

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

Feb. 8, 2020

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of District 16 of the American Contract Bridge League was held in the Richardson Room of the Westchase Marriott on Feb. 8, 2020. In attendance were:

Executive Officers

Rebecca Brown	President
Nancy Strohmer	1 st Vice President
Betty Starzec	2 nd Vice President
Tom Trudeau	Acting Executive Treasurer
Tomi Storey	Executive Secretary

Voting Board Members (Unit Representatives)

Rebecca Brown	Unit 172	
Sue Gerard	Unit 173	(alternate for Guillermo Poplawsky)
Kathleen Malcomson	Unit 174	
Jim Bauer	Unit 176	
Dave Ticen	Unit 187	
Helen Lauderdale	Unit 197	
E.W. Sweeney	Unit 201	
Neal Perlman	Unit 204	
BJ Sanders	Unit 207	
Gay Roach	Unit 225	
Lynn Sykes	Unit 233	

Non-Voting Board Members

Representing District 16 on ACBL Board of Directors

Paul Cuneo, Director

Committee Chairs

Scott Humphrey	Awards
Nancy Strohmer	Charity
Rebecca Brown	Disciplinary

Stu Nelan	Intermediate/Novice
Jonathan Ernest	Appellate
Ed Rawlinson	Education
Sandy Potts	Membership
Jim Bauer	Scorecard
Tomi Storey	Tournaments
Buck Buchanan	Teacher of the Year

Standing Positions

Scott Nason	GNT Coordinator
John Magyari	Internet Coordinator
Scott Humphrey	Tournament Coordinator
Roxie Tom	NAP Coordinator
Jack LaVigne	District Recorder
Scott Humphrey	Tournament Coordinator
Betty Starzec	D16 Board of Governors
Bob Morris	D16 Board of Governors

Guests

Margarita de Montages	President, Unit 173
Lauri Laufman	President, Unit 174
Jeff Overby	D9 Representative, ACBL Board of Directors
Chris Compton	Club Owner, Unit 176

Call to Order and Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 AM and a quorum was confirmed.

President Brown spoke on the death of Executive Treasurer Dan Leightman and his dedication to the District. She introduced Tom Trudeau, who has been appointed to Acting Treasurer and she expressed her hope that we would elect him to the official position during the upcoming election of officers.

President Brown also reminded us that Mr. Leightman had been appointed at the last District meeting to fill one of the open positions for the D16 Board of Governors. Since there are plans to change the structure of the Board of Directors and the Board of Governors at the Spring NABC in Columbus in March, she suggested that we not fill the open position until after that meeting.

Before turning the meeting over to elections of new officers, President Brown addressed several other outstanding matters. She introduced Stu Nelan as our new I/N chair and congratulated him on a fast start in his new position. Carolyn Worsham has moved from Unit 201, so she will no longer be the Unit Representative. E.W. Sweeney, who is also the President of Unit 201, will be taking over and was introduced to the group. Sue

Gerard, alternate for Unit 173, was welcomed and President Brown recognized Margarite de Montagues, president of Unit 173. Lastly, Jim Thurtell has resigned his position as Disciplinary Chair due to a family illness.

Election of New Officers

The bi-annual election of new officers was held. The current 1st Vice President Nancy Strohmer was nominated for President by Rebecca Brown and elected by acclamation. 2nd Vice-President Betty Starzec was nominated by President Strohmer to be 1st Vice-President and elected by acclamation. Jim Bauer was nominated for 2nd Vice-President by Betty Starzec and elected by acclamation. Tom Trudeau, currently the Acting Treasurer, was nominated by Rebecca Brown to serve permanently and duly elected. Tomi Storey, Executive Secretary, was nominated to continue to serve in that position and re-elected.

President Strohmer accepted the gavel and thanked outgoing President Rebecca Brown on behalf of the Board for her stellar leadership over the last two years and her commitment to the District. This was received by a rousing round of applause from everyone present.

