



Memorandum of Discussion

ACBL Unit 174 Board of Directors Meeting

February 15th, 2010

Houston Bridge Studio

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. Present were Pat Levy, President, Paul Cuneo, Vice-President, John Erickson, Secretary, Bob Dowlen, Robert Reichek, Kathy Hughes, Joyce Ryan, Lauri Laufman and Karen Nimmons.

Also present for part of the meeting were Jim Woodward – Treasurer, Bert Onstott and Dianna Gittelman.

Minutes of January Board Meeting

The minutes of the January meeting were approved by on-line poll.

Treasurer's Report

Jim

Jim submitted financial reports dated December 31, 2009 and February 14, 2010. Our net income for 2009 was an approximate loss of \$1,700.

Motion: To approve the year end 2009 and February 14, 2010 financial reports as presented.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Lone Star Regional Speakers

Dianna

The speaker program was well received by the players, as evidenced by the significant attendance and the exhaustion of the flyers announcing each speaker. The speaker appreciation gifts, self-sanitizing toothbrushes, were definitely appreciated by most of the speakers. The Board thanked Dianna for the hard work she put in to make the speaker program such a great success this year.

Committee Reports

STAC

Bob



The January STAC had a total table count of 743 tables with 19 clubs participating. With the lower charge to clubs of \$1 per table, the result was a loss to the Unit treasury of \$333.30.

Flyers and Trophies

Karen

GNT flyers have been sent to the clubs. Life Master plaques are up to date, with 14 prepaid plaques remaining.

I/N

Kathy

Kathy would like to have a Unit camera for I/N use or be compensated for the use of her own camera. The Unit photographer is usually too busy taking pictures of event winners.

Bridge in Schools

Brigitte Sandifer

In January the Westchester Academy held an intensive one week bridge program for 35 students in grades 6-8. The students attended for three hours each day, with a mini-duplicate tournament on the final day. Sandy Stevens was the lead instructor, assisted by Natalie Wernet and half a dozen other ACBL member volunteers. The ACBL provided the class with abundant supplies, including textbooks, specialized playing cards, a teachers manual, Learn to Play Bridge cd's, t-shirts and trophies. Everyone was amazed at how much the students learned. Many established screen names for Bridge Base and played online. The Westchester teachers were so pleased that they are contemplating starting a bridge club at school and are hoping to involve their students in some local tournaments.

Member Communications Committee

John

Kay Kennedy contacted approximately 50 new members. Others were unable to be contacted or messages were left. One new member contacted was only nine years old.

Membership

John

Unit membership totals 2,556 as of January 31. This is a decrease of 8 in the last month, although we had 9 new members join our Unit.

NAP/GNT

John

GNT – The flights B & C event for district qualification will be held at the Studio on Sunday, February 21. Our flyer states that unit teams winning at district will be eligible for a \$2,000 subsidy (\$1,000 from the District and \$1,000 from our Unit), but this is true only for Flights A, B, and C. A new flyer advising players of the District GNT in May will clarify this point.

Fund Raising

Bob

Randall's sent us a check for \$33.41 as a rebate for ACBL members' participation in the Good Neighbor program.

Supplies

Lauri

It seems that supplies are sufficient for the next sectional tournament in April.

Online Partnership Desk

Bert

The system has 364 registrants, with 41 having registered in the past 30 days. There were 161 total partnership requests in the past 30 days. Bert will work on a couple of system enhancements in the next few weeks. The Austin Unit has asked Bert to set up a similar system for them.



Unit Web Site

Thus far this year the number of visits per day to the web site averages about 600. No issues have arisen so far this year.

Old Business

Lone Star Regional

Pat/Paul

The Regional went very well, with the largest attendance since 1998. Eliminating the concession stand and the dollar off coupons, coupled with providing free coffee, seemed to be well received. Pairs competitors adjusted quickly to the use of the BridgePad electronic scoring devices. The Gold Rush Pairs on Saturday undoubtedly helped increase attendance on that day. Many players took advantage of discounts to ACBL players at nearby restaurants.

Next year's LSR is scheduled for the last week of January, due to Marriott pricing. As the economy has become significantly weaker since that agreement, there may a possibility of renegotiating back to our traditional week.

Holiday Party Reimbursement

Jim

Two clubs submitted documentation for holiday party reimbursement after the January 15th deadline. Discussion ensued as to whether or not to allow the reimbursements.

Motion: To allow the reimbursement of holiday party costs submitted after the original January 15th deadline.

The motion was seconded and approved.

New Business

Sectional Tournament Sites

Paul

We have an agreement with the Westchase Marriott to host the Unit's April and August Sectionals thru 2015. The room rate will be \$89, except for \$139 in April 2011, when Houston will be hosting the Final Four NCAA basketball tournament.

Election Sectional

The budget needs to be increased for a podium and stage necessary for the annual meeting, announcement of 2009 Ace of Clubs and Mini-McKenney winners and introduction of newly elected Board members.

Electronic Scoring Pads

John

The BridgePad electronic scoring devices seemed to be well received by the players after a short learning curve. However, it does not seem to be cost effective to rent them for sectionals, as three days usage would not offset the shipping costs.

Social Bridge

Robert

At this point 6 ½ tables are committed for the February 27th event at BCOH. Everyone is urged to publicize the event at local clubs.

Recommendations for Use of Funds Received from 2009 NABC

Pat



There was considerable discussion concerning use of these funds and how best to benefit the Unit's members. It was decided to solicit more feedback from members via Chuck Michalski's periodic online letter to Unit members.

District Meeting

Bert

On February 6, new officers were elected: Charlie Price – President, Dewitt Hudson – 1st VP, Bert Onstott – 2nd VP, Lew Levy – Treasurer, Bob Butterfield – Secretary. The District donated \$10,000 (received from the ACBL Charity Foundation) to the Red Cross Haiti Relief Fund. District 16, the 4th largest ACBL District, now has a membership exceeding 9,000. If membership remains above 9,000 at the end of June, the District will be entitled to an additional Regional. Units may apply. Dallas will host the 2014 Spring NABC. A Procedures and Guidelines Committee of Ira and Ellen Hessel, Lew Levy and Bert was appointed.

Unit Guidelines on Zero Tolerance

Pat

Pursuant to the ZT seminar presented to interested club owners and managers during the Regional, the Board discussed the current Unit policy. The key point was that the policy mandates matchpoint or IMP penalties for behavior violations, while many clubs merely give warnings. Paul will compare our Unit policy with the ACBL policy and after further discussion the Board will issue guidelines to clubs.

Sound System Purchase

Paul

As rental of the sound system from the Marriott for the LSR and sectionals is a significant cost, Paul will research whether it would be cost effective for the Unit to purchase its own system.

Executive Session

The Board spent about fifteen minutes in executive session.

Adjourn

Motion: That the meeting be adjourned.

The motion was seconded and approved at 9:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted

John Erickson

Secretary

