

DRAFT MINUTES OF ACBL DISTRICT 4 BOARD MEETING
Manheim, Pennsylvania
November 2, 2018

Voting Member Attendees:

- At-Large: Meyer Kotkin (President), Dan Boye (IPP), Joann Glasson (DD) (3 of 6).
Unit 112: Pat Stadelmaeir (Unit Pres.), James Carroll, Jerry Manioci, Mike Mihevc (for Lynn Ackerman), Mary Quiggle, Betty Youmans (6 of 6)
Unit 120: Walter Mitchell, Jr., Fran Hofherr (for Bill Orth) (2 of 2)
Unit 121: Brian Snyder (Unit Pres.), Albert Bingaman, Jr. (2 of 2)
Unit 133: Jim Kenney (Unit Pres.), Betsy Cutler (2 of 2)
Unit 141: Joan Warren (Unit Pres.) John Dickenson, Terry Coughlin (for Mike Giesler), Susan Morse, Bob Glasson, Pat Civale, Elaine Weintraub, Daisy Goecker (for Wendy De Chaderevian), Everett Young, Donna Morgen (for Allison Brandt), Dick Morgen (for Howard Kahlenberg), Tom Purl (12 of 12)
Unit 168: Andie Sheaffer, Jeanne Gehret, Pamela Murray, Tom Coxey (for John Klinger), Kathleen Del Corso (5 of 5)
Unit 190: Melody Henderson (for Caroline Hughes, Unit Pres.), Karen Pollak, Ala Hamilton-Day, Mark Henderson (4 of 4)
Unit 217: No representatives (0 of 2)

Also Present:

Bill Bauer, D4 Board Secretary
Dian Wise, Unit 168 President
Josh Kotkin, Board Duplicator for VF and Lancaster Regionals
Bob Cole, Tournament Director

Excused members:

Dave Kresge, Vice-President
Tom Weik, Presidential appointee
Mary Miller, Presidential appointee, Syracuse & Rochester Tournament Chairperson

A meeting of the ACBL District 4 Board of Directors was held at Spooky Nook Sports & Convention Center in Manheim, PA on November 2, 2018. Meyer Kotkin, President, called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM, a quorum being present (36 of 41 voting members representing 7 of 8 units).

Meyer led off by thanking Jeanne Gehret and Tom Coxey for being co-chairs of the Lancaster (Manheim) Regional and for doing a fine job in their first year.

Meyer expressed his and the Board's condolences to Connie and Walter Mitchell on the recent loss of their son.

Meyer recognized Joan Warren and Josh Kotkin of Unit 141 for coming to the aid of North Jersey Unit 140 of District 3. District 3 left Unit 140 in need of duplicated boards with only 3 days' notice.

Meyer also thanked his son, Josh, for duplicating 200 sets of boards for this Regional.

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

Unit 120: Fran Hofherr

Unit 168: Tom Coxe

Unit 190: Melody Henderson

Bill also noted that new Unit 168 President, Dian Wise, is in attendance.

DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Joann Glasson had no report as she has reported upon ACBL Board meetings in her articles for the District 4Spot.

SECRETARY'S REPORT & APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF June 29, 2018

The Secretary presented the minutes of the Valley Forge Board meeting of June 29, 2018. Before calling on a motion to approve the minutes, Bill explained that a correction was warranted based upon his review of the tape recording of the meeting. The motion to have the District conduct all four STaC's beginning in 2019 stated that 25% of the profit from each STaC would be retained by the District and the remaining 75% divided among the units in proportion to their percentage of participating tables. The draft minutes stated that the split was 20% for the District and 80% for the Units. Elaine Weintraub explained that it is anticipated that the 25% of profits will compensate the District for not retaining 100% of the profit from the August District STaC as in the past. The percentage split will be reviewed each year by the District Treasurer who may make a recommendation to the Board for a change to the division of profit.

The corrected minutes were unanimously approved. Bill reminded the Board that the minutes appear on the District website.

