



Memorandum of Discussion

ACBL Unit 174 Board of Directors Meeting

April 7th, 7:00 PM

Houston Bridge Studio

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. Present were Bert Onstott - President, Jolie Hess - Vice President, Karen Nimmons - Secretary, Joyce Ryan, Lauri Laufman, John Erickson and Jim Woodward - Treasurer. Norm Gautier and Sandy Stevens were present as guests.

Guests

Attracting Social Bridge Players – Norm Gautier

Norm Gautier described the events designed to attract social bridge players. The following is a summary of what's planned.

- Objectives:
 - ⇒ Have a fun day
 - ⇒ Introduce social bridge players to duplicate
 - ⇒ Raise money for charity?
- Event content:
 - ⇒ Bridge lessons
 - ⇒ Lunch
 - ⇒ Sanctioned bridge game
- Player Packet
 - ⇒ Adventures in Duplicate
 - ⇒ Website information and link
 - ⇒ Club information geared to Newcomers (lessons/games)
 - ⇒ ACBL information
 - ⇒ More?, e.g. basic instructional material
- Other
 - ⇒ Run by Unit 174 volunteers, subsidized by Unit 174
 - ⇒ Charge fee to cover most costs
 - ⇒ Limit attendees to say 100
 - ⇒ Plan to have events at different sites/times, possibly quarterly

- ⇒ Encourage clubs to: follow-up with attendees.
 - Schedule games/lessons soon after event
 - Utilize newcomer side games
- Social Bridge Event Committee
 - ⇒ Co-Chairs:
 - Norm Gautier
 - Bert Onstott
 - ⇒ Executive Committee Members:
 - Dianna Gittleman
 - Gary King
 - Pat Levy
 - Sally Knight
- How Board Members Can Help
 - ⇒ Site selection
 - Space for 25 tables (2100 sq. ft.) plus several teaching areas if available.
 - ⇒ Promotion
 - ⇒ Event Day Volunteers

Contract with Head Caddy – Sandy Stevens

The head caddy is responsible for seeing that all tables have everything they need for the game to run smoothly and be scored quickly. She works closely with the directors to set up sections. She trains, assigns, monitors, and together with the caddy chairman, disciplines and protects the caddies. At the end of each tournament, she oversees the collection and packing up of all the playing supplies. Recently additional duties have been added to caddy jobs, such as emptying trash cans, and passing out goodies, door prizes and tickets.

Sandy Stevens proposed that the Unit establish a contract regularizing the employment of our head caddy, Sandy Bippert, to be renewed yearly at the agreement of Ms. Bippert and Unit 174.

The purpose of the contract would be to help the Unit in planning and budgeting and provide continuity throughout changes in Board composition. The benefit to Ms. Bippert would be that she would feel a greater sense of job security and would have a better idea of when her services were specifically needed

The contract could be terminated at anytime by either Ms. Bippert or the Unit for any reason, provided notice by either party is received in writing a minimum of two weeks before a scheduled tournament. She proposes that the Unit:

1. continue to pay her at her present rate,
2. provide a smoking-permissible hotel room for her during each tournament,
3. specify the dates and locations of all tournaments during the year at which she is expected to work,
4. contact Ms. Bippert a minimum of two weeks before each tournament to confirm her hotel reservation and to tell her whether she is needed for set-up,
5. establish a complimentary subscription to the District 16 Scorecard for her,
6. provide a Caddy Chairman to secure and schedule caddies,
7. give Ms. Bippert a copy of the schedule before each tournament, and

8. pay Ms. Bippert in full if she has an injury or illness which occurs during a tournament, but works any part of the tournament and continues to provide guidance.

Sandy has also offered to come to Houston to clean bidding boxes and boards and replace cards in both as needed if the Unit will pay for a hotel.

These items were tabled and will be readdressed during the May meeting.

Election of Officers

Jolie Hess was unanimously elected as President.

Pat Levy was unanimously elected as Vice President.

Bert Onstott was unanimously elected as Secretary.

Jim Woodward was unanimously elected as Treasurer.

Minutes of March board meeting

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

Treasurer's report

Jim Woodward presented the treasurer's report.

The Unit remains in good financial condition:

- The balance sheet as of April 7, 2008 shows total assets of \$156,624.59.
- The P&L sheet shows a profit of \$10,891.68 for January 1st through April 6th.

Jim pointed out that our cash flow situation makes it undesirable to send all of the approximately \$13,000 owed to the NABC subcommittee at this time, as it would likely force us to cash in a CD early and incur penalties. He would prefer to send only \$6,000 at this time, and send the rest when our cash flow situation improves, or when our CD's mature, which is in November. The board supported this position.

Motion: That the treasurer's report be approved as presented.

The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Bert Onstott pointed out that we need to have some positive statement each month from Norm Gautier (the financial Verifier), that he has examined the financial reports and found them to be substantially as represented by the Treasurer. Jolie agreed to contact Norm each month for this report.

Appointment of a replacement for Jo Dene Bond

Board member Jo Dene Bond unexpectedly passed on Tuesday, April 1st, creating a vacant board position. The Unit Bylaws, Article VI, Section 6, direct that

“Any vacancy occurring on the Board of Directors shall be filled by the Board of Directors, and any person so appointed shall hold office during the unexpired term.”

