

New England Bridge Conference of the American Contract Bridge League

Minutes

Executive Committee

June 23, 2012

Sturbridge, MA

Sturbridge Host, Sturbridge, MA, June, 2012

Attendance

Officers: Ausra Geaski, President; Mark Aquino, Vice President; Richard DeMartino, Treasurer/District Director; Carolyn Weiser, Secretary; Robert Erwin, Past President

Unit Representatives: Bill Hunter (James Rasmussen, alt.) Dean Panagopoulos (EMBA); Phyllis Bausher, Allan Clamage (CBA); Bruce Emond (CMBA); William Shockley (RIBA); Wayne Burt (NHBA); Wayne Hersey (VBA); Richard Budd (MBA); David Rock (WMBA)

Invited Guests: Helen Pawlowski, Tournament Manager; Peter Marcus, Director

Absent: James Rasmussen, EMBA

Opening Remarks - President Geaski

The Audit Committee met at the Senior Regional. All financial matters were reviewed and were found to be in excellent order. Thanks go to Helen Pawlowski and Rich DeMartino for pulling the information together and to Dave Aronson and the Audit Committee for completing the audit.

J. Rasmussen organized a meeting at the Cape Sunday morning as a follow up to the request made at the Board of Delegates meeting in Mansfield for greater transparency of financial information. The meeting was very successful and the additional information will be provided going forward.

Secretary's Report - A motion was made and seconded to accept the Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting, Cromwell, CT, February 18, 2012; seconded and so voted.

Treasurer's Report - Richard DeMartino

Per the financial discussion at the Cape the Treasurer's Report included a comparison between 2011 and 2012 financials. All GNT awards have been distributed. The switch to Megahurtz Computer for web design and hosting has saved the district money.

The first four tournaments this year show a combined loss of over \$16,000. The D25 cash balance is at a low point. The two main District financial goals are make a modest profit each year of \$2,000 to \$4,000 cover our operating expenses and to have cash assets of approximately \$45,000. We are below that amount for the first time in many years. We have increased the table fees during the last year but the tournaments are currently operating at a loss. Contributing factors are the decrease in attendance and our room block not being met resulting in having to pay function room rental and/or limited comp. rooms.

The 2014 NABC in Providence fund has a substantial starting balance. Complete details are available upon request.

District Director's Report - Richard DeMartino

Progress for the development and implementation of the new ACBL Score has not moved as quickly as anticipated. R. Erwin asked if the ACBL was waiting until the new program was perfected. R. DeMartino responded that last March he and Peter Marcus made a report. A Project Manager was not appointed in time and when the new CEO came on board he wanted to do a thorough review of everything before a decision was made. Another concern to ensure a good system is built is to obtain input from the users of the new system. Peter Marcus has been selected to provide feedback but has not been contacted as of this date. Additionally, the clubs and tournament directors should be involved to provide their input. More information on this will be available after the meeting in Philadelphia.

Tournament Manager's Report - Helen Pawlowski

At the Cromwell tournament two key problems were identified: attendance was down 65 tables and the room block was not met resulting in the loss of some comp rooms. The hotel allowed extra hospitality to be purchased to cover the cost. H. Pawlowski will renegotiate the contracts for 2013 and 2014 to get a more

realistic, reduced room block. Some contributing factors to the lower room pick-up may be the change in event times which allowed players the time to go home vs. stay at the hotel and less expensive accommodations in the area used by some players.

At the Senior Regional we, also, had a significant drop in the table count and room pick-up. H. Pawlowski was able to negotiate with the hotel to get the comp rooms but needed to sign the contract for the next year.

A. Clamage asked if we could change the apportionment of the increased table frees to be a higher percentage going to D25 vs. the National Fund. R. DeMartino expressed a concern that although there is a substantial amount of seed money from the last National the district will need the additional funds for the 2014 NABC in Providence to ensure the same level of hospitality as provided in the past. Until we have a National Committee and a National Treasurer we can not make that determination.