Bill then reported on Unit membership and the determination of the number of representatives that each unit would be entitled to send to Board meetings in 2018. The membership by Unit as of October 1, 2016, 2017 and 2018 per the ACBL was:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>10/2016</u>	<u>10/2017</u>	<u>10/2018</u>	<u>2017-2018</u>		<u>2019 REPS</u>
				<u>CHANGE</u>	<u>%</u>	
112	1,162	1,159	1,203	+44	+3.8	6
120	292	294	282	-12	-4.1	2
121	206	209	183	-26	-12.4	2
133	279	268	271	+3	+1.1	2
141	2,832	2,797	2,880	+83	+3.0	13
168	1,029	957	934	-23	-2.4	5
190	696	646	646	0	0.0	4
217	<u>131</u>	<u>125</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>-9</u>	<u>-7.2</u>	<u>2</u>
TOTALS	6,627	6,455	6,515	+60	0.93	36

Unit 141's representation increases by one as a result of the October 2018 membership statistics. Unit 217, although it has fallen below the number of members to have two representatives (per the formula in the bylaws), will retain two representatives since the bylaws also provide that no Unit shall have fewer than two representatives.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Pat Civale noted that she had placed copies of her report on each table. She then reported that the current fiscal year-to-date (June 1, 2018 through October 27, 2018) balance sheet reflects a \$188.6K cash balance (including \$112.8K in the Nationals Account). In addition, there is \$32.7K of outstanding advances to Tournament Committees for total assets of \$221.3K.

The fiscal 2018 P&L statement shows a small District profit of \$3.3K to this point in the fiscal year. The Syracuse Regional was reported to be profitable, but the Treasurer still has to go over the report, such as to make sure that all expenses have been recorded.

Pat concluded her report by calling attention to the three year financial history of the Valley Forge Regional. 2016 had a \$3.6K loss, 2017 a \$12.3K profit and 2018 an \$8.6K profit. She commended Meyer for boosting attendance and increasing hospitality.

Pat noted that the Charity game at the Valley Forge Regional raised \$210.00 which was sent to Children's Hospital. She received a very nice thank you note in response.

Pat said she will provide additional financial information that any Board member wants.

The Board approved the Treasurer's report unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Meyer called the board's attention to a quarterly report, the QUIP report, which he receives from the ACBL. One statistic that Meyer finds meaningful is the one-year retention rate for members whose memberships were up for renewal for the first time. District 4 retained 64% of its 1st year members which is the 6th highest percentage in the ACBL (the leading District retains 66%). Being an expert in statistics, Meyer said this retention rate has dire consequences and every effort needs to be made to retain more of the newest members.

Susan Morse called attention to a club in Unit 141 that has not only a teaching program, but also a limited point game for newer players. The upper limit moves upwards as the players masterpoints increase. The limited-point game protects newer players from the rigors of an open game where sometimes experienced players, and even Directors, do not treat newer players well.

Meyer also reported that Mary Miller is taking on the responsibility to head the adhoc Committee on District Support to Clubs. If the ACBL does not know why 1st year member retention is so low, perhaps Mary can find out.

Meyer concluded his report by giving a history of the D4/D3/D24/D25 Consortium or co-op formed in 1985 to provide tournaments with boards and supplies at a lower cost than the ACBL charged. Meyer has made the Valley Forge and Lancaster Regionals “Co-op free” by using District equipment (recall the 100 set of boards purchased this past year) and supplies. Using District resources saves about 50% compared to the co-op. Other D4 Regionals and Unit Sectionals may choose to use either the co-op or the District resources. We will retain our membership in the co-op as long as some of our tournaments choose to go the co-op route. The co-op started with \$4,000 of seed money from each of the four Districts and now has about \$15,000 in the bank.

RATIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION

There were no Executive Committee actions to ratify.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PUBLICITY

Joann Glasson noted that the D4 website provides a wealth of information that members can use to get answers to their questions.

DISTRICT 4SPOT

Allison Brandt was not present. Meyer noted that the 4Spot was coming out electronically each month. Units should make even greater use of the 4Spot to publicize their tournaments.

TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR

Elaine Weintraub distributed the 2019 schedule of District and Unit tournaments including other sanctioned events such as STaC’s, NAP and GNT. Other tournaments, such as the NABC’s and surrounding district tournaments are also included.

Elaine called attention to the bunching of tournaments in the Spring and Fall. There are two or three tournaments each week in those seasons. Elaine will be requesting tournament chairs to consider spreading out tournaments over more of the calendar year. She and others feel the bunching negatively affects attendance as there are too many tournaments. She cited a Philadelphia and a Wilmington Sectional on consecutive weekends as an example.

