

DISTRICT 5 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BOARD MEETING
January 14, 2017

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Officers Present: Jan Assini, Marc Sylvester, Brian Ellis

Representatives Present: Barbara Bergman, Barbara Bacon,
Mary Paulone Carns, Sharon Fairchild,
Jim Overcashier, Chris Urbanek

Representatives Absent: None

Guests: AJ Stefani, District Director from District 8

WELCOME/PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Jan Assini called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM. She welcomed the members.

MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING

The minutes had previously been emailed to the members. The minutes were approved. Sharon Fairchild requested that the minutes come out sooner.

COMMITTEES

Treasurer's Report –Brian presented a written and oral treasurer's report.

- Attendance report through the Buffalo regional shows little change over the last year, but compared with 2010 attendance is down 25%.
- The Bookselling fund is slightly up.
- Pittsburgh made a profit, but see the separate report from this regional.
- NAOP made \$1000.
- Buffalo will have a profit, but the report isn't complete.
- The STaC is even
- PNC has new charges, so some accounting changes will be made to minimize these.

Report of the District Director [was presented later in the meeting] – Sharon Fairchild previously emailed her report.

The ACBL has modified their cellphone policy and they suggest that districts adopt similar policies for uniformity.

- Ringing, first offense: ¼ board (pairs) *or* 3 IMPS (KO) *or* 1 VP (Swiss)
- Making a call, texting, answering phone: ½ board (pairs) *or* 6 IMPS (KO) *or* 2 VP (Swiss)

- Second offense of any of the above: 2 boards (pairs) *or* 20 IMPS (KO) *or* ½ the maximum number of available VP per match (Swiss)
- Third offence: disqualification of the pair or team from the event
- Kibitzer, first offence—must leave the room

The Executive Board was in favor of adopting this policy, 8-1. The vote will be taken at the meeting of the Full Board in May.

Sharon is retiring at the end of 2018, and will have served 21 years by then. It is time to think about who is interested in the job. Sharon is asking for ideas regarding viable candidates. The Unit Boards will vote if there is a contested election. Filing deadline is May 31, 2018. In answer to a question, Sharon said that the previously discussed possibility of restructuring the districts isn't going to happen.

The structure of BOD meetings is changing: beginning in the summer of 2017, the meetings will be Thursday through Saturday, with the BOG meeting on Sunday. Thus the DDs will be unable to play in some early events.

Fifth Column – Emails are still being sent announcing the posting of the Fifth Column. A counter on the web portal for the 5th Column has 1374 hits since November 2015. With 7 issues in that time, the average is roughly 200/issue. There is no way to break down whether the hits went up since reminder emails started. There was a discussion about whether the 5th Column is serving a purpose now that there is so much electronic communication. Should we continue the 5th Column? Jan will talk to Sharon Robertson and this item will be on the agenda for May.

Rock and Roll Regional (2017) (ongoing) – Sharon reported that attendance to date is up by 25 tables. There is good attendance from Buffalo and Pittsburgh. The venue is great, and breakfast and happy hour are enjoyed by the players. Between-session hospitality will be eliminated.

Regarding 2019, Jan reported that Monica Early is stepping down. The board thanked her for her service. Bill Hogsett will co-chair with Jill Smith. He has only committed for 1 year so far. He is a very hard worker.

All American Regional – Sharon reported

- Flyers are out
- Starting in 2018, the upper limit of strat B will be 2500.
- Sharon will negotiate a new contract (the current contract includes May 2017 and January 2018). We might be able to have a full day on Tuesday under the new contract.
- There will be an additional early Fast Pairs

Pittsburgh Labor Day Regional – Mary reported that Visit Monroeville waived the \$5000 rental fee as a “welcome gift” for 2016 only. Thus there was a bigger profit than will be expected in the future. There were some growing pains. Mary and Barb met with the Doubletree staff in September and reviewed the issues. The staff members were very receptive to making adjustments to deal with the issues. They are interested in a new

contract (there are 2 remaining years on the current contract). Mary will contact them in January.

There was a theft of funds that were being stored in a locked room at the convention center. The ACBL provides insurance to deal with this, and we were made whole, but possible policies to tighten security were discussed. These include that all funds go to a safe deposit box every night. Brian will make a deposit every day, if necessary via the night deposit. Sharon will find out what the ACBL policies are regarding the issue of handling funds.

Buffalo Regional – Chris Urbanek reported.

- The tournament was successful financially
- Ken Van Cleve was unable to attend. Betty Metz arranged supplies and equipment and saved ~\$900. In 2018 the tournament is opposite Michigan, so Ken will be unavailable then. Chris will discuss with Ken.
- Ontario is unhappy that the Buffalo tournament is no longer held in the summer. Thus there are closely scheduled tournaments in 2017 and 2019. It is difficult to find affordable hotel space in Buffalo in the summer and the current contract goes for 3 more years.
- Betty hopes to keep a similar schedule; the times will remain at 10 and 3.