The status of sites for future Regionals was discussed. For 2012 and 2013 all Regional sites are under contract. In 2014 there is no contract for the summer regional but discussions are in progress to get a proposal from the Nashua Raddison once the room renovation is complete. The site for the 2014 regional needs to be decided by the end of 2012. The January and October dates are under contract with Sturbridge. There is no contract yet for the Masters Regional in 2016. The Mansfield contract was changed to add 2015 to the original contract due to cancelling the fall regional for the 2014 Nationals. There is currently no contract in Cromwell after 2014. W. Burt expressed concern with not returning to the Nashua site until 2014. H. Pawlowski assured W. Burt that she has the right of first refusal for both Sturbridge and Nashua for 2014 and 2015. W. Burt reiterated the concerns of New Hampshire and Maine that there would not be a Regional there in 2013. D. Panagopoulos asked if we were in danger of losing a contract if a decision had to be made between Regionals. This could be solved by having the Executive Committee authorize H. Pawlowski to sign a contract with Nashua for 2014 should the property become available and a decision had to be made between Executive Committee meetings. President Geaski interjected that the decision should be brought to the Board of Delegates. Following discussion President Geaski asked for a show of hands of those that would be in favor of making the move from Sturbridge to Nashua should the property become available. All but one present supported the move.

President Geaski continued that if an emergency arises between now and the next Regional do we want to recommend to the Board of Delegates that H. Pawlowski be allowed to make such a decision without coming to the Executive Committee. B. Emond questioned what would happen if the hotel had another client in 2014. H. Pawlowski assured the Executive Committee that she would be able to handle such a situation. There was agreement to discuss this at the Board of Delegates meeting.

Tournament Committee /Scheduling Committee Report - Mark Aquino - David Rock

D. Rock stated that attendance at our recent tournaments demonstrates that there is a need to revisit the tournament schedule of events. H. Pawlowski and P. Marcus put together a framework for a simplified schedule. The suggestion was that there would be a pairs and a team game each day. Events would be at 10 & 2:30. There would be a side game in the evening every day except Friday when we would keep the current KO's. All carry over events, except the Friday night KO's would be eliminated. H. Pawlowski reported that there were 27 and 25 tables in the Daylight Open Pairs and 17 in the AX/BC Pairs with 5 tables in the side game. A question was raised at the meeting regarding the Saturday times and whether they should be retained at 1 & 7 to accommodate those who come in only for Saturday and Sunday. The Committee recommends that we drop Monday night from the schedule. There was a strong preference for 10 & 2:30 even for Saturday. M. Aquino added that this is a great topic to bring up to the Board of Delegates meeting on Sunday. B. Emond asked if there were representatives from all the Units at the meeting. There were. A decision needs to be made in Warwick so that the flyers can be prepared for 2013. The decision to continue the "party Zip KO" will depend on how well the event does in Sturbridge. A. Clamage suggested that the Executive Committee members bring up the issue of event timing to their Units and bring the results back at Warwick. D. Rock will bring the matter up at the Board of Delegates meeting and the Executive Committee members should continue the discussion within their Units. President Geaski cautioned that we need to consider such a change carefully. We have made many decisions and then had to change our minds. We should have one person as the focal point to whom comments can be directed and brought to the meeting in Warwick. We need to articulate the reasons for making a change. P. Bausher questioned whether the hotels could provide lunch if all of the games started and ended at the same time as there was a "mob scene" at lunch yesterday. Suggestions should be sent to D. Rock to compile for the Warwick meeting.

Old Business

Hyannis Results - Allan Clamage

There was no significant change in the results this year as compared to last year. 58% wanted to change the start time. Many who say “do not change” say they won’t come back if we do change the start times. If this is true, we could be facing a substantial loss in revenue and rooms. In the previous three years we dropped from 800 tables to only 700 this year. A schedule change could result in a further drop in attendance. There is no simple solution to the problem. The number of people who said “do not change” dropped to 28%. The final analysis of the survey depends on what you do with those who said “no preference.” Those who were older and came from the furthest distance are those who say “don’t change.” R. DeMartino added that the 2/1 difference is not a trivial difference. Those who want a change are more likely to respond. If we look at Sectionals and Regionals, more and more are starting at 10 & 2:30. President Geaski asked the Executive Committee members to indicate by a show of hands whether the Executive Committee should be recorded as supporting a change in start times at the Cape when the Board of Delegates met on Sunday. The recommendation for a change in start times at the Cape will be brought forward to the Board of Delegates meeting.

Split-site NAP Finals - Mark Aquino

R. DeMartino stated that he believed that the Executive Committee approved a different assignment of winners than what was written in the Conditions of Contest. M. Aquino responded that the Executive Committee was giving an opinion. When the Conditions of Contest were being developed there were many complaints. If someone had a 70% and 68% game in Woburn and the highest finisher in Hartford was 52% under the suggested formula a pair with 68% would become the third place winner. The consensus was that this was unfair. The published Conditions of Contest guarantee a winner from each site. H. Pawlowski added that the current format is a good marketing tool for the C-Flight players. W. Burt asked why the C Flight would not be scored across the field. H. Pawlowski stated that from a directing point of view scoring across the field was not best. M. Aquino added that the Conditions of Contest are not determined by the Executive Committee but is ultimately the responsibility of the NAP Coordinator.

