

CORRECTED MINUTES OF ACBL DISTRICT 4 BOARD MEETING
King of Prussia, PA
June 29, 2018

Voting Member Attendees:

- At-Large: Meyer Kotkin (President), Dave Kresge (Vice-President), Dan Boye (IPP),
Joann Glasson (District Dir.), Mary Miller (Pres. Appointee) (5 of 6).
Unit 112: Pat Stadelmaier (Unit Pres.), Jerry Manioci, (2 of 6)
Unit 120: Bill Orth (Unit President). Walter Mitchell (2 of 2)
Unit 121: Albert Bingaman, Jr. (1 of 2)
Unit 133: Betsy Cutler, Tom Kriz (sub for Jim Kenney (Unit President) (2 of 2)
Unit 141: Joan Warren (Unit Pres.) John Dickenson, Mike Giesler, Tom Purl,
Bob Glasson, Pat Civale, Wendy DeChaderevian, Elaine Weintraub, Ken
Chatzinoff, April Uhlenburg, Allison Brandt, Dave Legrow (12 of 12)
Unit 168: Bob Priest (Unit Pres.) Barry Gorski, Linda Ivanoff, Tom Coxey,
Kathleen Del Corso (5 of 5)
Unit 190: Caroline Hughes (Unit Pres.), Mark Henderson, Richard Popper,
Soley Kristjansdottir (4 of 4)
Unit 217: No representatives (0 of 2)

Also Present:

Marc Labovitz, ACBL Tournament Director
Melody Henderson, Delaware Regional Co-Chair
Bill Bauer, D4 Board Secretary

Excused

Tom Weik, Presidential appointee
Lynn Ackerman, Unit 112

A meeting of the ACBL District 4 Board of Directors was held at the Doubletree by Hilton, King of Prussia, PA on June 29, 2018. Meyer Kotkin, President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, a quorum being present (33 of 41 voting members representing 7 of 8 units).

Meyer called on the Secretary to recognize Board members attending their first Board meeting. Bill noted the following new members and substitutes in attendance:

Unit 133: Tom Kriz
Unit 168: Tom Coxey
Unit 190: Mark Henderson, Soley Kristjansdottir

DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Joann Glasson requested that members read her report on the District website.

SECRETARY'S REPORT & APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOV. 3, 2017

The minutes of the Lancaster Board meeting of November 3, 2017 were unanimously approved. Bill reminded the Board that the minutes appear on the District website.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Pat Civale noted that she had placed her report for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2018 on each table. She then reported that the May 31, 2018 balance sheet reflects a \$216K cash balance (including \$112.8K in the Nationals Account). There is \$35K of outstanding advances to Tournament Committees included in the total assets.

The fiscal 2018 P&L statement shows a small District profit of \$1.1K. The 2017 Valley Forge Regional produced a \$12K profit due to the \$2.00 card fee increase and the tournament being up 100 tables over 2016. However, the Rochester Tournament had a loss of \$13.9K. Lancaster 2107 yielded a \$6.9K profit and Wilmington 2018 yielded \$13.3K in profit. The financial details for each of these tournaments is included as part of the Treasurer's report as well as a comparison to the previous year.

The REACH funds from the ACBL contributed \$549 net of revenue shared with the Delaware Unit. Jeff Rubens provided an analysis of the REACH impact on a Delaware Sectional and the district reimbursed Unit 190 per the method adopted by the Executive Committee (later ratified by the Board).

The Board approved the Treasurer's report unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Meyer reminded the Board that upon being elected board President in Lancaster last November that he assigned members to report on three important topics:

1. Tournament Operations. Allison Brandt as Tournament Committee Chairperson will review tournament operations and make recommendations.
2. Technical Enhancements. Mike Giesler will lead this effort.
3. Better Club - District Coordination. Dave Legrow will head up this committee.

Later in the meeting, both Dave Legrow and Allison Brandt reported on their assignments. The detailed reports appear on the District website.

RATIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION

Meyer requested the Board's affirmation of two Executive Committee's resolutions adopted since the Lancaster board meeting as follows:

1. Resolved that the District will share REACH proceeds with affected District 4 units. Pat Civale will serve to review and approve requests for impact aid. Meyer noted that Jeff Rubens of Unit 190 documented that a Delaware Sectional had been impacted. Joann Glasson said that no more REACH events have been scheduled for the remainder of the year.
2. Resolved to spend \$12,000 to purchase 100 sets of boards, carrying cases and playing cards plus board number labeling. Meyer advised that this equipment could be requested by any Regional in the same manner as card tables. Marc Labovitz will make the transportation arrangements when contacted.

The motions to affirm the Executive Committee resolutions carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PUBLICITY

Joann Glasson had no report.

DISTRICT 4SPOT

Allison Brandt announced that Larry Cohen will be a new contributor. Allison thanked Jay Apfelbaum for his many years as a contributor.

TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR

Elaine Weintraub is awaiting actions that will be introduced later in the meeting by Allison Brandt that will impact tournament scheduling.

CHARITY

No report.

FINANCE

Dave Kresge had no report.

NAP

Meyer Kotkin appointed John Dickenson to take over as both NAP and GNT coordinator for Bob Glasson. Meyer thanked Bob for his service and John thanked Bob for his help during the transition as well.

John reminded the Board that NAP Club Qualifying events will occur in June, July and August.

John reported the attendance at the various 2017 District Finals as follow:

Flight "A" held October 14 & 15 in "Philadelphia" at the Valley Forge Bridge Club had 15 tables, a 25% increase over the previous record turnout.

Flight "B" held October 21 at two sites, Valley Forge Bridge Club and in Endwell, NY had 23 and 12 tables, respectively, an increase of 40% over the previous record turnout.

Flight "C" held October 14 at local clubs had 76-1/2 tables. John noted that District 4 has the largest Flight "C" participation amongst all ACBL districts.

In 2018, Flight "A" will be held October 13-14 at the Valley Forge Bridge Club. Flight "B" October 27 at two sites -- North Penn Bridge Club in North Wales, PA and at Kendall of Ithaca in Ithaca, NY. Flight "C" will be held October 13 at clubs electing to host the game.

Some participants at the Valley Forge site complained because 3 of the top 4 scores came from the NY site which they felt was because the NY field was generally weaker. Both

bob Glasson and John Dickenson analyzed the results and independently concluded that the fields were comparable. For example, there were similar numbers of “C” pairs playing up in the “B’ event.

Looking further out, 2019 “A” pairs will be played in Philadelphia/Wilmington and “B” pairs split between Philadelphia/Wilmington and NY. In 2020, “A” is scheduled for Harrisburg per the 5-year rotation but John may move the event based upon 2018 & 2019 turnout.

Bob Priest requested that Harrisburg be one of the two sites for the 2019 Flight “B” event plus one other year during the 5-year cycle. Bob noted that Units 168, 120 and 217 have a membership about equal to Unit 112. John responded with attendance data: 2015 Wilmington/Harrisburg had 25 tables total; 2016 NY/Harrisburg had 24 tables; whereas 2017 Philadelphia/NY had 35 tables. Bob Glasson added that Lancaster is only 1 hour+ and Harrisburg about 1-1/2 hours from Valley Forge Bridge club. Of course, a commute from the West Virginia counties in U168 would be closer to 3 hours.

GNT

John Dickenson had no report.

EDUCATION

Jerry Manioci reported that the ACBL’s Best Practices workshop will be held at the site of the Syracuse Regional from August 13-14. The emphasis is on teaching technique. The cost is \$25 (vs. \$150 at an NABC) for all except U112 members who are free since Unit 112 is subsidizing the cost. Sign up to attend with Mary Miller.

Jerry also reported on an innovative method to teach bridge using “Apple TV”.

