



Memorandum of Discussion

ACBL Unit 174 Board of Directors Meeting

September 8th, 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, Karen Nimmons, and Joyce Ryan.

Also present for the beginning of the meeting were Jim Woodward-Treasurer and Eric Snow-NABC Chair and District 16 Representative.

Guests

District 16

Eric Snow

Eric reported on happenings at the District board meeting in Dallas over Memorial Day.

- The District treasury is looking much better than last it has been; the district is in good shape financially. The district now has about \$24,000 in the bank.
- Mark Baumgardner has been appointed the new District 16 GNT Coordinator, replacing Sandy Campbell.
- Every year, the ACBL Charity Foundation donates \$100,000 to charity; that is divided up equally among 5 districts each year; the districts get to choose the recipients of \$20,000. District 16 is one of the districts selected for 2009. The district board is asking the units to nominate charities to receive the \$20,000. As reported last month, Unit 174 selected Blue Bird Circle and Texas Hearing and Service Dogs as their nominees. The district currently has four nominees, and is looking for more.
- The Puerto Vallarta tournament is in October; the room block is about taken, so if people want to attend, they should make their reservations now.
- A committee was appointed at the July regional to consider whether we should continue setting aside \$1 from entries purchased on Saturdays during District 16 Regionals to be used for future D-16 Nationals tournaments. There are no D-16 NABC's scheduled for the next five years. The committee recommended that the practice continue; the District board accepted the recommendation.



- Eric reminded us that nominations for Unit goodwill and Texas STAR awards are due by December.

2009 NABC

Eric Snow

Eric reported that they are working on parking and meeting with the hotel trying to resolve the food budget. All is proceeding smoothly.

Minutes of August board meeting

Bert

The minutes were approved via on-line poll.

Treasurer's report

Jim

Jim Woodward gave the Treasurer's report. The Unit remains in fine financial condition. Highlights of the Treasurer's report are:

- Total current assets are \$172,190.81; \$75,582.28 of that is designated for use by the 2009 NABC.
- The checking account balance is \$5,070.40.
- There is \$81,433.88 in CD's that mature in November.
- Current profit to date for the year is \$11,917.58, which is about \$4,000 less than the \$16,158.00 set aside for the NABC.

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

The motion was seconded and approved.

Verifier's Report

Jolie received this report from Norm Gautier; the Financial Verifier:

This is to confirm that the Verifier functions were performed for Unit transactions from 4/1/08 through 6/30/08 and there are no exceptions to report.

Committee Reports

Awards/Flyers

Karen

Karen reported that the awards are up to date. She has ordered 15 LM plaques since she placed a blanket order for 100. Two people just made LM in Dallas; she plans to order their plaques soon.

She sent out flyers for the October sectional to all clubs.

She will send out NAP flyers to all the clubs soon.

Bridge in Schools

Bert (for Natalie Wernet)

Natalie got teachers for the KIPP classes.

Communications Committee

Jolie (for Betty Freedman)

