

Special Meeting
Zoom
7:00 PM
Wednesday, August 18, 2021

Attendees:

President- Jack Mahoney
Vice President- Curtis Barton
Treasurer - Joe Brouillard
Secretary - Carolyn Weiser
District Director - Carole Weinstein
Mike Wavada - CBA Representative and Webmaster
Tournament Manager- Sally Kirtley
DIC - Peter Marcus
Sue Miguel - I/N Chair

President Mahoney called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

1. Abrupt cancellation of Warwick and consequences

President Mahoney asked S. Kirtley to recap the current Warwick situation. S. Kirtley stated that the hotel has not said anything about a penalty yet. They have been offered February

S. Kirtley has been trying to contact the Mansfield site, but has received no response. She will attempt to contact the General Manager as soon as possible. We need to know what the penalty will/would be and the exact date it would occur.

President Mahoney added that we should proceed as if Mansfield will happen. The NABC in Austin is about the same time, and the ACBL might find it difficult to keep Austin open and cancel Mansfield. If they cancel Austin, there would be heavy penalties.

General discussion followed regarding the current and possible situation in November regarding the Covid situation. DD Weinstein noted that the ACBL has projected a much smaller table count and is not expecting many from outside the United States. Their current estimate is 6500 tables. J. Brouillard asked when the room cancellation penalty would happen. DD Weinstein stated that it would not happen until the 23rd. S. Kirtley was asked if Mansfield would hold us to our projected room count. She answered that she will call the General Manager. DD. Weinstein stated that she felt that Mansfield would be a go.

President Mahoney noted that Maine had been told that it's sanction for a September Sectional would be honored by the ACBL and it is considering whether to hold it or not.

C. Barton stated that we can hold Mansfield with the Warwick schedule and plan. He is also optimistic that it will run. I expect a spike in September and October and then it (covid) will cool off. We have lots of volunteers and Mansfield will be much easier to administer regarding any covid controls. The exact requirements regarding masks, etc. will be determined as the tournament approaches.

S. Kirtley noted that the hotel (in Mansfield) is usually very busy during Patriots season. Their games have had almost full attendance. She will contact the GM.

P. Marcus stated that he thought, with the current ACBL situation, the only honorable thing we can do is to cancel all Regionals for 2022. The ACBL is looking at tournaments one by one and week by week. In a conversation with Marilyn (Wells), she announced that the ACBL model is that it reserves the right to say yes or no on criteria that it determines. The criteria can change even after permission is granted. We no longer have any control over our regionals. They can be cancelled on a whim. Nationwide things are open. Concerts are being held. Sporting events are open without mask requirements. Everything is open except the ACBL. We have no ability to promise the players that an event that has been approved will stay approved. The ACBL

won't even say yes or no with a 60 or 90-day window. October has not been reviewed. Decisions will be made by September 16, but they have waffled before.

DD Weinstein noted that the Board voted no mask.

P. Marcus stated that M. Wells told the directors that J. Jones said if you wanted to run a tournament you would have to require masks or no masks would be supplied and the tournament would become a downgraded Sectional. The players will be yelling at us, not J. Jones. The ACBL will tell us in six weeks if we can have an event, but they could change their mind. There is no stated criteria. DD. Weinstein noted that 6 of the 26 September sectionals had been approved, 3 in New England. P. Marcus continued that, if the ACBL would give us a checklist, and give permission 60 or 90 days out and then leave any cancellation up to the Unit or District, we could make plans. We cannot make plans if there is no certainty. On a month's notice they ACBL pulled out of Warwick when nothing else is closed. There are no limitations elsewhere. If the tournament was cancelled, it should have been our decision. The Tournament Chairs weren't even consulted or contacted. At some point, someone has to say no to the arbitrariness of the ACBL.

DD Weinstein added that he (Peter) should be making that argument to the ACBL not us.

President Mahoney added of the three tournaments that were simultaneously cancelled, our Covid numbers were significantly lower than those in the other two jurisdictions. There is no distinguishing based on any rational criteria. Everyone is treated the same. Our Covid numbers were 1/2 those of Palm Beach Gardens. The Country is open. No place in the country is closed, except by the ACBL. (P. Marcus continued) The ACBL won't make clear what their criteria (for cancellation) is. They won't publicize them. Until when the ACBL says that a tournament is a "go", it should be a "go" unless we determine otherwise. We need to protect the players as we know we cannot predict what the ACBL will do. I recommend that we vote to cancel NAPs in Watertown and put them on line and that we cancel all district face-face-bridge through 2022.

Joe Brouillard commented that we cannot set paypal numbers for NAPs.

Sue Miguel added that we should cancel Mansfield. Is there a protocol if someone comes down with Covid? Rhode Island numbers are horrible. They were 11 three weeks ago and are 197 today.

2. Mansfield issues

President Mahoney asked what we should do about Mansfield.

M. Wavada said that he was uncertain. He was certainly unhappy about sending out the original email on Warwick and then having to send out the cancellation. If we do what Peter suggests, we may be killing face-to-face bridge. The Units don't have much day-to-day expenses but the clubs are in a very serious situation.

C. Weiser said that she agrees with Mike.

C. Barton added that under the current uncertainty, he doesn't know. If we go forward, we need to plan carefully, and make it clear that we do not run the show. The fact that Mansfield is close to Austin may help. We should have a plan and a "kill date."

DD Weinstein added that we should have a kill date and that if we still have the OK on X that it is a go! 30 days is not enough.

J. Brouillard added that we have contacts and we seem to have dodged a bullet with Warwick. If we have to cancel 30 days out (in Mansfield), we may have to pay huge penalties.

M. Wavada added that Frances (Schneider) was very unhappy because CBA that the ACBL forced CBA to cancel its sectional.

J. Brouillard continued that the Units cannot run sectionals on line. The ACBL won't allow them. They keep that priority to themselves.

President Mahoney reiterated that we cannot make the decision for ourselves because the ACBL will not let us.

3. National fund and our responsibilities vs. rights

J. Brouillard stated that the NABC committee continues to plan with the assumption that Providence 2022 will be held. We have been in contact with Sarah Beth Roth, the new Wendy Sullivan. They (the ACBL) want to control everything. They will not give us a budget. Sally (Kirtley) and Helen (Pawlowski) are under the gun. We continue to try to find an event sponsor.

4. Straw Vote regarding cancellation of Mansfield should we run up against increasingly large penalties if we do not do so.

No one voiced the opinion that, at this time, we should cancel Mansfield. * President Mahoney stated that "we'll just have to proceed."

C. Weinstein stated that there is a meeting Friday, September 9th and that she will push to have the ACBL give us the control we need over the Mansfield Regional.

President Mahoney continued that he has no faith in the power structure of the ACBL. The New England representatives have continually railed against what has been going on. "I do not think that you (DD Weinstein) can bring the ACBL to its senses."

DD Weinstein promised to fill him in after the meeting.

President Mahoney ended the meeting at 8:05.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Weiser

Secretary, District 25*

Note: the secretary could not see the hands of those present and the President did not call for a voice or tallied vote.