Rock and Roll Regional (2018) – Jim Overcashier reported that plans are going well. He may not have a co-chair.

NAOP and GNT – Barb Bacon reported.

- The NAOP went well. There were 9 tables in flight C, a big increase. Part of the reason is that there was an email blast sent to all players who qualified in clubs.
- Flyers are ready for the GNT. There is a block of rooms at the Comfort Inn for \$109.
- The events are sanctioned through 2018.
- There was a problem in the NAP regarding a potentially ineligible player from another district. Barb will talk with the field supervisor regarding how this was handled.
- The Erie Unit sent a letter requesting a rent increase. The rent is reasonable, but we have signed contracts for 2017 and 2018 (4 events). There is also the possibility of exceeding the available space in the fall event. After discussion, a motion passed to offer a \$200/year bonus to the Erie Unit. Barb will discuss the possibility of adding a weekend in the fall if necessary.

STaC – Mary reported that attendance is down, consistent with other events and declining membership in the district. However some clubs have withdrawn due to the extra \$1 fee imposed by the ACBL. Alex Bealles directed for the first time and he did an excellent job. There is an issue re late payment. The policy is that payment is due within 1 week of the end of the event, but there is no stated consequence for late payment. An inordinate amount of time and effort is being spent on collection from only a few clubs. The board approved the following: Clubs who haven't paid within the time limit may get an email

from Mary. If the club then doesn't pay within a week of the email, they will be disqualified and their games will be considered to be club games [note: after the meeting, Mary learned that ACBL policy prohibits disqualification of an already-completed event. The policy was thus changed to: ***Clubs who haven't paid within the time limit may get an email from Mary. If the club then doesn't pay within a week of the email, that club will not be allowed to participate in the next D5 STaC.*** Effective June 2017].

Website – No issues reported.

Membership – Marc Sylvester reported that membership is 3358. That is a 2% decrease over 12 months. The only gains were in the small units.

Social Media – Marc reported that there are very few hits on the Facebook page. He will use Facebook to solicit nominations for the McGilvrey award.

Education – Chris Urbanek obtained the funds and sent them to the winner of the Lebow award, a student of Barb Grzegorzewski. Buffalo has a BiS program and a summer program subsidized by the ACBL. Jan reported that Cleveland is down to one school because of disciplinary problems. Mary said that the Pittsburgh area has 3 schools. There will be an LB1D program in Pittsburgh at the end of January. Barb Bacon developed an application for the Lebow award.

OLD BUSINESS

Starting Times at Regionals – Brian reviewed the information. The possibility of having early starting times for Cleveland and Buffalo Regionals was discussed at the full board meeting in September. (Buffalo is currently using early times and Pittsburgh can't do so due to site issues). Championship events would be at 10 and 3, with horizontal events in the evenings. Representatives are supposed to discuss this with their unit members and a vote will be taken in May. Jim Overcashier requested permission to hold the 2018 Rock 'n' Roll regional at the early times. May is too late for a decision. Jim was given permission on a one-time basis. Jim will discuss exact times (10 & 3, or 10 & 2:30) with Ken Van Cleve. It is anticipated that a final decision for future tournaments will be made in May.

Victory Point Scale – Tabled.

GNT/NAOP site – Was discussed above.

NEW BUSINESS

Fast Results/ACBL Live – Mary reported that Fast Results is being phased out, and ACBL Live serving the same function. Therefore, Chairs are reminded not to advertise Fast Results. (Other features of Bridge Finesse are continuing to be offered).

Remote Participation at Regionals – Sharon reported that Jay Whipple developed a way for attendants at clubs using the Common Game to participate in Regionals

electronically. There were various concerns including the fact that our regionals already have declining attendance, and there would be even less incentive for players to attend in person; questions about cheating; club players as a group are weaker and could skew the fields. Sharon will get more information and this will be discussed again at a future meeting.

McGilvrey Plaque – Jan Assini suggested that Regional Chairs be responsible for arranging transportation/custody of the McGilvrey Plaque for the next future tournament.

Thank-you for charitable contribution – Chris Urbanek presented copies of a thank-you letter sent by The Little Portion Friary in Buffalo, who received a \$6000 donation from ACBL Charitable funds.

Bridge Mate Settings – Mary reported that the Bridge Mates have a “review” screen that appears at the end of each round. If the operator doesn’t turn it off, the information persists long enough that an arriving player can see the results of the previous boards. Mary has spoken to Ken about this in the past, but nothing changed. The board confirmed that it is district policy that the Bridge Mates be set not to display this review. Mary will talk to Ken again.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30.