Jerry would like to see members volunteer as mentors at their local colleges. He would really like to see this program takeoff.

Meyer noted that we had a 6 year-old (Peggy Coe’s grandson) in attendance. Also a young couple from Turkey who attend college in Ontario played for free. They were so enthusiastic that they were looking for a midnight game (4th session of bridge in a day).

INTERMEDIATE/NEWCOMER

Ala Hamilton-Day submitted a written report which Bill read as follows:

Due largely to the hard work of Joan and Bill Goldstein, Unit 141 has had great success in running I/N Sectionals. Two different kinds of mentoring programs, meanwhile, have been run in Unit 190, and each have developed duplicate bridge players. At regional tournaments, the Golden Opportunity Pairs or Gold Rush Pairs, have been very well attended and Tourney Chairs are adding them to the schedule with alacrity. There are issues, however, when players are coddled, whether they are beginners, part of the Forgotten Middle, or even experts.

There is the problem in getting the I/N players to swim out of their insular protected small golden ponds and having them play in B/C/D games, while the B/C/D players do not want to go near Open Water A/X games. This problem often flares up when there are not enough tables to run separate A/X and B/C/D events, like what happened on Monday at this tourney, or to run separate B/C/D and I/N events. This often results in the lower bracket players complaining bitterly. I overheard one person say, (and he made the overalls in Monday's combined A/B/C Pairs), that if there wasn't a separate B/C/D event for him to play in on Tuesday, that he threatened never to return. The more experienced players talk about the old days (which I remember as being rather nasty) and make snarky comments that players today can get to be an LM without ever having to play against one.

Zero Tolerance enforcement is a must, if you want to get the less-experienced players to move up and out of wherever they play. Play nice!

TOURNAMENT

Meyer called upon Elaine Weintraub, Tournament Coordinator and Allison Brandt, Tournament Committee Chairperson. Elaine led off by saying that she has postponed scheduling some 2019 events pending direction from the Board. Allison then noted that the Board had an opportunity to study her committee's report on the District website, so she deferred to Meyer to make motions to implement recommendations from the report.

After commending Allison and her committee for their exceptional report, Meyer Kotkin offered two motions based upon recommendations from Allison's report. The first motion was to remove the caps on Regional entry pricing effective immediately. Currently, the entry price is capped at \$13.00 unless a Tournament committee requests an exception from the board such as for Philadelphia (\$15) and Lancaster (\$16 because of daily complementary lunches). Thus, Tournament Committees would now be able to establish entry fees to provide additional hospitality or to secure better playing space or otherwise meet the needs of their players. While a few members liked the idea of a cap, the vast majority felt the various tournament committees know best what to charge. A practice used in Districts 6 & 7, allowing players to purchase entry vouchers and if unused, allowing players to use them at a future Regional, would be difficult to implement with District 4's variable entry fee from Regional to Regional.

This motion to remove the District entry fee caps effective immediately passed virtually unanimously.

The second motion addressed the issue of STaC proliferation and tournaments "stepping on each other". Currently, most unit STaC organizers invite all or most of the other units' clubs to participate unless a Unit expressly opts out. Instead, Meyer moved that beginning 1/1/2019, there would be four District 4 STaC's in place of each of the unit STaC's (scheduled as close to one STaC per calendar quarter as possible). The District would pay the expenses (primarily the sanction and director costs) and then retain 25% of the remainder (profit). The other 75% of the profit would be paid out to the units in proportion to their percentage of the participating table count for each week-long STaC.

There are expected savings in Director expense according to a financial analysis provided by Allison's committee.

Note: The profit split, 25% of the profits retained by the District with 75% going to the units is a correction to these minutes. The corrected minutes were subsequently approved at the November 2, 2018 Board meeting during the Lancaster (Manheim) Regional.

