



Memorandum of Discussion

ACBL Unit 174 Board of Directors Meeting

November 5, 2020

Zoom

Call to Order

Jack LaVigne

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm.

Directors Present: Joyce Gore, Lauri Laufman, Jack LaVigne, Greg May, Kathleen McDougall, Karen Nussbaum, Clif Rice, and Sheryl Thomas.

Others Present: Gary Hercules-Treasurer, Paul Cuneo, Tom Hogle, Bill Riley and Nancy Strohmmer.

ACBL Up-Date

Paul Cuneo

Paul said the Fall ACBL Board Meeting is scheduled for November 18th.

Current activities on ACBL continue to be primarily running special events once a month. They will be adding special events to the calendar.

There are a few clubs running face-to-face games. It is about 3% of all clubs but tend not to be in major metropolitan areas. ACBL at the present time is still discouraging clubs from returning face-to-face.

Paul said personally he does not see any tournaments on the horizon until at least the first of March and even this may be extended.

ACBL is doing well financially.

Paul said on his end, they are starting to talk about conditions for online bridge in the strategic committee for post pandemic.

Paul said in the future, club pooling will be within District boundaries only. He then explained how clubs that first started online starting pooling other clubs broadly, thus making large games. He said he believes they will be undoing national pools when face-to-face returns because it is hard for local clubs to compete with these large games.

Paul said they are still working on discipline online. Some people are getting caught, but it is a slow process. Jack asked how one would report suspicion of being cheated. Paul said when someone is really



convinced, they file a Player Memo, which is online, and this goes to the National Recorder. If they are not really convinced but are suspicious, they should call the director and also notify the club manager. Both will review the hands to be sure there is no foul play.

Paul said he and Jack had met with John Fechter, the head of sales for the Marriott Hotel and were successful in cancelling the 2021 Regional contract. He said we do not have any future contracts with the hotel at this point. Paul said they had discussed renewing future contracts up to the end of 2025 and maybe even 2027 for Regionals and is hopeful they will get back to him shortly.

Approval of Minutes

Joyce Gore

The October Minutes were prepared and emailed to the Board.

Motion that the October 2020 Minutes be approved was made by Kathleen McDougall – Seconded by Clif Rice. **Motion Carried**

Treasurer’s Report

Gary Hercules

Gary reported that the October Financial Report had been emailed and verified.

Motion to accept the October Financial Report was made by Karen Nussbaum – Seconded by Lauri Laufman. **Motion Carried**

Old Business

Publicity Chair

Dave Becker

Jack said Dave had sent an invitation to “Bridge in a Day” out to newspapers. This would normally have cost \$1500., but because of his relationship with these newspapers and his car dealer business connections, they gave him an introductory offer of \$500. Jack said Betty Starzec had informed him there was an online called “Cooperative Advertising Program” which offers to help pay for this. He would get the invoice from Dave and submit it to see if we could get some of our money back.

Sheryl said she had sent out an email to the Aliana Next Door community. She is waiting for response from them and is also waiting for Facebook’s approval to put the same email on Facebook.

Committee Reports

Club Connection

Kathleen McDougall

Charity

Nancy Strohmer

Nancy started by giving a big thank you to Carol Winograd for once again working on the Selection Committee for the 2021 Charity of the Year. Nancy informed the Board that the recommendation for Charity of the Year is the **Houston Food Bank**. She said there had been five (5) nominations for the Food Bank and presented the reasons why they were selected



Motion to accept the Houston Food Bank as the Unit 174 Charity for 2021 was made by Greg May –
Seconded by Kathleen McDougall **Motion carried.**

Nancy said she had communicated with the Executive Director, Joe Jones and the Director of Operations, Greg Coles of ACBL and had requested having charity games on BBO. She said the subject had resurfaced in the last two to three weeks and ACBL is seriously looking into putting charity games on BBO.

Education **Kathleen McDougall**

Kathy said they have narrowed down the potential list for online teachers. She said the teachers that have taken the ACBL Teachers Certification online course have been getting familiar with SharkBridge

Jack interjected and said Betty Starzec spoke to him on the Board subsidizing teachers motion made last month which read “ABTA certified. Betty said it should have been “ACBL accredited”. Betty said this includes TAP, Best Practices or online courses. He asked for a modification motion.

