



Memorandum of Discussion
ACBL Unit 174 Board of Directors Meeting
November 3rd, 2008
Houston Bridge Studio

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm. Present were Jolie Hess-President, Pat Levy-Vice President, Bert Onstott-Secretary, Paul Cuneo, Bob Dowlen, John Erickson, Lauri Laufman, and Karen Nimmons.

Minutes of October board meeting

Bert

The minutes were approved via on-line poll.

Treasurer's Report

Jim

November Financials

Jim reported on the financials through November 3rd. Some highlights are:

- Total current assets are \$172,701.51. Of that total, \$77,351.27 is designated for use by the Houston NABC.
- Net income YTD is \$11,443.29. That includes \$17,927 as a \$1 surcharge on every tournament entry sold during 2008, which was reserved for use by the Houston NABC. Excluding the surcharge, we have a deficit of \$6,482.71.
- It appears that the October sectional will lose ~\$2,800.
- The Social Bridge event held October 18th will lose a little over \$1,800.

Motion: That the Treasurer's report be approved as submitted.

The motion was seconded and approved.

John Ericson pointed out that we need to make a deposit now to hold the Stafford Center for the May tournament now, and one for the August tournament soon.



Budget

Jim proposed a preliminary budget for 2009. The budget as proposed did not take into account the increase in Sunday sectional table fees approved last month. Jim will rework numbers and submit for approval in December.

CDs

Jim discussed how we need to restructure our CD's to manage cash flow in 2008 and 2009. It appears we will need to take approximately \$40,000 out of CD's to meet cash flow needs, mainly for the NABC and the 2009 LSR.

Motion: That Jim be authorized to adjust the CD deposits as necessary to manage cash flow, and inform the board via e-mail of the details.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Once the CD's are restructured, Jim will send the money set aside for the NABC to Carolyn Fox.

Committee Reports

Awards/Flyers

Karen

Flyers

Karen will send regional flyers to four more Regionals.

Awards

Karen ordered three more Life Master Plaques. There are now 77 left from the 100 that were pre-ordered.

Bridge in Schools

Natalie Wernet

There was no report from Natalie.

John received the following e-mail from Bonnie Watt:



I am a teacher for Westchester Academy for International Studies, a Title One school, in the Spring Branch Independent School District. Although we follow the testing, objectives, and guidelines of our district, but we are a little different than our other "traditional" schools. One of these differences is we are given the first week in January to "investigate" a topic of our choice. The week-long investigation is given three hours in the afternoon Monday thru Thursday and then, all day Friday. The middle school students sign up for their course, so most who are entered into a class have a desire to be there. The course a colleague and I want to offer is bridge, with the hopes that it will spark enough interest to allow us to form a club following our week-long study. Depending on the interest, we could have up to 40 students.

I am searching for someone (or a group) who would will be willing to come and teach our students and possibly assist in setting up a club for a longer lasting interest. All who work with out students would need to be approved by the SBISD police department. This is a short, on-line procedure.

We are definitely interested in learning more about the School Bridge League and would appreciate any information that would help us be successful with this endeavor.

The e-mail was forwarded to Natalie. John will follow up with Natalie to determine the status of this item.

Communications Committee

Jolie (for Betty Freedman)

Betty gave her usual great report to Jolie.

Pat spoke with Mary Jane Kinnebrew and Betty Freedman about sending a follow up letter to people who move from another unit into our unit. We all agree that a letter welcoming them and informing them of the locations and times of the games and giving them the names of one or two people to contact for further information is a good idea.

Bert pointed out that there are about 200 "Bridge in Houston" brochures left over from the Social Bridge function held October 18th and proposed that Betty's committee include a brochure and send the letter to all new members as well.

Pat will follow up with Betty.

Membership

Bert

Membership is up 1 to 2,335. We had nine new members. There is a [web page](#) on the unit web site with charts.

Fund Raising

Bob

Jolie received a letter from Randall's indicating that we will be receiving a check for \$23.03. Randall's has been formally notified to send communication to Bob; Bob will get in touch with Randall's and confirm that they will communicate with him in the future.

Goodwill

Pat

Pat sent one get well card to Anna Marlatt.

I/N, Education & Book Sales

Joyce

Joyce sold 3 books this month to Barbara Philips and Margaret Morris of Livingston



NAP/GNT

John

NAP

The NAP unit level qualifying games for flights A and C will be held Sunday, November 16th at the Houston Bridge Studio; the Flight B game will be held Saturday, November 15th at the Bridge Club of Houston. John will finalize details regarding access to the clubs, use of computers, and plans for caddies with Sherry Gerdes and Sue Williams.