Bob Priest, President of Unit 168, stated that his unit preferred the current unit-organized STaC's which allowed Unit 168 to join with just units 217 and 121 such that the overall winners would assuredly come from their local clubs. His request to have at least one of the four STaC's be conducted as a 3 Unit (168, 121 and 217) and then a 5 Unit STaC was not included in the motion. Bob also noted that his Unit held only 2 STaC's per year to avoid conflicts with Unit 168 Sectionals and other bridge events. Bob later pointed out that only Units can request and obtain STaC sanctions and not districts. Joann Glasson said she is aware of this ACBL policy and that four "random" units would be chosen for the sanction applications with the dates determined by Tournament Coordinator, Elaine Weintraub.

It is understood that Unit 190 can choose to allow its clubs to participate in STaC's organized by units outside of District 4.

The original motion carried with about 3 negative votes.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON DISTRICT – CLUB COOPERATION

Dave Legrow summarized his committee's report which may be found on the District website. Dave's committee consisted of 6 or 7 members who met several times prior to the publication of the committee report.

Many of Dave's recommendations address the issue of declining ACBL membership in District 4. These include:

1. Recruit social players. It has been said that 88% of all bridge players have never played in a club. This disparity is enhanced when non-ACBL member teachers teach the game.
2. Encourage those who have left the game to return to play. Current ACBL members are aging and many have relocated to Florida where bridge is flourishing. Others are deceased or shut-in.
3. Cease giving lip service to Zero Tolerance since failure to implement ZT at clubs drives players away.
4. Address financial pressures on clubs by instituting group purchase agreements.
5. Publish a District suspension policy and teach how to enforce the policy. It will be better to have a District policy than many individual club or club director policies.

Meyer asked for a volunteer club owner to chair this committee. Mary Miller, a club owner, volunteered to serve on such a committee. Dave Kresge says that he may have a "snowbird" potential candidate.

TOURNAMENT REPORTS:

Valley Forge - Meyer Kotkin reported that the table count was up even on the
(6/26 – 7/2/17) weekend. 1,632 tables yielded a \$12K profit.

Meyer reported that the ACBL is providing Purple Pass to enable credit card entry purchases to tournaments while absorbing the cost. Purple Pass has proved popular with Gold Rush entry buyers (about 50% vs. about 25% for other events). The ACBL returns any excess after subtracting the sanction and director costs the tournament owes the ACBL.

Through Wednesday, the 2018 tournament was down 70 tables. However, attendance picked up on Thursday with the Dupli-Swiss and a free lunch.

The new bracketing policy seems to be working well (reducing disparities within brackets) for our small K/O events. While some players like the new format, others miss the traditional K/O competition the first day which instead utilizes a Swiss “qualifier”. Bob Priest said he hoped the ACBL board grants approval for the new bracketing format to continue. As a tournament chairperson, Meyer likes that the new format eliminates the need for a second session “consolation” Swiss T/4.

There also was much discussion on director staffing, a major determinant of tournament profitability. Some Directors-in-Charge have been very cooperative in implementing staff reductions when attendance drops off on the weekend. Tournament Chairs need to have an understanding with their D-I-C concerning staffing.

Lancaster - Co-Chair (with Jeanne Gehret) Tom Coxey reported that the
(10/30 – 11/5/2017) 2017 tournament was up 200 tables. The 2018 tournament will have dupli-Swiss on Sunday. However, the new K/O bracketing method will not be used as yet. Again, there will be complementary lunches between sessions every day with entries again costing \$16/session. Tom asked tournament chairs to take flyers home.

Harrisburg - Bob Priest said the tournament would be 6 days (Monday
(5/6- 5/11/19) through Saturday) with no sessions on Mother’s Day, Sunday, May 12. A draft schedule is available.