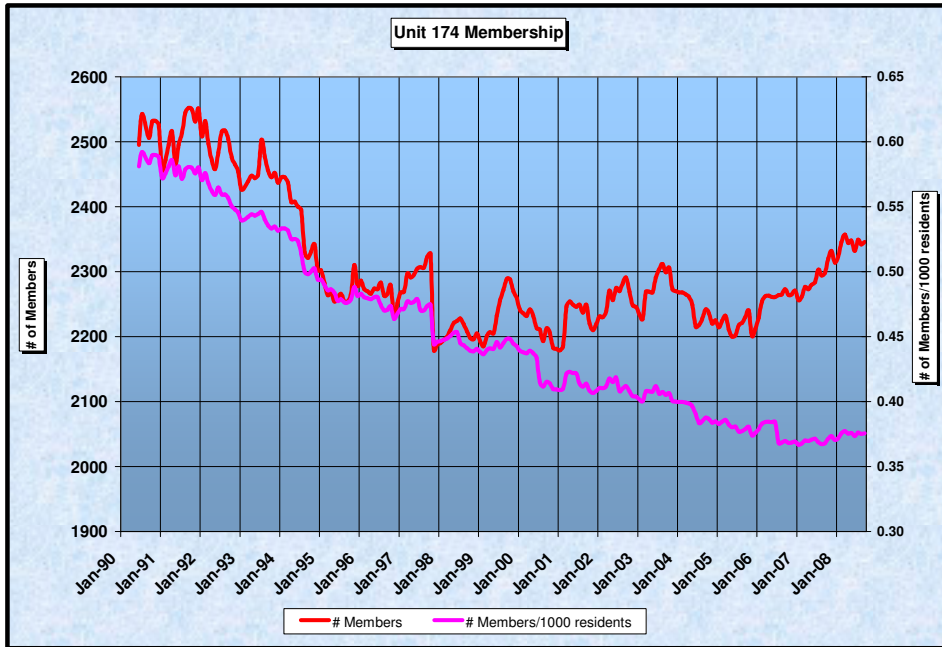


Betty sent Jolie a report. She did get responses to some of the post cards she sent to those transferred-in members who could not be reached by phone.

Membership

Bert

Membership is up 4 to 2346.



Fund Raising

Bob

No news.

Goodwill

Pat

Pat reported that she sent a card to Dianna Gittelman who is recovering from surgery and to Janet Simmons, the sister of Ken Alvater who passed away.

I/N, Education & Book Sales

Joyce

Joyce reported that she sold 175 books this month to Laura Lee Jones (98), Dave Glandorf (63), Julia Miller (1), Linda Brending (8) and Iva Kemp (5). She also sold four of the outdated books at the August tournament.

Since Lynne Graham has retired and moved to Louisiana, Laura Lee Jones has taken over her classes. Laura Lee has 102 students.

NAP/GNT

John

NAP

John has received reports of qualifiers from only three clubs; he will contact the other clubs to remind them to submit their lists.

We discussed posting a list of qualifiers on the Unit web site in hopes that it will boost participation in the Unit qualifying game; we agreed to do so. John will gather the names; Bert will format the list page.



GNT

No news.

New Player Services

Paul

No news.

Pro-Am

Paul

The Pro-Am is being held October 30th at the Bridge Club of Houston, Houston Bridge Studio, and Clear Lake Bridge Club.

Paul sent out the Pro-Am flyer via e-mail to the board for review.

Bert will print out and deliver flyers to Karen, who will send them out to the clubs.

STAC

Bob

Bob reported that the hand records have been sent out to all clubs except those who play on Monday during the day. The hand records for the Monday daytime game were inadvertently not included with the others when Tom Whitesides sent them out. Bob requested and received those on September 8th; he will send out the remainder ASAP.

Seventeen clubs are participating. One club objected to requirement that games must have non-playing directors.

Supplies

Lauri

Lauri reported that supplies are in order. She has been inventorying the contents of the crates. She reported the awards usage for the August tournament to Jim.

Bert took the tall director's cabinet home for refurbishing; the doors were falling off. When he got it home he found that the metal cabinets inside that hold most of the tournament supplies are in really bad shape. The drawers are reusable, but the cabinet is beyond repair. New ones are available from Powers Industries here in Houston for \$133.06 each, or a total of about \$270.

Motion: To authorize spending up to \$400 to purchase replacement metal cabinets.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Tournament Coordination

Pat

Pat reported on her Tournament Coordinator activities. She

- Requested Sanctions for Sectionals for the following dates in 2010
 - April 3rd - 5th
 - June 11th - 13th
 - August 13th - 15th
 - October 29th - 31st
- Requested the bill from the Super 8 Motel for the directors and head caddy. The total bill was \$739.20 for the 6 people for 2 nights.
- Inquired how many rooms were occupied with guests who mentioned they were playing at the tournament; the manager guessed approximately 10 or 11 rooms.



- Gave the manager of the Regency Inn the names of those who will need rooms at our expense for the October tournament: Head director Tom Marsh, directors Scott Humphrey, Kevin Perkins, John Smalley, and Lucky Snyder and the head caddy Sandy Bippert.
- Requested some changes for the 0-300 Sectional which is being held Sept 12-14 at the Bridge Club of Houston.

Old Business

August Sectional

Bert/Pat

The tournament went fairly smoothly. We've received nothing but praise for the venue.

Attendance was up 26 tables from 2007 to 550 tables.

Most of the costs are in; it looks like we'll lose about \$2,300, which is about equal to the amount set aside for the NABC.

