

Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors of District 16 of the American Contract Bridge League

September 2, 2017

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of District 16 of the American Contract Bridge League was held in the Prelude 1 conference room on the 1st floor of the Radisson Hotel at 900 East Lookout Drive, Richardson, TX 75082 on September 2, 2017. In attendance were:

Executive Officers

Tomi Storey	President
Nancy Strohmer	2 nd Vice President
Dan Leightman	Executive Treasurer
David Pearlman	Executive Secretary

Voting Board Members (Unit Representatives)

Nancy Strohmer	Unit 174
Tomi Storey	Unit 176
Steve Shirey	Unit 183
Neal Perlman	Unit 204
Larry Davis	Unit 207
Gay Roach	Unit 225

Non-Voting Board Members

Representing District 16 on ACBL Board of Directors

Paul Cuneo, Director

Representing District 16 on ACBL Board of Governors

DeWitt Hudson, Representative

Committee Chairs

Paul Cuneo	Education
Laura Delfeld	Intermediate/Novice
Scott Humphrey	Awards

Standing Positions

BJ Sanders	GNT Coordinator
------------	-----------------

Others

Gary Blevins
Ira Hessel

ACBL Director of Field Operations
Scorecard Editor

Call to Order and Quorum

Approval of Consent Agenda

Mr. Leightman provided the Treasurer's report, offering that nothing of note had occurred since the previous meeting. He stated that for 2018 he would look to do a thorough budget of anticipated expenditures. Ms. Sanders asked that he provide her with 2017 expenditures related to her activities as a baseline. Mr. Leightman said he would do so.

Ms. Storey noted that, subject to a correction to add Mr. Hudson to the list of attendees at the July 8, 2017 meeting, the consent agenda could be approved. On that basis, and after the motion was duly made and seconded, the consent agenda was unanimously approved.

Education Report

Mr. Cuneo reported that the Robly license had been renewed at the same \$264 annual rate as in 2016. He also reported that ACBL's Educational Foundation had completed an eighteen month long restructuring process, one result of which was that the boards of ACBL and the ACBL Educational Foundation now had only one member in common. He noted that the Foundation would continue all its existing activities and add others, including a heightened effort to encourage donations from wealthy ACBL members and to market the game more intensely to college students. He also reported that a film about bridge and young people was in progress, and that the Foundation planned to have a series of twenty-five (25) lessons on line soon.

Mr. Cuneo also offered that he had sought input from teachers around the District as to how to best help grow the game of bridge and that thirty-eight (38) individuals had provided responses.

Mr. Cuneo emphasized that attendance at Regionals was in an accelerated decline. For calendar year 2016, attendance was down 5% on a year over year basis, and in the first half of 2017 that rate increased to 5.8%. He reported that intermediate and novice attendance represents two-thirds of the decline. Players in these categories may feel that attainment of Life Master rank is not a real possibility given the late age at which most of them started to play duplicate.

Mr. Cuneo expressed hope that ACBL would take corrective action at its next meeting, possibly by rolling back the increased masterpoint requirements adopted for players joining ACBL after 2010.

ACBL Report

Mr. Cuneo noted that the ACBL Board has taken steps to help Hurricane Harvey victims in the form of additional charity games, and a \$50,000 contribution to the American Red Cross, primarily in the form of matching funds for other donations.

Visit from ACBL Director of Field Operations

Gary Blevins, ACBL's Director of Field Operations, explained his role in the organization and commented that the Dallas Regional was well organized and well run. Mr. Hessel asked why at the Nationals substantially less than half the field had qualified in the Roth Open Swiss, and Mr. Blevins explained that the Conditions of Contest had changed subsequent to the designation of the playing space, resulting in a less than ideal situation that the directors had handled as best as could be done given the physical constraints.

Mr. Blevins noted that ACBL would soon have after hours support for evening and weekend games, so that problems could be handled at the time they arose.

Mr. Cuneo reported that he had been asked by a club owner whether the decline in attendance at the 2017 Houston Regional would result in the loss of any tournaments. Mr. Cuneo and Mr. Humphrey informed the club owner and the Board that it was critical that attendance in 2018 exceed 3,000 tables; otherwise the District would lose a regional in 2020.

Mr. Davis asked which tournament(s) would be dropped if that were to happen. Mr. Humphrey responded that there it was uncertain, but that the most likely result would be to eliminate a smaller Regional that operates on a three-year cycle.

Scorecard

Ms. Storey reported that she had contacted several Districts on the East Coast to get information on their versions of the Scorecard. None has decided to discontinue hard copy publication. Some have reduced from six issues per year to four. Rebecca Brown will send out requests for information and opinions to Units within the District, with responses due by November 1.

Ms. Delfeld offered that her intermediate and novice players love the Scorecard and that it would be a bad idea to discontinue a print version. Mr. Hessel reported that in 2010, when the issue of opting in versus opting out of the print version was last considered, a push for opt-outs had resulted in only seventy-eight (78) individuals opting out.

Ms. Storey stated that given the minimal attendance at the meeting due to Hurricane Harvey, further discussion of the Scorecard issues would take place at the Board's next meeting in January.

Grand National Teams

GNT Coordinator BJ Sanders presented a revised draft of Conditions of Contest for the 2017/2018 cycle. Ms. Strohmer asked how many games a club could hold, and how many sessions a qualifier should have. Ms. Sanders responded that while in theory a club could hold an unlimited number of games, she recommended that only about three such games be offered. She said a club level qualifier could be a one-session event, and a unit level qualifier should be two sessions as it has been in the past.

Ms. Sanders stated that no decision had been reached about holding District level finals for different flights at different times, but that separating the Superflight appeared the easiest to do without incurring additional expense. Mr. Cuneo reported that in 2018 Houston will hold the United States Bridge Federation Team Trials at time convenient for GNT finals, and that during the latter part of the Trials unused rooms will be available in which GNT competition could take place.

After motion duly made and seconded the proposed Conditions of Contest were approved unanimously.

BridgePads

Mr. Perlman reported that he had contacted BridgePad and been assured that they would continue to operate as before.

Teacher of the Year Award

Ms. Delfeld stated that only one nomination for Teacher of the Year had been received in the previous cycle and one award granted. She will increase publicity to seek an increase for the current cycle.

Austin NLM Regional

Mr. Davis reported that the tournament was successful, would be repeated, and would likely be combined with an Open sectional the next time around.

Ms. Storey sent condolences on behalf of the District Board to our members affected by Hurricane Harvey.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was adjourned at 9:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Pearlman
Executive Secretary, ACBL District 16