Motions Regarding Financial Matters

A motion was made to close the current account with Veritex Bank (formally Green Bank) so that our newly elected treasurer Tom Trudeau can open a new account as signatory. Moved, seconded and passed.

A second motion was made to allow Mr. Trudeau to open such accounts as he deems necessary, to manage and invest our funds. These accounts will require only one signature for checks, wire transfers, and other financial transactions, however we may authorize a second signature and Nancy Strohmer as president is authorized to do so. Mr. Cuneo questioned why we did not authorize our verifier. Mr. Trudeau said he would have the necessary reports sent to Mr. Woodward, our current verifier, so there would be no need to have a third signatory. Ms. Brown asked that we pass the motion as written and deal with that possibility if needed at our next meeting. So moved, seconded and passed.

The third motion is to open such accounts as needed in Mexico, to avoid the transfer of funds across the border. This motion was also seconded and passed.

Financial Reports

Mr. Trudeau has not yet been able to access the QuickBooks database. He will be meeting later this morning with Mr. Leightman's secretary who will give him the needed files. He has the license already in place so he can create 1231 reports, and, in the future, reports will be timely.

Approval of Minutes and Consent Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously. Written reports also were received from the Charity chair, Membership, NAP, and Charity as part of the consent agenda. President Strohmer mentioned the great success of the Austin NABC promotional games. Receipts are in excess of \$6000 and almost all monies have been received. Robert Donathan, treasurer of the 2021 Austin NABC, stepped in to handle these finances for Mr. Leightman during his illness and was recognized and thanked for his assistance.

ACBL D16 Board of Directors Report

Mr. Cuneo began by again acknowledging his guest Jeff Overby, the D9 ACBL Board of Directors representative. Mr. Overby serves on the Restructuring Task Force, which is challenged with the work of developing motions to move most of the bridge activity from Board to being handled by subcommittees. Mr. Overby will have these motions ready for the next meeting in Columbus in March. The goal is to have these committees for all bridge-related activities in place by the end of 2020, to be handled by the Board of Governors or by management, rather than the Board of Directors.

The Board has suffered a timing setback with what the ACBL does with respect to marketing with the resignation of Dan Storch. It also affects the work being done in conjunction with the Educational Foundation around TryBridge.org. A replacement has not been selected yet, so Mr. Cuneo does not see that moving forward in the second quarter. He expects to have more news in Austin.

The restructuring plan to reduce the ACBL from 25 to 13 looks well-positioned to pass in Columbus. He knows they need detailed revisions to the original motions to accommodate the fact that it will be 2021 before the next regional election occurs instead of 2020. Mr. Cuneo said he felt confident that the Board of Governors would rectify the changes once the motions are passed.

Mr. Morris asked about the D16 position that is up for reelection in 2020 – Mr. Cuneo has stated his intention to run again and this regular election will be held, since the restructuring of regions won't happen until 2021. Mr. Morris also questioned if this would affect the current Board of Governors status. Mr. Cuneo said the idea was to have the Board of Governors restructure itself once the Board of Directors reorganization takes place. He stated he felt they should allow the BoG to govern themselves.

OLD BUSINESS

Scorecard Update

Jim Bauer stated it was a year ago at this meeting when the Board approved a 2-year test for Units to select paper or digital copies. The first digital issue was the May/June 2019 issue. Part of the test was that we would track the financials to see if adjustments

need to be made in the pricing structure. Mr. Bauer asked that we wait until the July/August issue of this year so that we would have an entire year of data.

Unit 233 (Central Texas) is the only unit that has changed their initial selection, reverting to paper from digital. For units that are all paper, individuals can still opt-out and go digital, by sending their request to Bert Onstott. This information is on the D16 Website. A discussion followed on if this could save money on postage. Mr. Bauer said he would investigate this, but any savings would be minimal.