CHARITY

The position of Charity Committee chairperson is vacant. There is nothing to report.

FINANCE

Dave Kresge was excused from attending the meeting and had no report.

NAP

John Dickenson reported the winners and the attendance at the various 2018 District Finals as follow:

Flight “A” held October 13 & 14 in “Philadelphia” at the Valley Forge Bridge Club had 15-1/2 tables, a slight increase from the 15 tables in 2017. John continues to believe that attendance is best when the tournament is played near Philadelphia where the majority of “A” players in the District reside.

The “A” winners are:

1. Meyer Kotkin – Jay Apfelbaum
2. Martin de Bruin – David Hoffner
3. Bharat Rao – Kenneth Chatzinoff

Flight “B” held October 27 at two sites, North Penn DBC in North Wales, PA and at Kendal at Ithaca. North Penn had 18 tables and Kendall only 8 tables. The attendance was down 22% in the Philadelphia area event and down 33% in Ithaca, NY. This year three of the four winners were from the southern site reversing last year’s winners’ playing site location.

The “B” winners are:

1. Thomas Salter – Ken Salter
2. Larry Plotkin – Steve White
3. Stephen Mast – Holli Mast
4. Andrew Rosenberg – Wayne Rosenberger

Note that 3rd place in masterpoints is 2nd place for monetary subsidy per D4 CofC.

Flight “C”, held October 13 at local clubs, had 49 tables. John attributed the sharp decline (from 76-1/2 tables last year) to two clubs planning to host the event and then not able to attract the five tables of club-qualified players. Also AMI Bridge Club, the largest of last year’s sites did not host the event this year. The 15 tables of AMI players from 2017 did not play elsewhere this year.

The winners are:

1. John Ferranti – Malin Castronuovo
2. Rich Godshall - Kay Garrity
3. Jack Thorp – Jacqueline Granite
4. Holli Mast- Angie Sykes
5. Janelle Tauer – Susan Manning

Fifth place is included because Holli Mast qualified for the NABC in both “B” and “C” and has opted to compete in “B”.

In 2019, Flight “A” will be held October 5-6. Flight “B” is currently scheduled for October 26 but may move to accommodate a U141 Sectional should one be scheduled for that date. Flight “C” will be held October 5 at clubs electing to host the game. The venues are TBD. VFBC is no longer available to host the event.

GNT

John Dickenson announced the dates for the 2019 GNT as follows:

Flights “C” and “A” will be held April 13-14, 2019.

Flights “B” and “Open” will be held May 4-5, 2019.

The playing sites are TBD. VFBC is no longer available to host the event.

EDUCATION

Jerry Manioci reported that he has identified three mentors for different colleges. He has found that it is more complicated than he originally thought to form an association with colleges as colleges require a faculty sponsor before a club can be established. Jerry will be sending out an e-mail asking recipients to refer bridge playing college faculty members so that he can contact them about sponsoring a bridge club.

Jerry has surprisingly learned that a fun game is more desirable important than an inter-collegiate competition.

INTERMEDIATE/NEWCOMER

Ala Hamilton-Day noted that one-day I/N Sectionals continue to be very successful. The downside is that when a pair is no longer eligible, they are not likely to move up to play in open events.

TOURNAMENT

Allison Brandt did not attend the meeting and there was no report.

Meyer reminded Regional Tournament coordinators to submit their proposed contracts with the playing site host facility to Meyer for review by Bob Glasson. The objective is to build a database of favorable and unfavorable contract clauses as a resource for Tournament Coordinators.

Further, in a conversation with a friend in Florida, Meyer learned that Florida uses a professional convention/tournament planner to identify and make arrangements with hotels to host tournaments. The planner’s services are paid for by the eventual host hotel, but are, of course, buried in the hotel charges to the tournament. Meyer obtained a proposal from the Valley Forge Casino in three weeks. The facility could become an alternative site to the Doubletree. Meyer noted that relations with the Doubletree are very good, it is the building itself (spread over two floors with a “lift” rather than an elevator) that could force him to consider another venue. Meyer can provide contact information if any Tournament Coordinator would like to the planner’s services.

Meyer also noted that he has received a number of requests from ACBL members to transfer into District 4. Most cite their regard for the hospitality shown at our Regionals. (Added Note: Both the sending District and the receiving District presidents must approve the transfer request before the ACBL will approve.)

