meeting.

Minutes - The minutes from the Executive Committee meeting held at the Presidential Regional, February 16, 2019 were accepted as sent.

Treasurer's Report - Joseph Brouillard

Our total assets are down \$10,852 from this time last year and our Working Capital is down \$18,579. These figures are a bit of a concern. For the first time, we list a liability of \$840, based on the sale in Cromwell of unredeemed vouchers. The Grass Roots Fund is doing well, but stipends and other expenses related to the GNTs have not yet been paid. The NABC Fund was at \$101,963 at the end of March. April was a good month and the total increased to approximately \$103,500.

The Income Statement shows a loss of \$1,516 in Cromwell and dividend income of \$316. We received a check for \$25.00 from the ACBL as a membership bonus. The NAP stipend of \$2,000 was paid out of the Grass-roots Fund. To date we show a loss of \$4,623 for the year.

D. Morgenstern asked what the figures were for the Goldmine/GNTs. Treasurer Brouillard answered that the final figures are in flux. We are going to pay all GNT expenses out of the Grass Roots Fund money. Final figures will be available in Nashua. S. Kirtley added that all the bills for Sturbridge have been paid. It appears that we will have a profit of \$272 for this year.

(C. Barton) Are the NABC funds in equities?

(J. Brouillard) No, it is in a balanced portfolio, 40% Bonds and the rest is two mutual funds; the Fidelity Puritan and the Fidelity Low Price Fund.

(C. Barton) is there any danger should there be a recession?

(J. Brouillard) No, The Puritan Fund is conservative with 60% in bonds. Our target for the NABC is \$105-\$110,000. When we get there, we will cash the money in a put it in laddered CD's.

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

We have good news and bad news regarding the sale of vouchers. The players seem to like them very much, but the bank charges have not been in line with what they purported they would be. What we were told by Citizens was that most transactions would have a .99% fee. The bill shows 2.17% and 3.1% for Visa and Master Card at 2.3%. Rewards cards were charged 3%. I have been to the bank twice and will go again. We have two options. We can go to another credit card processor. We would lose the positive feature that the money is deposited into our account within 1-2 days. We could split the fee and charge a convenience fee of 1.5%, which is common. This would raise the entry fee by .22. President DeBlois noted that we would have to be transparent should this happen. Treasurer Brouillard repeated that we were told 1%.

General discussion followed regarding the possible network fees and what other entities charge and are charged. DD Bob Bertoni noted that a three tiered fee structure is normal for most businesses with rates from 1.5 to 3.1% . Treasurer Brouillard suggested that we wait a year to see what percentage go uncashed. VP Mahoney made a motion that we wait 1 year to make any final decision regarding changes in the voucher payment system. The motion was seconded and so voted.

Tournament Manager's Report - Sally Kirtley

Summary Report - Cromwell

No report

Summary Sturbridge -

I have not paper work on Sturbridge. We appear to have made a profit of \$272.

Update - Senior Regional

We knew we would take a bath here. The head director has made every effort to keep director costs down and I have worked to keep the hospitality figures as low as possible. The numbers seem to be very similar to last year, therefore I do not expect a huge loss.

Update - Contract changes regarding Cape Codder

Some issues have developed with the Cape Codder for next year. They are pushing back hard. They want \$1,000 immediately, \$7,000 in October and the balance for everything when we arrive. They will have all the deposit money on rooms. They will not accept any more than \$5,000 on credit card. They want a guarantee of 450 room nights with no attrition at all.

The Resort and Conference Center is wooing us. The problem is that they want a 2-year guarantee. They have no one in that slot, so I may be able to get it for one year with the right of first refusal. The playing space is better there. The numbers have consistently been lower here than in Hyannis. We have lost money here every year.

VP Mahoney noted that they Cape players do not attend in Falmouth. We have been told that they are more likely to come to Hyannis. President DeBlois added that the only way we can test this hypothesis is to move back to Hyannis. If this fails too, we will know it is just the Cape site issue. We have been looking off Cape. M. Wells noted that she has never heard of the requests made by the Cape Codder in all her experience. It was noted that the Conference Center also has issues with handicapped access to some rooms and mustiness. President DeBlois suggested that they (The Cape Codder) do not want to honor the contract.

