

DRAFT MINUTES OF ACBL DISTRICT 4 BOARD MEETING

Manheim, Pennsylvania

November 1, 2019

Voting Member Attendees:

- At-Large: Meyer Kotkin (President), Dan Boye (IPP), Joann Glasson (DD), Mary Miller (4 of 6).
Unit 112: Pat Stadelmaier (Unit Pres.), James Carroll, Lynn Ackerman, Betty Youmans (4 of 6)
Unit 120: Walter Mitchell, Jr., Fran Hofherr (for Bill Orth) (2 of 2)
Unit 121: No representative (2 of 2)
Unit 133: Mike Kohler (for Jim Kenny, Unit Pres.), Betsy Cutler (2 of 2)
Unit 141: John Dickenson, Bob Glasson, Pat Civale, Elaine Weintraub, Daisy Goecker Everett Young, Dave Legrow, Janet Johnson, Bill Goldstein, Joan Goldstein (10 of 12)
Unit 168: Andie Sheaffer, Jeanne Gehret, Tom Coxey, Linda Ivanoff, Ron Orr (5 of 5)
Unit 190: Solly Krisjansdottir (for Caroline Hughes, Unit Pres.), Jess Stuart (for Karen Pollak, Ala Hamilton-Day, Mark Henderson (4 of 4)
Unit 217: No representatives (0 of 2)

Also Present:

Bill Bauer, D4 Board Secretary Russ Jones, ACBL Board President
Dian Wise, Unit 168 President Mick McGuire (Russ Jones bridge partner)
Tom Purl, Tournament Director
Melody Henderson, Delaware Regional Co-Chair

Excused members:

Dave Kresge, Vice-President Jerry Manioci, Education Chairperson
i
Tom Weik, Presidential appointee

CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

A meeting of the ACBL District 4 Board of Directors was held at Spooky Nook Sports & Convention Center in Manheim, PA on November 1, 2019. Meyer Kotkin, President, called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM, a quorum being present (33 of 41 voting members representing 6 of 8 units).

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 133: Mike Kohler
Unit 190: Jess Stuart

INTRODUCTION OF RUSS JONES, ACBL BOARD PRESIDENT

Joann Glasson introduced Russ Jones of Arkansas, ACBL Board President, to address the Board.

REMARKS OF RUSS JONES, ACBL BOARD PRESIDENT

Russ began by thanking the Board for its invitation to speak. Russ told the Board that we had an excellent playing site. But he was disappointed that he did not see any bridge players attempting the climbing wall near the entrance.

Russ remarked that the ACBL lost money last year but is now on track to make a profit of \$1M this year now that Joann has been restored to Finance Committee chairperson.

He noted that Club Reporting is changing. No longer will there be monthly club masterpoint or financial report submissions. Instead game files will be uploaded to the ACBL using "Live at ACBL". Players will be notified of the results just as they are when they play in tournaments (if the ACBL has the player's email address).

New member recruiting incentives have been "beefed up". Also, the ACBL Education Foundation is doing more to support teachers. The foundation also created a new bridge website, TRYBRIDGE.COM as teaching resource for new players.

Meyer noted that he receives a monthly QUIP Report (Quarterly Unit Improvement Plan). Particularly distressing is the statistic reporting that only 52% of new members renew for a 2nd year. Russ Jones commented that the ACBL has made improvements to point awards for newer players in an attempt to make it easier for new players to get over the 5 masterpoint hurdle for the rank Junior Master.

DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Joann briefed our board on a resolution that will be presented to the ACBL BoD meeting later this month in San Francisco. Joann was a member of a Committee charged with coming up with a plan to reduce the ACBL Board size. The Committee met recently in Chicago. The plan proposes to ultimately reduce the board size in half. The reduction would take place in stages as Board members complete their terms in office. The reduction will be accomplished by creating Regions that will combine Districts into 12 Regions. Districts would retain their structures except that they would have a shared Regional Director. For example, Districts 3 & 4 would be combined into a Region. Districts 9 & 7 would be regions of their own because of their membership size. A 3-District Region is also contemplated.