Accordingly, the board nominated and unanimously selected Bob Dowlen to fill the remaining one year of Jo Dene’s term. Bob has graciously agreed to serve.

New Committee Assignments

New committee assignments were made. The following table shows the 2008/2009 responsibilities.

2008/2009 Committee Assignments	
Adopt-a-Novice Coordinator	None
Attorney	Buddy Hanby
Awards/Flyer Distribution	Karen Nimmons
Book Sales Coordinator	Joyce Ryan
Budget Coordinator	Jim Woodward
By-Laws	None
Charity Game Coordinator	Sandy Stevens
Communications Committee	Betty Freedman
Directory Coordinator	Bert Onstott
District Representative	Eric Snow
Education Liaison	Joyce Ryan
Election	N. Greene & D. Crumbaugh
Ethics Committee Chair	Mike Lee
Financial Verifier	Norm Gautier
Fund Raising/Sponsors	Bob Dowlen
GNT Coordinator	John Erickson
Goodwill Chair	Pat Levy
I/N Coordinator	Joyce Ryan
I/N Coordinator Assistant	Paul Cuneo
Houston Convention Center Rep	Eric Snow
Membership	Bert Onstott
NAP Coordinator	John Erickson
New Player Services Coordinator	Paul Cuneo
Nominating Committee Chair	To be named
Parliamentarian	Paul Nimmons
Photographer	Donna Sparks
Pro-Am Coordinator	Paul Cuneo
Publicity Committee Chair	Dianna Gittelman
Recorder	Barbara La Vigne
Scorecard Reporter	Anne Page
Senior Olympics	None
STAC Coordinator	Karen Nimmons
Supply Coordinator	Lauri Laufman
Supplies - Assistant	John Erickson
Tournament Coordinator	John Erickson
E-mail Newsletter Editor, Webmaster & Graphic Artist	Arlene Weingarten
2009 LSR Regional Chair/Co-chair	Jolie Hess/Pat Levy
June 2008 Sectional Chair/Co-chair	Lauri Laufman/Barbara Nance
August 2008 Sectional Chair/Co-chair	Pat Levy/Bert Onstott
October 2008 Sectional Chair/Co-chair	John Erickson/Paul Cuneo
April 2009 Sectional Chair/Co-chair	Lauri Laufman/Bob Dowlen
June 2009 Sectional Chair/Co-chair	Pat Levy/Karen Nimmons

Committee Reports

Awards/Flyers – Lauri Laufman

Awards

Lauri has given out five Life Master plaques, and has ordered seven more.

Karen Nimmons will look into alternate sources for the Life Master plaques and decide whether to stay with the current vendor.

Flyers

Bert Onstott has printed some flyers for the June tournament; he will print more and Karen will send to the clubs and nearby units.

Bridge in Schools – Bert Onstott forCarolyn Fox

There was no report.

Communications Committee – Bert Onstott (for Betty Freedman)

Betty Freedman and her committee consisting of Judy Ensor, Jolie Hess, Bathsheba Perry, Mary Jane Kinnebrew, Billie Sampson, Bridgette Sandifer, and Robin Johnson had contacted or attempted to contact 20 new and 13 non-renewing members. Only three of the non-renewing members indicated they were no longer interested.

Membership – Bert Onstott

Membership is down 13 from 2357 to 2344 in spite of having 10 new members. Retention also was down for the first time in a while.

Fund Raising – Jolie

There was no report.

I/N, Education, Book sales – Joyce Ryan

Book Sales

Joyce sold 104 books this month to Iva Kemp, Barbara Delozier, Lynne Graham, Laura Lee Jones, and John Zilic.

I/N

The Monday evening beginner (0-20) game at the Houston Bridge Studio had 10 tables last week. All players are getting a copy of *Adventures in Duplicate*. Joyce is teaching pregame lessons from that book.

Four new players just graduated from Gary King's beginner class.

Programs for Clubs

Joyce would like to see the unit encourage new player games with these new program incentives:

1. A per table subsidy for clubs who have (or start) new 0-20 games. She is suggesting a \$10 per table subsidy for the first three months of operation. Clubs would be required to submit copies of the printouts showing the monthly table count and would be issued a check for the first three months of operation.
2. A unit paid free play for students completing a series of lessons issued by the teacher and redeemed at the club. The club would collect the free plays and submit them monthly for redemption. (approximate cost to the unit \$100 per quarter)
3. Subsidy for quarterly mailings to 0-20 players advertising I/N games. The unit would share 50% of the cost upon submittal of receipts. (approximate cost to the unit \$150 per quarter)
4. A unit subsidy for teacher graduation games at the rate of \$10 per table. The fee would help pay for certificates, director fees, and refreshments. The club would submit a game roster for reimbursement. (The graduation games are a way to get students from the lesson series to TRY a duplicate game, an important step in keeping them!) (approximate cost to the unit \$120 per quarter)
5. Provide full service clubs with a computer CD of the player names and addresses from the Bridge Extravaganza quarterly events. Subsidize 50% of the cost of mailings to the players who attend the event. (approximate cost to the unit \$75 per quarter)
6. Offer a subsidy for a teacher or advanced player to review and offer suggestions on bidding, defense and play of the hand after an I/N or Beginner game for a suggested rate of \$25 per session. The verification would be signed by the club owner/manager and submitted monthly to the unit treasurer. (approximate cost \$100-\$200 per month)

This proposal was tabled until the next meeting, when it will be readdressed. All board members are encouraged to review all these proposals. Bert Onstott volunteered to flesh these out into statements that could be added to the procedures manual.