Robly vs Pianola

The district has had a license for Robly, one of the mass email programs. We have had this license since 2015 and it is used primarily for the I/N newsletter, currently being sent to all the I/N members in the district, about 3900 members. At the time the account was opened, we offered all unit permission to use Robly, but only Unit 174 has done so. Pianola had been free for some time, but this year the ACBL decided to start changing the Units to use the licensing. It makes sense to allow the units to use Robly, but there are some restrictions in the usage. There should be one designated user per Unit. It can be used for Unit business only, NOT club business. A suggestion was made by Ms. Brown that Mr. Cuneo sent a list of all such information to the Executive Secretary and she can disseminate this to the Units. Mr. Cuneo agreed and will send that ASAP. Ms. Laufman of Unit 174 also reminded everyone that with Robly, you have a 500-mile radius for promoting tournaments, rather than the 200-mile radius with Pianola. Also, as Ms. Brown reminded us, there is no cost to the unit with Robly, since the District pays for the license.

NEW BUSINESS

Regionals at Sea

Ms. Brown spoke to Arlene Harvey, who is the ACBL employee in charge of Regionals at Sea. They were looking at the 2021 schedules and proposed 3 different dates. Only one was problematic, interfering with the Houston Sectional which also hosts the GNT finals. After discussion with the Executive committee and others, the date was rejected.

GNT Flight B Conditions of Contests

In the absence of Scott Nason, who is ill, President Strohmer presented his proposal for a change on the current conditions of contest. Mr. Nason suggests changes that he feels will make for a fairer, more interesting and exciting final. Ms. Brown believes it will be a positive impact for the finals and President Strohmer feels it is fairer to all participants. Ms. Brown explained to the group that the impact on the last day reaches more players. Mr. Nason's plan would make Saturday afternoon and Sunday mornings as a bracketed Swiss, with 8 6-board matches. Then the top 3 teams from the

bracketed Swiss would play a round-robin with each playing 2 12-board matches to determine the 1st and 2nd place. He is also suggesting a carryover from the Swiss qualifier, perhaps as high as 40%. The reason for this, per Mr. Nason, is that the pairing for the semi-finals are very important and if there are only 4 teams, the disparity between team talent feels random and can unduly affect the outcome. This is an attempt to make the format fairer as the top teams compete at the end. A discussion followed on the carryover, with most agreeing that a carryover is a good idea, but that 40% seemed very high. Ms. Brown suggested that since the GNT was in April and the question of carryover seemed to be an issue, that we divide the proposal into 2 separate motions. Mr. Morris felt that many of us seem to agree some carryover was an excellent idea but needed to be lowered. Mr. Bauer, as a former GNT coordinator, asked if this might conflict with any National GNT CoC's. BJ Sanders said that CoC's must be approved by September for the following cycle. Ms. Brown stated that it would be shame not to act on the format change. Mr. Bauer suggested we base our motion subject to ACBL approval.

A motion was made to have the team format change accepted with a 20% carryover, subject to final approval of the ACBL for the changes for this cycle. The motion was seconded and passed.

NAP Subsidy Proposal

Since Larry Davis submitted the proposal, President Strohmer asked Roxie Tom, the NAP Coordinator, to handle the discussion. Per Ms. Tom, Mr. Davis was mistaken in his belief that players who fill in for players who originally won a qualifying spot in the finals are not given the money that would have gone to that place. For example, if the 2nd place pair cannot attend, the lower pairs move up and a new 4th place pair is selected. All DO receive the subsidies originally assigned to their placement. The District also pays the original awards assigned to each level. The proposal is dismissed, since it is not needed.

Teacher of the Year Report

Buck Buchanan began by introducing our own Education Chair, Ed Rawlinson, as the 2020 Teacher of the Year. Mr. Rawlinson received a huge round of applause for his outstanding accomplishment. Mr. Buchanan stated that we had 14 contestants this year – 6 who were resubmitted and 8 new candidates. There were also 8 candidates nominated who did not follow up after notifications, so he plans to do some investigation as to why this happened and see how we can improve on people submitting packages to be considered. Instead of carrying forward former nominees, the Committee has created some new categories. They plan to name finalists rather than just the winner. They have also created a new category – The Rising Star. This will be someone who is just being noticed and impresses the judges. They also plan to create a blueprint for selection moving forward, with criteria, search, committee selection, etc.