A **Motion** to modify the previously approved subsidy regarding teachers to the following **Motion** “that the Board subsidizes up to \$500 of expenses for ACBL accredited teachers, to teach beginning bridge courses on BBO or SharkBridge for as many as four (4) instructors” was made by Lauri Laufman -
Seconded by – Karen Nussbaum. **Motion Carried**

Kathy said they are in good shape for getting the four (4) teachers on board.

Greg said the certification class was setup for SharkBridge rather than BBO. He said it would be the easier way to go but it is also more expensive than BBO. A lot of the teachers were not too happy with SharkBridge as there is a lot to learn on this platform. Greg said SharkBridge is a powerful platform. Kathy said she thought BBO was trying to improve their program.

Bill Riley concurred with Greg’s feelings on SharkBridge but said it could be mastered. Bill said SharkBridge is more powerful than BBO but it is also more complicated and has a steep learning curve.

Club Management **Bill Riley**

Bill said the 0-20 game did not make, but they will try again. It was previously scheduled for the 2nd and 4th Monday. Only 2 pairs registered to play last month. Bill said they were only given permission for 0-20. He thought if they tried to increase it they would have to get permission from all the other clubs. Bill did not think this would occur because of what has happened during the past two weeks.

Jack said a Robly Eblast was sent out to the 520 Unit members under 20.

Lauri said the Eblast only went to 393 members because that is the number in the data base we are allowed to solicit via Robly. Attending to the 0-20-switching to 0-50 for a supervised game, Lauri recalled that for a Sectional they were not allowed to do this so she thought this would not need to be cleared with the other clubs. Lauri said it would need to be cleared with ACBL and BBO. Jack said we might need to follow up on this.



Paul suggested we might consider offering some BBO Tutorial sessions to the 0-20. He said if we have that many members under 20 masterpoints, and we are not attracting them, they might not be on BBO and might not even know how to get on.

Member Communication

Jeanne Phelps

STaC

Karen Nussbaum

GNT

Kathleen McDougall

NAP

Greg May

Intermediate/Newcomer

Nancy Guthrie

Supplies

Clif Rice

Technology

Greg May

Awards

Sheryl Thomas

Sheryl said there were no new Life Master this month.

New Business

April Sectional

Lauri Laufman/Greg May

Lauri presented the proposed Budget for the April 2021 Sectional with an approximate deficit of \$6000.

Motion to accept the April 2021 Budget as presented was made by Sheryl Thomas – Seconded by Kathleen McDougall. **Motion carried,**

Lauri then presented the Schedule for the April 2021 Sectional. There was a discussion on increasing the stratifications for the A bracket. It was agreed to raise the A bracket to 3500.

Motion to accept the Schedule as presented with the adjusted stratification was made by Clif Rice - Seconded by Karen Nussbaum. **Motion carried.**

It was decided to add “the stratifications may be changed at the discretion of the Directors” to the Flyer

Tournament Contracts/Future

Lauri Laufman

Lauri reiterated that Paul said we had been relieved from the 2021 contract with the Marriott and she and Paul are working on February contracts for 2022 hopefully through 2025 or even 2027.

Lauri said we are good for 2021 by way of sites. She said she is waiting for The Shriners to bless the fall 21 tournament, but it is already on their calendar. She said we look towards the Marriott or The Shriners for our Sectionals in 2022. We do not have anything as yet.



By way of future Fall Sectionals, Lauri said she had reached out to Moody Gardens in Galveston to check availability. They said they had Biker weekend in 2022 or mid-October dates in 2023. Lauri asked them to hold the Oct 2023 dates and to provide a proposal. She has applied and received a Sanction for both an Open Sectional and I/N NLM Regional for Oct 20 -22, 2023.

District Update

Lauri Laufman

Executive Session

The Board entered Executive Session at 2:22 pm, exiting at 3:05 pm

The **December Board Meeting** will be **Tuesday December 8th** at 1:00 pm on Zoom.

Motion to adjourn was made by Sheryl Thomas - Seconded by Karen Nussbaum

Motion carried

The meeting was adjourned at 3:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Gore

Unit 174 Secretary