GNT

Pat pointed out that we need to select a site for the 2009 Unit level GNT games. We have the sanction for the dates (in February 2009) but have not selected a site.

Motion: That we hold the GNT Unit level qualifying games at the Houston Bridge Studio if the Studio agrees.

The motion was seconded and approved. John and/or Pat will follow up with Sue Williams.

New Player Services

Paul

Paul reported that things went well during the October tournament. He had dedicated people present both Saturday and Sunday, but new players only showed up for the first time on Saturday. Some of those returned Sunday. Some of the attendees at the "Bridge in the 21st Century" event came to the tournament.

Pro-Am

Paul

The event was held Thursday, October 30th. There were 20 tables at the Houston Bridge Studio, 12 at the Bridge Club of Houston and 10 at the Clear Lake Bridge Studio. The overall winners were Joyce Trimble and Kailash Sachdev with a 73.21% game at the Bridge Club off Houston. Karen will order their trophies. There were 8 participants at BCOH who came from the Social Bridge event.

It was proposed that next time we arrange to score the event across the field. Bert will check with Memphis regarding the necessary arrangements.

STAC

Bob

Bob has the letters requesting club participation in the January STaC ready to send out and will send them out this week.

In the October meeting, the idea of replacing a sectional tournament with a STaC was surfaced. Pat asked Memphis if we were allowed to hold an additional STaC; their answer was that we are only allowed to hold two STaCs per year.

Supplies

Lauri

- Thank you to Bert for his excellent job of refurbishing the director's cabinet and stenciling the front.
- Discussion about the condition of some of the other rolling carts followed. There is one empty rolling cart that Bert offered to take away and work on. Maybe in the near future we can also re-align some of the other cart doors such that they open and close (or lock) better. Also, Bob and John have offered to assist as needed with supplies... inventory, etc.
- Thank you to Jolie and Bob (on the board) along with the other volunteers who helped clean tables at the Halloween Humble Sectional.



- We will be going over the current supplies and ordering as needed to prepare for the Regional which will be here before we know it!
- We are looking for 20 volunteers to come out on Monday morning, the first day of the Regional to clean tables and bidding boxes. We figure with 20 volunteers, this will only take an hour or two tops as the tables will already be set up. More to come.

Tournament Coordination

Pat

Pat sent out the Unit calendar (tournaments, charity games, STACs, Pro-Am, etc) to all the club managers/owners. She noted to them that we had given some special events to each day of the week and a few nights which differed from previous years when most of the tournaments were on Thursday evenings.

Pat also spoke with the manager of the Regency Suite Inn in Humble after the tournament. They were happy with the directors and happy with the extra guests they received as a result of the tournament.

Old Business

October Sectional

John/Paul

Table count was up three from 2007 to 445 ½.

As mentioned in the Treasurer's report, the tournament will lose about \$2,800.

The directors did a good job.

Thanks to all the volunteers, especially to the committee chairs: Jim and Frances Simmons, I-N, Carmen Keys, Partnership, and Donna Frederick, Hospitality. They were all great and put in a lot of time.

Election Sectional

Lauri, Bob

Lauri presented a proposed budget and schedule for next May's election sectional.

Motion: That the Election Sectional budget be approved as revised.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Motion: That the Election Sectional schedule be approved as revised.

The motion was seconded and approved.

On-Line Partnership Desk

Bert

It's in use. 51 people have registered, and 44 partnership requests have been submitted. None of these have been updated to indicate they found a partner using the web site.

Bert is still working on adding features: enhancing the requests for partners for team games to allow for 1) one looking for three, 2) two looking for two, and 3) three looking for one and adding a text field where registrants can write anything they choose about other systems, conventions played, preferences in a partner, etc.

Since the site's success depends on people using it, we discussed ways of publicizing it. Bert will develop a flyer to be distributed to the local clubs.



Sectional Tournament Sites

John

Sam Houston Race Park.

John Erickson looked into using the Sam Houston Race Park for sectionals. The park has two areas; one is 5,000 sq. ft. (too small); the other is 20,000 sq. ft. (more than we need). The 20,000 sq. ft. area is rented for \$3,000/day. They have a catering requirement of \$1,000/day. There are two parking areas: a small one about 50 yards from the entrance and another larger one about 100 yards from the entrance.