A motion to award The Rising Star a check for \$50. This was given to Ms. Patricia Cantu of Unit 173 this year. The motion was made to make this an annual award and to reimburse Ms. Brown for her expenditures this year. Seconded and passed.

Aces and Knaves

Betty Starzec reminded the group that the movie would be shown this evening. She believes that of the 3 movies currently available on bridge, this one does the most by far for the promotion of the game. Your attendance will help us evaluate this as a proof of concept and a marketing tool. The movie can be used in other scenarios, such as a Learn Bridge in a Day event. Mr. Morris says he has seen the movie and assures us it is well worth our time to attend and appreciate the work that has been done.

Disciplinary Chair Vacancy

As stated previously, Jim Thurtell has resigned as Chair due to an illness in his family. President Strohmer announced that she has appointed Rebecca Brown to fill this position. Ms. Brown explained current changes in the disciplinary process, since it is a district-wide process rather than a unit one. Mr. Morris questioned Mr. Cuneo on national level processes. Mr. Cuneo told us the ACBL abolished the unit levels of recorders and disciplinary chair. If the district recorder wants assistants at the unit level for some of the larger units, they may do so, but the intent is to handle at the district level, so there is less training necessary.

Board Policies and Decisions

President Strohmer told the Board that a report on all such matters was being prepared so that all current members could be brought up to date on such matters. She thanked Ms. Brown and Ms. Storey for working on this and said it would be ready for dissemination to the Board soon. This will include all policies decided or changed since 2004.

Job Descriptions

President Strohmer also stated that job descriptions have not been updated since 2014. Since there are several new positions as well as changes to older ones, she will be contacting Board members for updating. She will also send a format for defining new positions.

STaC Changes for 299er Players

Chris and Donna Compton submitted a proposal to change the number of boards required for newer players in District STaC games. Currently the District requires 20 boards per session in order to match point across the field. If fewer boards are played, they will be awarded match points only as a stand-alone game. Mr. Compton says players under 299 masterpoints frequently cannot play that many boards in the time frame of 3 hours. He stated the ACBL will allow them to play only 18 boards, but the District has a rule that it must be 20. He is asking that the District change the rule to allow 18 boards for players under 299 masterpoints.

Ms. Brown showed Mr. Compton the ACBL regulation that states the same policy as the District: there is a 20-board minimum if the game is to be scored across the field. There is no minimum if the games are to be scored as a stand-alone game. Mr. Compton stated that the Bridge Academy of North Dallas is working hard to bring in new players. He feels that if we are losing new players with the addition of regionals and sectionals, without emphasis on the lower ranks of players. It was the consensus that this is absolutely true. Ms. Starzec said this is more a question for Mr. Cuneo and the ACBL Board. Mr. Cuneo said he would address it with the Board. Ms. Starzec made a motion and Ms. Storey seconded to reduce the number of boards required for players under 299 masterpoints. In the discussion that followed, Mr. Cuneo felt it established a bad precedent to pass a motion in conflict with the ACBL. He will take this to the Board meeting in Columbus to see what changes he can make. Ms. Starzec agreed that this was the correct approach and withdrew her motion until after that time

Recognition of the D16 Website Improvements

President Strohmer recognized our D16 webmaster, John Magyari, for all the work he has done updating our website. The Board joined in thanking him and applauded his efforts.

Action Item Review and Meeting Critique

President Strohmer congratulated Lauri Laufman and Jack LaVigne, the co-chairs for the Lone Star Regional, for a very successful and well-run event.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was adjourned at 9:40 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Tomi Storey
Executive Secretary, ACBL District 16