Tournament Manager Kirtley stated that the contact person has changed and that the individual has the same last name as the owner. She requested permission to go with the site that gave the best offer. Vice President Mahoney made a motion that the Tournament Manager be granted permission to sign a contract with the site that gives us the best deal. The motion was seconded and so voted.

President DeBlois stated that the District is considering combining the Senior Regional and Non-Life master Regional/Rainbow and Sectional and I into one event that we could hold off the Cape.

We would be looking at a date outside of April and not on the Cape. We would not lose the rights to the Senior Regional as long as each was under a separate sanction. TM Kirtley asked if there was a possibility that so many events would create games that were too small. Attendance at the NLM might be less. M. Wells added that no other NLM Regionals are planned for the Northeast. President DeBlois reminded the Executive Committee that all of this is still in the investigatory stages.

Treasurer Brouillard stated that we seem to be running about 8 tables down from last year.

Tournament / Scheduling Committee Report - Jack Mahoney

Update Tournament Schedules- Warwick and Mansfield, 2019

A handout of the Warwick schedule was provided. The committee decided to rename to Thursday/Friday KO's the Midweek KO's to differentiate from the Monster KO. The 7:30 I/N game was cut as, this conflicted with the planned Pro/Am event. The 299 games had been left out of the Thursday and Saturday schedule. They were inserted. As we are holding the A/B/and C NAPs in Mansfield, we decided not to attempt a weekend KO. The associated Red Point Swiss was also removed.

(S. Diamond) Has the committee considered raising the midflight top? DD Bertoni gave him a summary of the players in D-25 that demonstrated why this would not work. There is also a required differential between the flights that would make it impossible. If we changed the mid-flight to 3000, we would have to move the X to 5000. There are only 211 players in all of District 25 that rank above that number. Area Manager Wells volunteered to check nearby District regarding flight mp requirements.

M. Williams asked if it would be possible to have a pro-am at every regional. President DeBlois answered that we previously had two per year but that attendance dropped. We then changed it to one per year, which is rotated between four Regionals. It took a great deal of work by Karen Randall last year in Nashua to make it work. It is very time consuming. M. Williams has volunteered to spearhead the effort for the Pro-Am in Warwick this year.

VP Mahoney stated that we are looking at the possibility of having a Regional in Springfield. He suggested that we might look into making the Pro-Am a two-session event. General consensus was that this would be too much for the AM's.

Cromwell

Cromwell will run from Tuesday to Sunday. We moved the Ask the Expert to Wednesday. Also under discussion are the relative merits of teams vs Pairs on the first day. Combinations such as having the lecture on Friday and the expert panel between sessions on Friday would be easier to advertise. The Thursday/Friday KO is renamed the Mid-week KO

Update Sponsorship initiative

Sponsorships will be available for a game, day, or more. We hope to do multiple year game naming. We will need a Sales Coordinator and Publicity Chair. We are in the process of nailing down the details regarding striations, requirements, fees. We hope to have the prototype product ready for the Executive Committee approval in Nashua, begin selling in Warwick for events in Cromwell.

(K. Likakis) Can anyone name anything that means something to them? (Answer) Yes. There will be some restrictions, such as political names.

President DeBlois encouraged anyone interested in helping to contact Jack (Mahoney).

(J. Mahoney) We hope that the money generated might help with the current tournament shortfall.

District Director's Report - Robert Bertoni

We had training at Horn Lake three days before the Memphis NABC, that was very informative and interesting. We met with the staff and were able to put faces with the names and voices. I was impressed with many who work there. The Chief Information and Technical Officer is very good. The city of Memphis was inviting and exciting except for the meetings. We dealt with many motions, but number 1 was the cheating scandal. There was a motion on the table that came from the Board of Governors that would have barred collusive cheaters for life. It was obvious that that motion was going to fail. I and another director offered a modification that would bar those convicted of collusive cheating at NABC+ or higher events for life. The way the original motion was written, it would have applied to even someone new to the game.

