

**DISTRICT V BOARD MEETING
Sunday May 29, 2011**

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Officers Present: Mary Paulone Carns (President), John Toy (Vice President), Brian Ellis (Treasurer)

Executive Board Members Present: Jan Assini , Sharon Fairchild , Lou Joseph, John Tscholl, Marc Sylvester, Jim Zimmerman

Unit Representatives Present: Jim Sullivan, Carolyn Sullivan (107); Sally Veauthier (111); Christine Urbanek, Margaret Clamp (116); Peter Miller, Sue Pisanelli, Barbara Bacon, Frank Scali (125); Pat Smith (127); Asim Ulke, Barbara Bergman, Jane Marshall, Susan McQuillan (142); Jack Goodykoontz (148); Bud Kury (185); Jim Overcashier (213); Barbara Grzegorzewski (226); Henry Nelson (229)

Units Not Represented: 129, 177

Guests: Charles Coleman (111); Vicky Goodykoontz (148); Terry Kessler (213); Steve Grzegorzewski (226); Alex Bealles (229, tournament coordinator), Sharon Robertson (5th Column)

WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM. President Mary Paulone Carns welcomed everyone to the District V board meeting, and all attendees introduced themselves.

MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING

The minutes were previously emailed to the members, corrected regarding attendance, and approved.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS/CORRESPONDENCE

President Carns called to the board's attention two important issues to be discussed resulting from the Executive Board meeting of the previous day; the proposed entry fee increase for District 5 events and the possibility of moving the Grand National Teams District 5 finals to Erie.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Treasurer's Report— Brian Ellis presented the Treasurer's report.

- Current net worth approximately \$95,000.00. This has decreased from \$127,000.00, our net worth in 2007. We are losing on average \$15,000.00 per year. He noted that based on average table counts, a \$1.00 entry fee increase would adequately offset the decline.
- All three regionals held since the last full board meeting (Pittsburgh 2010, Buffalo 2010 and Cleveland January 2011) were profitable, with Buffalo making the greatest profit. However, much of the profit showing was due to the change in accounting for expenses. The actual profits were lower or possibly non-existent.
- The STaC's continue to be profitable.
- The NAOP and GNT continue to lose money due to operational expenses, team subsidies and related expenses.

Asim Ulke (142) asked that the Board consider addressing the Regional expenses regarding chair and workers compensation, free room and entry fees, as well as general hospitality expenses in relation to tournament running costs. He wondered whether sufficient expense decreases would allow the District to maintain entry fees at current levels.

Brian Ellis advised of the current perks which are allocated to Executive Board members, and that District 5 may well have the lowest tournament costs of any District due in no small part to the negotiation efforts of the various tournament chairs, several of whom are Executive Board members. Peter Miller (125) pointed out that the majority of work for the tournaments and District Events was done by a small percentage of District Members, and that such expenses were probably well deserved judging by the success of the tournaments.

Margaret Clamp (116) asked what the minimum net worth would be needed to assure a comfort level. Jim Zimmerman thought that a minimum of \$50,000.00 might be the figure, but it was pointed out that at an average yearly loss of \$15,000.00, our current net worth would be wiped out in six years, and possibly quicker should current attendance decrease.

Carolyn Sullivan (107) noted that the largest drain on the treasury was the NAOP and GNT. President Carns noted that this issue was already on the agenda and asked that further discussion be held until then.

National Board Items—Sharon Fairchild noted that the ACBL President is doing a "100 clubs in 100 days" tour and will be in District 5 visiting three clubs. She also noted that the ACBL has a program to recognize members for a Youth In Bridge award. She asked board members who know of anyone who might be eligible for such an award to contact her as she must handle the presentation of any nominations.

Fifth Column—Sharon Robertson reported that there are no problems.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

REGIONAL TOURNAMENT REPORTS

Cleveland All American Regional (in progress) – Sharon Fairchild reported that the tournament was doing well, and if attendance held steady the tournament would be roughly up 30 tables over the previous year. Jim Zimmerman asked about the poor conditions of the playing cards at the current tournament. President Carns noted that the Board has a contract with Ken Van Cleve to handle the cards for all District 5 tournaments; that she had already spoken with him regarding the problem and that he was already replacing the bad decks and resolving the trouble.

Pittsburgh “Roni” Labor Day Regional – President Carns advised that the flyers were out and available for distribution. She asked all Board members to take flyers and distribute as completely as possible. All other plans are progressing smoothly. It was noted that the playing site is now closer to all District 5 members to the west and north of Pittsburgh.

Buffalo Spooktacular Regional – John Toy reported that the tournament will be held at Grand Island. The tournament dates had to be changed due to conflicts with the Jewish holidays and Canadian Thanksgiving.

Cleveland Rock and Roll Regional – Sharon Fairchild reported that the January 2011 Regional suffered due to poor weather conditions, but she noted that due to the registration of players she was able to contact a great many more players regarding the current and upcoming tournaments.

Jan Assini reported that the January 2012 tournament is being worked on. The schedule is almost finalized. There has been comment and discussion regarding the starting times for the events, and she is looking for any input prior to making a final decision. There was general discussion regarding why the schedule does not have a new knockout event starting every day. It was pointed out that due to the smaller size of our regionals, (compared with Gatlinburg) starting a new knockout event every day would not only dilute the brackets but also decrease the pair game attendance. The schedule will be adapted to include a new knockout event starting every other day.