There are two advantages: First, the smaller board would be closer in size to the "optimal" board size of six persons. Six is felt to be the optimal size according to studies. The second advantage is financial, in that \$100K of savings would accrue from lower travel costs for board members.

SECRETARY'S REPORT & APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF June 28, 2018

The Secretary presented the minutes of the Valley Forge Board meeting of June 28, 2019. The 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 2020. Bill

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also compiled a spreadsheet showing the membership by Unit for the past 14 years as of October 1 of each year which he sent out prior to the meeting and placed hard copies on the tables. The District has lost 8% of its membership since 2009, the year of peak membership in the past 14 years. Units have lost from 5% to 42% of their membership compared to their peak membership year in the past 14 years.

The membership by Unit as of October 1, 2017, 2018 and 2019 per the ACBL was:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>10/2017</u>	<u>10/2018</u>	<u>10/2019</u>	<u>2018-2019</u>		<u>2019 REPS</u>
				<u>CHANGE</u>	<u>%</u>	
112	1,159	1,203	1,131	-72	-6.0	6
120	294	282	251	-31	-11.0	2
121	209	183	172	-11	-6.0	2
133	268	271	255	-16	-5.9	2
141	2,797	2,880	2,729	-151	-5.2	12
168	957	934	922	-12	-2.8	5
190	646	646	598	-48	-7.4	3
217	<u>125</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>99</u>	<u>-17</u>	-14.7	<u>2</u>
TOTALS	6,455	6,515	6,157	-358	-5.5	34

Unit 141's and Unit 190's representation decreases by one as a result of the October 2019 membership statistics. However, no Unit is to have fewer than two Board members per the bylaws.

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, 2019 through October 24, 2019) balance sheet reflects a \$151.4K cash balance (including \$114.0K in the Nationals Account). In addition, there is \$54.5K of outstanding advances to Tournament Committees for total assets of \$205.9K.

Note that the above numbers exclude the Rochester Regional and the NAP which are likely to report small profits. The \$35K decrease in cash is largely due to the increase in prepayments to our Regional Tournament Committees and the \$4.1K loss for the Wilkes-Barre Regional.

The Board approved the Treasurer's report unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Meyer began his report by thanking the district's Tournament Chairpersons for jobs well done. Meyer has received numerous positive comments from players from outside the district who attend our Regionals.

Meyer reviewed the ACBL's BoD and BoG Election process. Unit Board members are the electors. Each Unit Board member's vote is weighted according to the number of unit

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board members and the relative size of the unit they represent. District 4 unit board members recently elected 3 representatives to the Board of Governors to serve 3 year terms from January 1, 2020 to Dec. 31, 2022. Jay Apfelbaum was re-elected and is joined by Walter Mitchell and Dan Boye. (Note: Meyer appointed Dan Boye to fill out the unexpired term of Allison Brandt.) Our other two representatives to the Board of Governors are 1st alternate District Director Richard Popper and 2nd Alternate District Director, John Dickinson.

RATIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION

The Board ratified the following resolution adopted by the Executive committee. The resolution reads: Allow all full-time students to play in Regionals and GNT/NAP (Flight “A” & “B” events) without paying card fees. For NAP Flight “C” waive just the District sanction fee portion of the card fees.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PUBLICITY

Joann Glasson had no report.

DISTRICT 4SPOT

Meyer led off by thanking Janet for her work as 4Spot editor.

Janet Johnson reported that the 4Spot is sent to 3,500 email addresses utilizing Constant Contact. Constant Contact reports that 42% of the recipients open the email in the first two days. Eventually, 57% open the 4Spot email. Constant Contact advises that their client base averages a 15% open rate. Further, Constant Contact says 13% of our readers use one or more links.

Betsy Cutler requested that Janet move the link “view in browser” from the end of the 4Spot to the top

TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR

Elaine Weintraub reported on the financial results of the first three of four STaC’s held in 2019. She noted that the District typically made a \$3,000 - \$3,500 profit in prior years on its August STaC. Now that the District is running four STaC’s, the District is on track to make the same profit as years prior to 2019. The District has been retaining 25% of the profit from each STaC. Elaine moved that the District continue to retain 25% of the profit in 2020 and the Board approved. Elaine further noted that some expense was saved by the Units joining together with the District.