UPDATE: TOURNAMENT MAY BE CANCELLED

On July 24, Bob informed Meyer and others of his recommendation to cancel this Regional Tournament as neither of his prior playing sites could accommodate the tournament. Feeling responsible, Bob resigned as Tournament Chairperson believing that

his extensive travels preclude keeping in constant contact with the hotel reservationists. In late August, Meyer wrote to the Unit 168 Board requesting a plan for future Harrisburg “odd-number” year tournaments including the upcoming May 2019 tournament. The Secretary has been informed by Unit 168 Board member, Edward Scanlon, that the Unit 168 Board will meet September 22 to respond to Meyer’s request for a plan.

- Rochester (split)**
(8/5 – 8/11/19) - Mary Miller said the contract is not signed as she wants to await the outcome of this year’s Syracuse Regional.
- Syracuse**
(8/13 – 8/19/18) - Mary Miller announced that a Best Practices workshop will be held in conjunction with the tournament. The new K/O bracketing method will be used. Two mid-flight events, one pair and one team, are scheduled. Entries will be \$15/session.
- Delaware**
4/30/18 - 5/6/18) - Mark Henderson, new co-chair along with Melody, reported that attendance held up this year resulting in a \$13K profit. There were complaints, so they are looking for another site.
- Wilkes-Barre (split)**
(8/5 – 8/11/19) - Walt Mitchell is planning a 5 or 6 day tournament starting Sunday or Monday and ending Friday. Venues are booked for wedding receptions on Saturdays in the summer months.

2018 PHILADELPHIA SPRING NABC (March 8-18, 2018)

Joann Glasson placed financial reports on each table and reported that the table count exceeded the ACBL’s expectation. Also, the Nationals Committee was able to return the funds advanced by District 4. Joann thanked just those in the room who contributed so much to the success of the NABC – Allison Brandt, Elaine Weintraub, Joan Warren, Mike Giesler, Meyer Kotkin, Walt Mitchell, Dan Boye, Mary Miller, Pat Civale and Bob Glasson.

Joann asked if the District Board wished to request another NABC. The Board gave an emphatic YES and many felt they would prefer to host a Summer or a Fall NABC.

OLD BUSINESS

Richard Popper, a Delaware attorney, had advised the Board of an inconsistency between the District Bylaws and our Articles of Incorporation at last year’s Lancaster board meeting. Our Articles of Incorporation (District 4 of the ACBL is incorporated in Delaware) does not mention the Board President having the authority to appoint committee members and Delaware law says that absent such a provision in the Articles of Incorporation, that power resides with the Board. He advised that the Board could either amend the Bylaws (remove the President’s authority to appoint Committee members) or amend the Articles of Incorporation to give the President that authority. The Board directed Richard to amend the Articles of Incorporation which Richard has done as follows:

The Corporation's Certificate of Incorporation is hereby amended by adding the following language to the end of Article TENTH:

“As permitted by Section 141(j) of the General Corporation Law of the State of Delaware, the Bylaws may permit the President of the corporation to form committees, with the same duties and powers as though such committees had been formed by the Executive Committee described in the first paragraph of this Article TENTH.”

The amendment to the Articles of Incorporation was presented and approved by the Board with the understanding that the filing fee would be paid by the District. Meyer signed the amendment which was given to Richard for filing.

UPDATE: Richard Popper filed the amendment with the Delaware Secretary of State who certified the amendment. Richard provided copies of the certification of the amendment, the amendment having been filed on July 2, 2018.

NEW BUSINESS

Betsy Cutler brought to the board's attention that the normal pre-game cell phone announcement is not all-inclusive enough given the advent of newer electronic communication devices such as "smart watches". She has personally encountered players using their smart watches during bridge sessions. While no motion was made, it was generally felt that the pre-game announcement needs to be made that all electronic devices must be turned off during the session.

NEXT MEETING

The Board will meet Friday evening, November 2, 2018 during the Lancaster (Manheim) Regional to be held at Spooky Nook. Meyer said that he will report on the savings in using the district's own boards and supplies instead of renting/buying from the "co-op".

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Bauer
District 4 Secretary
william.baueriii@verizon.net