TOURNAMENT REPORTS:

Valley Forge (6/25 – 7/1/18) - Meyer Kotkin reported a profit of \$8,500. He added one more day of free lunch. Next year there will be free lunches every day except Monday. Bob Glasson negotiated better pricing with the Doubletree.

Lancaster (10/29 – 11/4/18) - Jeanne Gehret reported that Mon/Tue attendance was up 8.5%. Wednesday attendance was down 17% likely due to the ACBL Instant Matchpoint Game. And perhaps the warm day resulted in players opting to enjoy an outdoor activity instead of bridge. Thursday and Friday were up, so that the tournament is now up 41 tables or 2-1/2% over 2017. 414 more tables are needed Saturday and Sunday combined to reach 1,700 tables for the week.

Harrisburg (5/6- 5/11/19) - Meyer Kotkin ascertained that there was no Committee Chair in place to succeed Bob Priest who resigned after not being able to secure a playing site (which he thought he had secured). With the concurrence of the Host Unit and new Unit 168 President, Dian Wise, the sanction will be canceled.

Rochester (split) (8/5 – 8/11/19) - Mary Miller submitted a report read by the Secretary. Mary reported that she is still in contract negotiations with the hotel in Rochester.

Syracuse (8/13 – 8/19/18) - Mary Miller submitted a report read by the Secretary. Mary reported that there were 771.5 tables, a decrease of 9% compared to 2016, but a 3% increase over the 2017 Rochester tournament. A profit of about \$3,800 is anticipated (but Treasurer Pat Civale has not reviewed the financial report for completeness). The informal feedback from players was positive and written surveys were extremely positive. There is a signed contract in place for 2020.

Delaware (3/30 – 4/5/20) - Mark & Melody Henderson have moved the Regional to the Doubletree Hotel on Route 202. They are still in negotiations primarily over food costs.

Wilkes-Barre (split) (8/5 – 8/11/19) - Walt Mitchell reported that the tournament will again be at the Woodlands after he concluded an exhaustive site search. The attractive room rate again includes a full breakfast. There is no charge for playing space. Walt noted that the hotel is not handicap-friendly with the playing space being far away from the rooms. The schedule is likely to be Monday to Saturday with the Sunday Swiss being moved to Saturday. Bands playing at wedding receptions on Sunday would distract players.

Walter thanked members who expressed their concerns over the death of Connie's and Walter's son one month ago. The cards and hugs were much appreciated.

OLD BUSINESS

Meyer reported that Mary Miller took on the role of heading up the Adhoc Committee on District/Club relations. Mary will be contacting club owners for suggestions.

Mark Henderson noted that the Delaware Unit is attempting the same type of relationship with their clubs.

Daisy Goecker suggested that Club Director treatment of players, especially newer players, is a factor leading to lower club attendance.

NEW BUSINESS - None

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

District Director Joann Glasson first thanked Meyer and Pat for their outstanding work this past year. Joann communicated with her committee via e-mail in the weeks leading up to this meeting. The committee recommended the same slate of officers who will serve through the 2019 Lancaster Regional:

- President - Meyer Kotkin of Unit 141
- Vice-President - Dave Kresge of Unit 133
- Treasurer - Pat Civale, CPA, of Unit 141

There being no further nominations from the floor, nominations were closed and the Secretary was instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for each candidate.

Per Meyer Kotkin’s request, Bill Bauer was nominated and reelected Board Secretary.

Meyer announced the appointment of John Dickinson to become 2nd alternate District Director for a 3-year term commencing 1/1/19. Walter Mitchell, the incumbent, did not file for re-election, nor did anyone else file. As a result of his appointment, John will also serve on the ACBL Board of Governors.

Meyer announced that he was retaining all Committee Chairs and Coordinators and requested that Tom Weik and Mary Miller be approved by the Board as Presidential appointees to the Board. They were duly nominated and confirmed. Meyer requested that his appointees to the Executive Committee be retained as well. Tom Weik and Mary Miller will continue as Presidential appointees to the Executive Committee. Allison Brandt will continue to be the Board of Governors representative on the Executive Committee. The Board approved these appointments.

NEXT MEETING

The Board will meet Friday evening, June 28, 2019 during the Valley Forge Regional.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Bauer, District 4 Secretary

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