



Memorandum of Discussion

ACBL Unit 174 Board of Directors Meeting

September 8th, 2020

Go-To Meeting Video Conference/Phone-In

Call to Order

Jack LaVigne

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 pm.

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

Others Present: Gary Hercules-Treasurer, Paul Cuneo, Nancy Guthrie, Paul Nimmons, Bill Riley and Nancy Strohmer.

ACBL Up-Date

Paul Cuneo

Paul said ACBL had sent a notice to units and districts cancelling all tournaments thru the end of February. The District held their meeting this morning and Scott Humphrey gave his opinion that the order would likely extend beyond that. Paul agreed it was highly likely it would.

He said overall, ACBL is doing well financially and informed the board that the District is continuing their effort in getting more people playing online as only 50% of all players that were playing at clubs are playing online. He said membership has started a more rapid decline. It had been declining at a rate of 1% per annum but in the last 3 month it has increased to 7% per annum.

Paul said Jack had found a major discrepancy in the Excel spreadsheet of "who is and who is not playing online" sent out by ACBL. Paul said we have just over 2500 members and the spreadsheet had over 7000 names. He sent a notice to Susie Cordell, who heads Information/Technology, asking her what this list was. Paul said we really need to understand this list and get people who are not playing online to start playing. Paul said these names were a great potential for contacts. Jack asked Paul if he thought the number in the "yes playing" and "not playing" columns was accurate. Paul said he believed they were.

Greg said he had contacted ACBL about having Unit Club games online. Rick Bye replied that we could not because the unit is not really a club. Jack summed up that the answer to "can units hold online club games was "no". He asked Paul if he would interact and find out if this is indeed true. Paul agreed to do so.



Approval of Minutes

Joyce Gore

The August minutes were prepared and emailed to the Board.

Joyce asked if David Goldfarb was indeed a Grand Life Master or just a Gold Life Master. It was determined he was a Gold Life Master and no award should have been given to him. It was agreed this be removed from the August minutes.

Motion that the August 2020 Minutes, with the amendment, be approved was made by Greg May –
Seconded by Clif Rice. **Motion Carried**

Treasurer's Report

Gary Hercules

Jack said the **July Financial Report** has been verified and asked for a motion to accept.

Motion to accept the July Financial Report was made by Sheryl Thomas – Seconded by Greg May.
Motion Carried

August Financial Report

Gary said that the August Financial report has been verified and reported that as of August 31/2020 the **Balance** is- \$218,577.68- **Fixed Assets** - \$8,869.02 **Expenses** \$9,694.27. **Loss** for the month of August \$728.98

Motion to accept the August Financial Report was made by Lauri Laufman – Seconded by Kathleen Malcolmson
Motion Carried

Old Business

Annual Meeting

Jack said a special meeting was held in August which took the place of the Annual Meeting. A quorum was not met. Jack said Paul had investigated this and it does not appear that it is required the minutes or treasurer's report be treated as a business item at the annual meeting. Therefore, it was not necessary that a quorum be met.

Jack asked if the board members thought we should send out an eblast to the membership for their approval on both the minutes and financial report. It was agreed that it was best to let the matter rest. Lauri suggested we have the minutes and financial report approved at the next annual meeting, just as a formality. Jack said approving one year old minutes did not make sense, and if we were going to do it with an eblast, we need to do it now, not in 2021, as it would not be productive.

Lone Star Regional

Karen Nussbaum

Karen said we had received an email from ACBL stating all tournaments thru the end of February 2021 have been cancelled, so the Lone Star Regional has been cancelled. She read the email from ACBL over the phone which was hard for the board to comprehend so Jack asked her to email it to the board members and they would make comments by email



Tournament Contracts/Future

Lauri Laufman

Lauri reiterated that the Regional has been cancelled and she and Paul would be working with the Marriott to cancel the February 2021 contract. As for the Sectionals, she said we do not have any contracts in place past August 2021. In the past we have had 3-4 years in advance at the Marriott. Lauri said she would start exploring venue options, however, doubted most facilities are fully staffed or will be booking that far out at this time.

Jack said he had previously asked board members to think about what attendance we would expect at the Regional for future years.

After much discussion Jack proposed that a 10% reduction be set for the Regional in 2022 for purposes of negotiating with the Marriott. The board agreed to use that number.