In regards to the titles, there were two separate motions, one to vacate the titles and the other to replace the winners with the second place team. Brad Moss and Steve Weinstein gave an impassioned presentation requesting that the titles of those convicted of cheating be taken away. In-house legal Counsel stated that because of the ex-post-facto laws we could not apply the punishment proscribed by a new law to a past act. The decision was deferred to the meeting in Las Vegas.

(D. Rock) The Ex-post Facto Law applies to constitutional law.

(R. Bertoni) They will sue the ACBL on that basis. The costs could be prohibitive.

(J. Brouillard) The ACBL is a private organization. This matter was settled by the Supreme Court in the NCAA case.

(B. Bertoni) This is why we deferred the matter to Las Vegas. It is a highly charged case. Both the players have lawyers representing them.

(K. Likakis) Did anyone suggest using an * by the title.

(B. Bertoni) We talked about this. The matter was tabled.

The Board passed a motion that would provide a 1.6% bump in mp award, with a cap of 50 mps, for 4-session pairs events. This would be a significant increase. It would be especially useful for districts that cannot run KOs. There will be a required second reading in Las Vegas.

The Goodwill committee was on the block for the money that is spent for receptions at NABCs. Sandy DeMartino is the current chair. There was a motion to cut the number of meetings to one per year. After discussion, the compromise was to continue to have the 3 meetings a year but to eliminate the open bar. This vote passed 13-12. There was a motion to discontinue paying her airfare and hotel room for 2 nights as well as entries to the tournament. The chair will no longer get their entries paid and will have to pay their own airfare.

There is a technical motion under consideration by the Governance Committee to restructure the governing body from 25 Directors and a 125 Board of Governors to 9 Directors and 50 "senators", two from every district. The "Senate" would be made up of bridge committees and make recommendations to the Board

The room block for Las Vegas already has problems. It has already sold out some of the days, making reservations for 8-10 continuous days difficult. The ACBL has added some hotels to help this issue.

Kristen Frederick is the new head of the Educational Foundation. She is a delight. She is in charge of the ACBL Educational Foundation

There were several problems with the GNTs at Sturbridge.

Flight C was not advertised as a GNT for Sunday and we had very few teams. The winners were not interested in going to represent the district. We will have to contact the other teams.

There were complaints with the Flight B regarding the movement. As it turned out, the carry-over was miscalculated. We have had problems with this event, every year for the past 4 years.

The winners in the B-flight were wrongly announced as Brian Weiner Duran, Gloria McDevitt had the same thing happen to them in the NAPs. This year, some members of the team had already purchased tickets and announced their win before the error in carry over was discovered. This caused much consternation among the players and embarrassment for the District. After several discussions, a compromise was suggested. The District offered the team members free entry to the GNTs. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to provide the free entries as presented.

Old Business

none

New Business

(President DeBlois) Currently there is no seat for the Past President on the Board of Delegates. Unless they are a delegate from their Unit, they will not be able to attend. I would like to change this for the future. A motion to provide a seat for the Past President at Board of Delegates meeting was made, seconded and so voted.

President DeBlois requested that our minutes reflect that David Moss, District 24, asked permission to move the date of their 2020 New York City Winter regional from the Christmas dates to November 4-8, 2020. The request was denied due to the conflict with the Harvest Regional. He then came back with a request to move it to November 8-12, 2020, which caused only one overlap day with our Harvest Regional. According to ACBL policy, a one-day overlap does not require permission from the conflicting District.

Unit Boards should be reminded that the deadline for candidates to apply for the position of 2nd Alternate District Director is May 31, 2019.

Peter Marcus offered to come to a Board of Delegates meeting to discuss the various game formats as well as other related tournament issues. He will be invited to attend the Nashua Board of Delegates meeting. This will be announced to the Delegates in the Notice and they will be asked to submit questions in advance. The secretary will forward these to P. Marcus.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Carolyn Weiser, Secretary, D-25