Update on D25 Handbook - Carolyn Weiser

A copy of a District Handbook was distributed. The modifications in the Introduction were suggested by R. Erwin and state that the Handbook is meant to be a reflection of current practice. A. Geaski added that it is important for the members of the District to see who gets a stipend and/or a room in conjunction with the duties. A chart was passed out. (See Addendum). Since some people fill more than one position there is a savings in the number of comp rooms needed.

Stipend for Posting of Tournament Results – Ausra Geaski

A question has been raised as to whether a person who posts tournament results on the D25 website should get some form of stipend. In the past, Peter Marcus has provided this service on a volunteer basis but is not able to continue with this. In the interim for 2012 Bob Bertoni, Bill Braucher and Joe Brouillard have volunteered to rotate the service for the Regionals. Joe Brouillard has indicated that he is willing to continue the service in exchange for free plays for himself and his partner at the tournaments (maximum = 2x3x7x14 = \$588 per tournament). M. Aquino suggested that we must first clarify the exact duties of the position. R. DeMartino added that we have lots of people doing this much and more work without any compensation. B. Braucher has always been a volunteer. Sandy (DeMartino) has noted at the Board of Delegates meetings that other Districts have many more volunteers. The EC agreed that considering the current financial concerns we need to be careful with agreeing to an additional expense. President Geaski will get back to J. Brouillard that the EC agreed to keep this as a volunteer position.

Update of Financial Analysis for D-25 - William Shockley

A meeting was held with A. Geaski, H. Pawlowski, C. Weiser and W. Shockley in Sturbridge to review the break-even analysis that B. Shockley drafted. W. Shockley identified that there are many fixed costs which the district is unable to control, i.e. ACBL sanction fees, director costs, hotel contracts. His efforts validated that this is a complex issue. B. Hunter stated that the biggest problem is the decreased

attendance which is lowering the revenue and we should consider opportunities to increase publicity. Each unit should have a point person to help with publicizing the Regionals in their area. Additionally, a Finance Committee should be formed to review the current financial situation and assist with financial planning. A. Geaski will bring this forward to the Board of Delegates meeting.

Executive Session:

NABC Co-chair Positions - Ausra Geaski

The Co-chairs of the Providence NABC will be Joe Brouillard and Helen Pawlowski. Each will be invited to every meeting of the Executive Committee to provide a progress report and allow for Executive Committee oversight of the process. All nominations for NABC Chairs and other positions will be approved by the Executive Committee. There will be a separate NABC Treasurer who will manage the NABC funds. All NABC positions are volunteers.

R. Budd made a motion to adjourn the meeting a 6:47 pm. The motion was seconded and so voted.

Respectfully submitted:

Carolyn Weiser
Secretary, District 25

Addendum:

| Position | Stipend | Room | Other |
|--|---------|------|--|
| Officers | | | |
| President | no | yes | no |
| Vice President | no | no | no |
| Secretary | yes | yes | no |
| Treasurer | yes | yes | no |
| Tournament Manager | Salary | yes | expenses related to D-25 events |
| D-25 District Director | no | yes | no |
| Committee Chairs/Coordinators | | | |
| Audit | no | no | 1 or 2 sessions free plays |
| Appellate | no | no | no |
| GNT Coordinator* | yes | yes | no *at NAOP finals |
| I/N Coordinator | no | no | no |
| NAOP Coordinator* | yes | yes | no *at NAOP finals |
| Nominating/Election | no | no | no |
| Tournament Committee | no | no | no |
| Tournament Coordinator | yes | no | no |
| Tournament Scheduling | no | no | no |
| Caddymaster (position currently handled by District Tournament Manager) | | | |
| Daily Bulletin Editor | yes | yes | no |
| Larry Weiss Trophy | no | no | no |
| Recorder | no | no | no |
| Seeding | no | no | no |
| Regional Tournament Chairs | yes | yes | no |
| Webmaster | | | |
| Site | no | no | no |
| Posting Results | no | no | no |
| Regional Staff | | | |
| Director in Charge | salary+ | yes | expenses at regional +determined by ACBL |
| Directors | salary+ | yes | expenses +rates determined by ACBL |
| Caddies | yes | # | no |
| Head caddy | yes | # | no #one room shared |