Publicity Chair

Dave Becker

Committee Reports

Jack informed the Board that Kathy is the new Education Chair. Kathy said the transition from Betty Starzec is not complete so there is no report.

Club Connection

Kathleen Malcolmson

Charity

Nancy Strohmer

Education

Kathy McDougall

IN

Kathy McDougall

New Member Recruitment/Retention

Clif /Greg /Kathleen/Kathy

Kathy said she had contacted most of the teachers directly or by email about teaching on BBO. There were several already teaching but there are several not interested in teaching online. Some were interested but did not know anything about BBO.

Greg said he had contacted and asked Silvana Morici if it was legal for our unit teachers to teach on BBO at no charge. She said “no”. Greg checked this with BridgeBase and Silvana was correct, they do charge a small fee. In the future they will launch **Prime Pro** at \$39.90 per month. Paul said there was a good alternative for the teachers, which is **Shark Bridge**. He then explained how **Shark Bridge** operated and that they charge \$1 per hour per student.

Sheryl thought we need to send out an eblast to communities inviting people to go on BBO to learn how to play bridge and begin playing online. Jack asked Sheryl to investigate on how and where we send the email contacting communities and neighborhoods.

Lauri suggested we send out a Robly eblast and maybe the District could also send one as it effects all Virtual Clubs in the district.



Jack said we have a BBO excel sheet, one of those who do and one of those who do not play online. He proposed we divide the list and each one of the board members call a certain number of people not playing online and do whatever we can to contact all on this list. He thought by contacting them by telephone it would be very productive.

Kathy said the Sugar Land people are not playing online because they cannot get in. She thought the Virtual Clubs need to open their list so more people can play.

Jack said they need to look for SYC on BBO which is "Support Your Club" and when they play in those games the club they usually play at will be compensated. This is a way to support their club.

Greg said there is a Club Championship Week from September 21 - 27 with increased rewards and up to ¼ of the awarded points may be gold.

Bill Riley said he directs about half of BCOH games and all anyone needs to do is contact the Director-of-the-Day before game time and the director will get them in. He thought the other clubs were doing the same.

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 we had 3 new Life Master this month: Laura McWilliams; Myra Marsh; and Bea Haznedar. She said their Life Master plaques have been mailed.

New Business

April Sectional

Lauri Laufman/Greg May

Lauri said she and Greg would talk in the near future to start planning the April tournament. She said at the District Meeting Scott Nason said he is looking forward on potentially holding the GNT at the April Sectional in Houston.



District Update

Lauri Laufman

Lauri said the District 16 Meeting was this morning and she had emailed of 4 files to board members. Pauls' District Report, Initiative/Retention, Membership Taskforce and the NABC surcharge policy.

She said District 16 is in a strong financial position with total cash assets of \$194,805.00. As of September 1st, District 16 has a total membership of 8,260. Unit 174 has 2,474.

The District 16 Jacoby Oswald Award winner is Rebecca Brown of San Antonio, a past District President. She is still active in the District. The proposal to expand recognition beyond what is currently being done by taking awardees to dinner with the District President, Executive Committee and Awards Chair did not pass.

Teacher of the year award was suspended in 2020. The TOY Selection Committee will suggest a temporary form of recognition that honors both an outstanding individual and simultaneously, the many who contribute to the shift from classroom to computer. This would not only be aimed at teachers.

NABC games in November 2020 have been cancelled and the next NABC promotional games will be held August 22-28, 2021. District Charity Games will be March 8,9,11, and 12 which are already on the calendar

Proposed was the possibility of having the District level NAP as a one day event (now 2 days). After discussion it was agreed to keep it a 2 day event.

Executive Session

The Board entered Executive Session at 2:49 pm, exiting at 2:54 pm.

The **October Board Meeting** will be **Tuesday October 6th** at 1:00 pm on Go-To Meeting Video Conference/Phone-In.

Online Clubs

Kathy reiterated the fact that some of the Virtual Clubs are having a hard time financially. She asked for suggestions and wanted to know how the board could help. There was much discussion on how this could be done. It was decided the best way we could help was by calling players who were not playing online to see if we could help them start playing. Some of them are not aware that there are tournaments where they are awarded gold, silver and black points.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Jack LaVigne - Seconded by Sheryl Thomas

Motion carried

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Gore

Unit 174 Secretary