CHARITY

Mary Miller had no report.

In the week following the meeting, Mary learned from former Charity Chairperson, April Unlenburg that the District will have ACBL Charity Foundation funds to allocate to charities of our own choosing in 2021. April provided her methodology for conducting the allocation process and some of the other responsibilities of the Charity Chairperson.

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FINANCE

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

NAP

John Dickenson reported the attendance and winners at the various 2019 District Finals as follow:

Flight “A” held October 5 & 6 in “Philadelphia” at the North Penn DBC had 12 tables, a decrease from the 15-1/2 tables in 2018. 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. Arthur Korth - Andy Kaufman
2. Martin de Bruin - David Hoffner
3. Jay Apfelbaum - Daniel Boye

Flight “B” held October 12 at two sites, North Penn DBC in North Wales, PA and at Johnson City, NY. North Penn had 21 tables and Johnson City 7-1/2 tables for a total of 28-1/2 tables, up from 26 in 2018.

The “B” winners are:

1. Lawrence Kidder – Laura Krauss
2. Wayne Rosenberger – Andy Rosenberg
3. Mike Kohler – Guinevere Rotter
4. Tom Henson – Carol McCallum (have declined invite to NABC)
5. Tom Foerster – Chris Marlow

Flight “C”, held October 5 at 7 local clubs (including at a Sectional site), attracting 56-1/2 tables.

The winners are:

1. Frank Feng – Michael Xiong
2. Ellen Luchette - Lila Gleitman
3. Benjamin Eckerson - Michael Mendelson
4. Michael Haas - Brandon Fong

In 2020, Flight “A” will be held October 10-11 at North Penn. Flight “B” will be held October 3 somewhere in the Philadelphia area (having outgrown North Penn) and in Webster, NY (Rochester) in conjunction with their Sectional. Flight “C” will be held October 10 at clubs electing to host the game. Note that we have outgrown North Penn DBC for Flight “B”.

John moved that one out of four years of split-site flight “B” be held in Harrisburg with the other three years continuing to be played in NY. Specifically, the 2020 NAP Flight

“B” would be in Webster, NY (Rochester), 2021 in Harrisburg, 2022 in NY, and 2023 in NY. The 4-year rotation would be repeated. This motion was approved by a show of hands with 25+ in favor and 3 opposed.

John further noted his frustration as no complete list of qualifiers is available from either the ACBL or from local club managers. Some club managers fail to send John a list of those who qualified at their club. The ACBL list consists of those who won masterpoints at a qualifying game but omits those who may have achieved a 50%+ game and failed to win masterpoints. Jay Whipple produces a list of those who Q'd for those who qualified at a club participating in the Common Game. Note: Qualified players also receive a personal e-mail from the Common Game just after the qualifying period ends.

GNT

John Dickenson reported as follows:

We had 34 teams compete in North Wales this year, up from 28 last year in King of Prussia. Open had 8, A had 11, B had 11 and C had only 4.

The Conditions of Contest were updated to clarify that the playoff for 3rd and 4th, if held, is only to determine priority to represent D4 at the NABC and masterpoint awards, as always, are determined by ACBL. Thanks to Art Korth who helped me update the CoC.

Next year's dates are May 2 and 3, 2020 for Open and B and May 16 and 17 for A and C. The Open and B drew 19 tables and we have outgrown the space available in North Penn DBC in North Wales. John has secured a favorable lease at the Lehigh Valley Active Life Center with more space available on the Saturdays when we have the most teams participating.

EDUCATION

Jerry Manioci was not in attendance and did not submit a report.

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

Meyer Kotkin is the Acting Chairperson.