NAOP and GNT

President Carns noted that the experiment involving the rotation of the GNT between Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Buffalo was not a success. The hoped for increase in the lower flights from local attendance did not occur. The Executive Board considered returning to the central location of Meadville, PA; however an offer was made by the Erie Unit to rent their clubhouse for the event. The rent is considerably cheaper and there is the added advantage that we would be able to provide our own hospitality. The downside is that due to

size limitation, we would have to hold the event on two separate weekends. The Executive Board empowered Barbara Bacon to negotiate the feasibility of using the Erie Club and verifying all conditions with the ACBL.

Barbara Bacon reported that the NAOP scheduled for early October in Meadville had to be moved to October 22-23 due to scheduling conflicts. She asked that all members remind players of the qualifying games being held at clubs District wide, and to emphasize that the winning pairs in each flight receive a subsidy from the ACBL towards their expenses at the NABC finals.

STaC

Plans are underway for the Summer STaC. President Carns is coordinating the event for the District with the ACBL. Registration is now being done directly through the ACBL, but she will send an e-mail to club owners/managers as a reminder.

The question arose of the possibility of duplicating hands through the District. Due to the small size of many of the club games, the onus upon the director to handle duplicating would be too much of a hardship.

Frank Scali (125) questioned the ACBL policy regarding what it considered the difference between an open game and a small game. President Carns noted that conditions of contest are set by the ACBL. We can tweak them to a limited extent. There have been instances of clubs refusing to participate because they do not want the "A" players descending upon them, when they do not usually attend their games. President Carns pointed out that this is the "nature of the beast", and no matter how you tweak the rules, someone is going to be unhappy. Because the STaC's have been successful to date, there seems to be no real reason to consider changing the current conditions.

Website

In Bill Holt's absence, President Carns reported that the Website has continued to operate smoothly and efficiently. There was a problem with the server earlier this week, but it was not a problem on our end and has since been repaired. She asked that all members notify Bill of any event and he will post it on the website.

Jim Sullivan (107) asked whether tournament recaps can be posted on the Website immediately after each event. Sharon Fairchild noted that she had already been asked about this possibility and had discussed it with the directors. It would seem that this is feasible and that Bill Holt will coordinate with the directors to achieve this goal.

Membership

Marc Sylvester reported that our current District membership is 3627 members, down approximately 3% from last year. We are 25th (of 26) regarding highest age of members. Our average age is 71.51 years. However, our member retention

rate is the highest, regarding average years of membership, although the ACBL questions the value of this statistic as it may indicate that we are not doing a good job recruiting new members.

Having sent out 128 new members packets which include information and a free play certificate, the response, while not overwhelming, has been steady, so the program may be deemed a success.

OLD BUSINESS

Education and Marketing – Jan Assini reported the success of the Cleveland inner-city education program that culminated in 84 participants at a special event held earlier during this tournament. She expressed her gratitude to Sharon Fairchild for handling the bulk of this event. She feels that some of the older children are now able to help perpetuate the program, although there is still a dearth of volunteers, and transportation is a problem regarding programs outside of the inner-city. Jan pointed out that she has a lot of resources and funds available to help anyone who needs or wants to start such a program.

NEW BUSINESS

Entry Fees – President Carns reiterated the three reasons the Executive Board recommend raising the entry fees.

- (1) The District is losing approximately \$15,000.00 per year at the current rates
- (2) Some of the Units in District 5 feel they cannot raise their Sectional Tournament entry fees above the District fees, and many need the increase to maintain their tournament and Unit viability
- (3) The longer we wait to increase fees, the more drastic the increase will have to be. The absorption of such a major increase will be much harder on District members

President Carns requested a motion regarding an increase so that discussion could begin. Sally Veauthier (111) moved that the Board increase District 5 event entry fees by \$1.00 per person per session, effective January 2012 (seconded by John Tscholl).

Sue McQuillan (142) questioned the value of raising the fees only \$1.00 per person. She felt that increasing the fees to \$12.00 now would avoid the necessity of having to raise the fees again in two or three years. She proposed a substitute motion that entry fees be raised by \$2.00 per person effective January 2012 (seconded by Jan Assini). The amendment to the motion was accepted.

Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of raising the entry fees piecemeal versus a larger immediate increase. Brian Ellis pointed out that increasing the entry fees to \$12.00 would safely cater to the distinct possibility of hotel rate increases.

Sue McQuillan's motion was voted upon. (Passed by majority). The new rates will become effective at the January 2012 Rock and Roll Regional.

Possibility of NABC in Buffalo – Sharon Fairchild reported that a formal bid had been submitted to the ACBL by the Buffalo-Niagara Area Convention Bureau for the Summer 2017 NABC. A committee from the ACBL will review the site(s) on June 6th and 7th.

Resolving Sectional Date Conflict – Sharon Fairchild noted that the Executive Board has appointed a committee to determine what constitutes a conflict within the District. The committee will be headed by Sharon Fairchild assisted by Alex Bealles (District tournament coordinator) and a Buffalo Unit 116 member to be named. (*Note: Dian Petrov has since been appointed to the Committee*). Sharon requested that any District 5 members that are aware of potential and or perceived conflicts to please contact her or any committee member as soon as possible.

Possible purchase of Duplicating Machine – Jack Goodykoontz (148) asked if any progress had been made on considering the purchase of such a machine. President Carns noted that the Executive Board has been given a demonstration of the Canton Unit's machine, which they have offered the use of for District 5 events. President Carns noted that the District was planning to try using the machine at the upcoming Pittsburgh Regional.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no additional business, at 6:42 PM, the meeting was adjourned.