John inquired whether we could have half of the larger area for a reduced price; site management is checking.

John will also check on lighting and concession prices.

U of H Clear Lake

Bob Dowlen looked into using U of H Clear Lake for sectionals. The university has one area about 6,000 sq. ft. (too small), which is full of vendors, that area is not available on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and they don't lease out there facilities. It's a definite no go.

Pasadena Convention Center

Bob agreed to take another look at the Pasadena Convention Center.

2009/2010 Directory

Bert

We will go to print in January and have directories ready to distribute at the Regional. All unit members are encouraged to go to [MyACBL](#) to verify and update their contact information by January 1st.

Social Bridge Event

Bert

Overall

The event took place as planned. There were 85 paid attendees, 81 played in the game, which had 21 tables. It was certainly judged a success. A [web page](#) was put up with results, survey responses, and photos.

One of the questions asked in the participant evaluation was "How do you rate the overall experience? (1 – Terrific; 5 – A waste of time)". These were the responses:

Response	1	2	3	4	5	Average Score
Number responding	54	16	4	4	0	1.46

Judging from this, the participants overwhelmingly enjoyed it. For those who did not see the web page, the responses to the participant survey are in the attachment (double click to open).

We only signed up three new members at the event, but BCOH has several events planned as 'the next step', and they will likely get many new members from the event.

Cost

The event ended up costing us quite a bit more than we planned, mostly due to the cost of printing 6,000 flyers.



On the plus side, we have about 200 brochures left, and 72 player packets. The packets can be used next time, and the brochures will be given to Betty Freedman's group who will send them to new and transferred in members. We'll have a better idea of costs next time. The CAP reimbursement was limited to \$750.

The church allowed us to use their facilities without charge and supplied bottled water and coffee at no charge. The committee proposed that we make a donation to the church in consideration of their extreme hospitality.

Motion: That we donate \$300 to the Champions Forest Baptist Church.

The motion was seconded and approved.

The next event is tentatively planned for April 2009, and will be held at a site close to the Houston Bridge Studio. In order to get that event rolling, a chairperson needs to be appointed now.

Motion: That Bert Onstott be appointed to chair the next social bridge event.

The motion was seconded and approved. Bert will form a committee to begin planning the next event.

2009 Lone Star Regional

Joyce Ryan is working on the speaker schedule.

We will be having ads in the Boston NABC daily bulletin; Lauri will draft an ad and send it out for approval. It has to be in by the end of next week.

We will revise the floor plan to move the I/N sections from the north-east end of the Grand Pavilion to south-west end near the snack bar. The bookseller will be moved to the north end of the Grand Pavilion. Bert will update the floor plan.

Pat expressed concern that we aren't selling many named events this year. That may be because we are competing with the NABC. Bert will make up an on-line web page showing the named events; perhaps that will prompt people to purchase events.

Jolie was informed that we will only have 12 directors in 2009, down from 14 in 2008.

Caddy Procedures

Paul presented his write up of caddie procedures for approval.

Motion: To approve the caddy procedures as revised.

The motion was seconded and approved. Paul will add them to the Unit Procedures manual.

New Business

Revisions to procedures manual

Lauri pointed out that the welcome letters do not get read by many of the tournament attendees; that they are tossed in the trash as soon as people sit down at the tables; in the interest of not wasting paper she proposed that we do away with providing them.

Motion: That we no longer print up welcome letters.

The motion was seconded and approved.



Lauri also pointed out that we are printing far too many restaurant guides for sectionals. She noted that she ended up tossing over 100 after the October sectional. The procedures manual currently specifies printing 200 copies.

Motion: That we only print 50 copies of the restaurant guide for sectionals.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Bert will update the Unit Procedures Manual to incorporate these changes.

Loan of supplies to the ABA

We received a request from the Robert Wallace, National Tournament Chairman of the American Bridge Association to rent our tables and the necessary supplies for running their Spring National, which will be held April 12 - 18, 2009 at the Westin Galleria. They expect to have 1,300 to 1,400 tables.

Paul agreed to work up a proposal and follow up with Robert.

Executive Session

The board was in executive session for 10 minutes.

Future Meeting dates

Future board meeting dates are December 1st, January 12th, 2009, February 9th, March 2nd, April 6th, and May 4th.

Adjourn

Motion: That the meeting be adjourned.

The motion was seconded and approved at 10:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted



Bert Onstott

Secretary