NAP/GNT – Ed Groner

North American Pairs

John Erickson will work with Ed Groner and Arlene to develop a flyer for the NAP games, which start in June.

Grand National Teams

John will also ensure that the Unit gets maximum participation in the District qualifying game in Richardson over Memorial Day.

STAC and Goodwill – Karen Nimmons

STaC

There was no news, as the next Unit STaC is not until the fall.

Goodwill

Karen sent out several cards.

Supplies – John Erickson

John Erickson reported that he had taken an inventory of our supplies. We have lots of pair entries for the higher letters, and he recommends that we use those letters at future tournaments to reduce the supply to a more reasonable level.

Tournament Coordination – Pat Levy

Sectionals for 2008:

Pat visited the Stafford Centre and discussed with one of their staff re possible hotels in the vicinity. She selected the Super 8 Motel on Murphy Road and reserved 6 rooms for the directors and the caddy master and put a hold on 5 more.

The room rate for a single room is \$55.00 plus tax and a double room is \$64.95 plus tax. The hotel is approximately 3 years old and the rooms looks quite nice for the rate. It is located approximately 1-2 miles from the Stafford Centre.

A contract from Humble for the October tournament has been requested and she has requested hotel rooms from the Regency Inn Suites. Mr. Desei, the manager, confirmed the rates will be the same \$49.99 for a single and \$70.00 for a double.

Tournaments for 2009 and beyond

Sanctions have been received for 12 Unit Club Championships. Charity game sanctions for 2009 will be requested as soon as we decide which charities we wish to designate.

Pat will meet with the Marriott Westchase in April to begin discussion of contracts for the Regionals after 2010.

Old Business

2008 LSR Regional

Most of the items have been resolved vis-à-vis the hotel bill.

The P&L to date shows a profit of about \$7,000. We are still missing expenses for the receptions that were held in the President's suite.

The classes appear to have broken about even; we made up on the director course what we lost on the TAP class. It appears we made \$1 on the classes.

April Sectional

The total table count was 543 ½, which is down from 2007's 592 tables, but up from 2006's 524. It's too early to report on the profit and loss, as lots of expenses still haven't come in.

Complaints were heard about people not being able to pick up their awards due to nobody being present at the hospitality table before and after the sessions. This is an alert to committee and tournament chairs to make sure their volunteers understand their duties.

Also discussed was whether to have eight or nine board sessions during the Sunday Swiss. It was decided this should be the call of the Tournament chairs and the directors.

Also discussed was whether to allow individuals to ask for awards from previous tournaments. The board was against this practice.

Motion: Awards won at a tournament must be picked up at that tournament, and may not be given out after the tournament in which they are won.

The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

June Sectional

Lauri Laufman was appointed Tournament Chair to replace Jo Dene. She will work with Barbara Nance on the Tournament.

August Sectional

The Stafford Center contract has been signed. A copy is on box.net, and Pat has the original.

Pat has asked two people to be the Partnership Chairmen and she asked Debbie Bellan and Ellen Greenfield to be the Hospitality chairs.

Online partnership desk

Bert Onstott has volunteered to produce this, on the condition the Unit purchase the software tools he feels he needs to accomplish this. This will also help in developing the Web site for the NABC.

Motion: That Bert Onstott is authorized to spend \$400 of Unit funds to purchase Adobe Dreamweaver for the Unit.

The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

New Business

2009 Sectional tournament sites

Jolie expressed concern that we did not yet have the locations for our 2009 sectional tournaments penciled in anywhere.

Since the Hornberger will not be available in 2009, it was suggested that we get all of our dates, except October tentatively reserved at the Stafford Center. Karen agreed to do so.

Members have requested that we look at the racetrack again, at University of Houston-Clear Lake, and at the Lodge 88 site at 1435 Beall in Houston. Jolie pointed out that the Shriners are building a new facility, and requested that Karen contact them. Also, the Hornberger is building a new facility; they have promised to contact us to let us know the details once it is available.

Bert Onstott volunteered to head up a committee to look again at tournament sites for sectionals and the regional. This proposal was accepted.

2008 Charity selection

The Unit can have five Unit Charity games each year. Three of the games must go to the charity selected by the ACBL, but the other two benefit charities selected by the Unit.

Motion: That the two Unit Charity Games in 2009 benefit M. D. Anderson.

The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Next Meeting Dates

The dates for the next several Unit Board of Directors meetings are: May 5th, June 2nd, July 7th, August 4th, and September 8th.

Executive Session

The board met in executive session for thirty minutes.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted



Bert Onstott
Secretary, ACBL Unit 174