The Stafford Center requires payment in full 30 days prior to the event. We missed that deadline in August; the Stafford Center staff notified us on Wednesday before the event that we would need to bring a cashier's check for the amount before we could begin setting up. This was done, but we need to avoid this in the future.

Pat received these suggestions:

1. That smoking not be allowed near the doors. A smoking patio should be set up at the south side of the building.
2. That the directors be introduced at the beginning of each session so we can tell if one is near us or not. Often we see people in black or maroon shirts and when we call for directors they do not seem to hear us. If we know which ones are directors, we could direct our call to them louder.

Tom Whitesides said the hotel doesn't have a safe available to the guests. He would prefer that someone pick up the money daily, or look for a hotel that has a safe.

October Sectional

John/Paul

The flyer has been printed and sent out.

John is looking for caterers. He has considered using Teresa Cole, who did the concessions at the Shriners', or Gulf Coast Catering, who did the snack bar at last year's October sectional and this year's April sectional. Bert suggested that we consider using the choir booster's club from Stafford. Lauri suggested that we investigate using the people who do concessions at the Cynthia Woods Pavilion.

Paul arranged for the Sunday lunch; Demeris will be serving BBQ.

Election Sectional

Lauri, Bob

The Election Sectional will be held May 1-3, 2009 at the Stafford Center. Lauri and Bob will be chairing the tournament. They will submit a budget and a schedule for approval at the next board meeting.

June sectional



John Erickson will co-chair the tournament with Karen.

On-Line Partnership Desk

Bert

It has been ready for use for about three weeks, but there was a problem with getting the underlying databases set up on the web server. First, Steve Bruce (the district webmaster) hasn't managed to grant Bert the necessary privileges to work with databases on the Unit web server. In the interim, Bert is using the Houston Bridge Studio's web server, but it developed a problem on August 14th that Yahoo Tech Support only solved September 6th.

Anyway, it is now working. ☺

The next steps are to gather feedback on the design, by exposing it to 1) a group of web experts, and 2) a focus group of users (which Gary King has volunteered to form), and incorporate any comments in the design. It also needs to be moved off the Houston Bridge Studio's web site on to the Unit's web site. Once that's done, we'll have to make it public to the unit membership. Bert hopes to have it available by the first of October, so it can be used for the October tournament partnership.

Contract for Head Caddy

Jim

Jim brought the contract to the August tournament for Sandy Bippert's signature; she didn't want to sign, asking that she be reimbursed for gas expense.

Motion: That the head caddy's contract be amended to pay \$75 towards travel expenses.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Jolie will ask Jim to make the revisions.

Programs for Clubs

Joyce

Joyce spent some time with Peggy Naughton of Clear Lake talking about novice/mentor and beginner game subsidies. She expects then to start some new games soon, both novice/mentor and beginner games. Dave Glandorf reported to her that Chuck Ensor sent out lots of flyers and promotional information. As a result, Dave has about 15 new players in his lessons and they will be the source of new players for the beginner games.

Marriott Renewal Contracts

Bert

Bert received proposed contracts for 2010 through 2015 on September 8th.

In these proposals:

1. They moved the dates of the 2011 through 2015 tournaments up a week to the last week in January from the first week in February.
2. They introduced a tiered structure for hotel rates: a cheaper rate for directors, and a higher rate for others. The director's rate is cheaper than we currently pay, which will help hold down tournament costs, but the rate for players is a bit higher. In practice, I think this means that rooms that go on our bill are charged at the lower rate, so committee chairs and the ACBL president, etc, would get the cheaper rate. This does introduce a potential problem: the director's like to pay for their own rooms, so they get their Marriott Rewards credits; we'll have to make sure they only pay the reduced rate.
3. They reduced the total room block from 908 to 870.
4. The service charge assessed on room rates and food and beverage went up from 20% to 22%.



5. There is no longer premium for more than one person per room.
6. The space rental rates increase \$500 per year, or about 6%.
7. The food and beverage commitment increases by \$500 per year as well.