The Board heard proposals from the 3 Units desiring to host the 1st District 4 NLM Regional Joan & Bill Goldstein, on behalf of Unit 141, proposed to hold a NLM Regional in July 2020. They expect about 50 tables/session. Their event schedule is modeled after the successful Toronto NLM Tournament. Note that the event called Gold Rush Pairs cannot accommodate Life Masters like the Gold Rush Pairs at Regionals (where LM's with fewer than 750 points may play).

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Betsy Cutler presented the Unit 133 Allentown Queen City NLM Regional to be held August 12-15, 2021 at the Holiday Inn and Conference Center in conjunction with their Open Sectional Tournament. Betsy has run 30v table NLM Sectionals attracting players from 5 states.

Meyer thanked Betsy and her husband for their work drawing boundary maps for each of our Units.

Bob Priest requested that Unit 168 hold an NLM Regional in 2022. Bob reminded the Board that the point awards are 33% gold/67% red.

Since the three proposals were for a different year in the next three year timeframe, it was moved and approved unanimously that each of the 3 Units conduct an NLM Regional per their respective proposals.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON DISTRICT – CLUB COOPERATION

Mary Miller reported on the cooperative education program with Yorktown BC. The District Board had agreed to reimburse the club a maximum of \$100/student for their cost to educate 18-40 year olds. Four students enrolled. The Board agreed to reimburse Yorktown for a second class.

TOURNAMENT REPORTS:

- Valley Forge**
(6/24 – 6/30/19)
(6/22 – 6/28/20) - Meyer Kotkin reported a profit of almost \$4K on 1,689 tables. Players received a free lunch Tuesday through Saturday. In 2020, the Regional moves to the Valley Forge Casino. Play will take place in one large, well-lit room but lunches will cost more to provide to the players.
- Lancaster**
(10/28 – 11/3/19)
(10/26 – 11/1/20) - Jeanne Gehret reported that attendance thru Thursday was down 8%. Players reacted favorably to the added curtains, light fixtures and chair feet pads (many of which were falling off as the week went by). A Board member noted that Warehouse Hotel staff members need to be alerted to the special pricing afforded bridge players.
- Rochester (split)**
(8/5 – 8/11/19) - Mary Miller reported that attendance was up 10% from two years ago. The 827 tables also represented a 7% increase over last year's Syracuse Regional. A few hundred dollar profit is anticipated when the final tournament report is finished.
- Wilkes-Barre (split)**
(8/5 – 8/11/19) - Walt Mitchell reported that there were only 457 tables, down from the 550 table average in past years. One reason may be that the tournament was held back-to-back with Hunt Valley (which is moving to Baltimore next year).

Syracuse
(8/10 – 8/16/20)

- Mary Miller reported that the contract with the playing site was signed.

Delaware
(3/30 – 4/5/20)

- Melody Henderson noted that the new venue, the Doubletree at Concord Mall on Rt. 202, has recently been renovated. They are adding a free lunch from Tuesday through Sunday.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Bob Priest asked to restore the Harrisburg Split Regional with the New York Regional. Then, give Wilkes-Barre its own Regional on Alternate years with Wilmington. This request was tabled until the next Board meeting.

Bob then requested that the Harrisburg 2021 Regional be canceled. The Board approved this request.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

District Director Joann Glasson explained that per the bylaws amendment adopted at the Valley Forge Board meeting, the current President, Vice-President & Treasurer will serve their 3rd and final year starting at the conclusion of the Manheim (Lancaster) Regional. However, Vice-President Dave Kresge informed Joann that he wished to resign because of a family obligation. Joann, on behalf of the Nominating Committee, nominated Jeanne Gehret of Unit 168 to the office of Vice-President. Jeanne was unanimously elected.

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

Meyer announced the appointment of Louis Glasthal to replace the retiring Jess Stuart as District Recorder. Meyer thanked Jess for his many years of service including his handling of a matter of a player who threatened to sue the District.

Meyer also appointed Rick Rowland to be Disciplinary Chairperson.

Meyer announced that he was retaining all the other 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.

Note: A week after the board meeting, Meyer appointed John Dickenson to be the Board of Governors representative on the Executive Committee

NEXT MEETING

The Board will meet Friday evening, June 26, 2020 during the Valley Forge Regional.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

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