Here is a summary of the proposed contracts:

	2010 (original)	2010 (revised)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Room block							
		Regular Block	Director Block	Regular Block	Director Block	Regular Block	Director Block
Saturday	1	3	1	3	1	3	1
Sunday	7	15	1	15	1	15	1
Monday	100	80	20	80	20	80	20
Tuesday	145	125	20	125	20	125	20
Wednesday	165	140	20	140	20	140	20
Thursday	175	140	20	140	20	140	20
Friday	165	130	20	130	20	130	20
Saturday	135	100	20	100	20	100	20
Sunday	15	13	2	13	2	13	2
Total	908	746	124	746	124	746	124
Room rates							
Single	\$124	\$135	\$115	\$139	\$120	\$145	\$125
Double	\$135	\$135	\$115	\$139	\$120	\$145	\$125
Triple	\$147	\$135	\$115	\$139	\$120	\$145	\$125
Quad	\$159	\$135	\$115	\$139	\$120	\$145	\$125
Other information							
Start Date	1/30/2010	1/30/2010	1/22/2011	1/28/2012	1/26/2013	1/25/2014	1/24/2015
End Date	2/8/2010	2/8/2010	1/31/2011	2/06/2012	2/04/2013	2/03/2013	2/02/2015
Space rental	\$7,500 + 20%	\$7,500 + 22%	\$8,000 + 22%	\$8,500 + 22%	\$9,000 + 22%	\$9,500 + 22%	\$10,000 + 22%
Food & beverage commitment	\$ 14,604	\$ 14,604	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,500	\$ 16,000	\$ 16,500	\$ 17,000
Cutoff date for bridge rate	1/15/2010	1/08/2010	1/08/2011	1/13/2012	1/11/2013	1/10/2014	1/09/2015

The hotel is also working on a proposal to hold a sectional.

Motion: To accept the proposed contracts subject to legal review.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Sectional Tournament Sites

John

John contacted the Hilton Hotel at the main campus of the University of Houston. The hotel has three ballrooms for rental, the largest of which is 6,200 sq. ft. in area. As this is not sufficient space for our sectionals, and the ballrooms are not connected, it did not seem that the hotel would suit our purposes. John inquired about availability for the May 1-3, 2009 weekend, and was told that the hotel space was already booked.

Bill St. Clair visited the Berry Center to inquire about rental rates and specifics. The rates he was quoted were attractive: \$1,500 per day plus a set-up fee of \$750. However, Second Baptist runs a church service on Sunday morning, and we were told that we could not begin on Sundays until sometime after 1:00 PM. John will ask Bill to follow up to see if we wouldn't be able to use space on Sunday that would not interfere with the church service.

A few months ago Therese Cole told us that the new Shriner's facility had plans to construct a ballroom that was scheduled for completion in January 2009. The latest update is that there has been a delay in getting permits, and at present there is no projection of a completion date.



2009/2010 Directory

Bert

Motion: That the Unit directory be made available on-line, protected by the member's ACBL number and a password.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Motion: That we purchase 1,000 unbound directory inserts.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Social Bridge

Bert

The committee met on August 12th and has another meeting scheduled for September 9th.

So far we have 22 registrants, and Norm knows about 10 more. This is far short of our 200 target.

Norm is working to get an announcement in the community newsletters that are published by Champions Printing and Publishing and in the Spring section of The Observer.

Unfortunately, the on-line registration for this event was broken by the same issues described under on-line partnership, but is now working again.

The Committee encourages all to help get the word out to social bridge groups. Flyers are available and will be mailed on request by Pat or Norm for further distribution.

2009 Lone Star Regional

Jolie

Joyce is working on the speaker schedule for the regional.

A group is collecting money for a Lynn Graham Day and the board is recommending the group follow the format that is followed for the Mary Lee Bentley Day. Pat will inform the group of the board's recommendation.

Everything is on track per the procedures manual.

Motion: That we provide Convention Card holders, NABC pencils with clips, and sheets of registration labels as hospitality gifts for the 2009 Lone Star Regional.

The motion was seconded and approved.

New Business

Approval of Nominating Committee

Betty Starzec asked that Dave Glandorf, Sally Wheeler, Marsha Bernstein, and Sandy Lobliner be approved as her nominating committee.

Motion: That Dave Glandorf, Sally Wheeler, Marsha Bernstein, and Sandy Lobliner be approved as the 2009 nominating committee, working for Betty Starzec.

The motion was seconded and approved.

Future Meeting dates



Future board meeting dates are October 6th, November 3rd, December 1st, and January 5th, 2009.

Executive Session

The board spent 15 minutes in executive session.

Adjourn

Motion: That the meeting be adjourned.

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

Respectfully submitted



Bert Onstott

