

**DRAFT MINUTES OF ACBL DISTRICT 4 VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING
Manheim, Pennsylvania
October 30, 2020**

Voting Member Attendees:

- At-Large: Meyer Kotkin (President), Jeanne Gehret (Vice-President) Joann Glasson (District Director), Mary Miller (Presidential Appointee) (4 of 6).
Unit 112: Pat Stadelmaeir (Unit Pres.), James Carroll, Betty Youmans, Jerry Manioci, Jim Patton (for Mary Kay Quiggle) (5 of 6)
Unit 120: Bill Orth (Unit President) (1 of 2)
Unit 121: No representative (0 of 2)
Unit 133: Mike Kohler (Unit President), Betsy Cutler (2 of 2)
Unit 141: Harold Kahlenberg (Unit Pres.), Susan Morse, John Dickenson, Bob Glasson, Pat Civale, Everett Young, Elaine Weintraub, Ellen Berkowitz, Janet Johnson (9 of 12)
Unit 168: Ron Orr, Bob Priest, Debi Klinger, Ed Scanlon, Carl Fahnestock (5 of 5)
Unit 190: Caroline Hughes, Ala Hamilton-Day, Mark Henderson, Richard Popper (4 of 4)
Unit 217: Jim McKeown (Unit President) (1 of 2)

Also Present:

Bill Bauer, D4 Board Secretary

Excused members:

Tom Weik, Presidential appointee

CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

A meeting of the ACBL District 4 Board of Directors was held via Zoom (virtual) on October 30, 2020. Meyer Kotkin, President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, a quorum being present (31 of 41 voting members representing 7 of 8 units).

Meyer informed the board of the bariatric surgery that his son, Josh, our board duplicator-in-chief, underwent. He has since lost 160 pounds and getting Meyer to exercise with him!

Meyer then called on the Secretary to recognize Board members attending their first Board meeting as voting members. Bill noted new member, Jim Patton of Unit 112. Jim, along with Betty Youmans, is a new co-chair of the Syracuse and Rochester Regional tournaments. As such, Jim Patton has transactional authority to spend District funds as signatory on the tournament checking account at M&T Bank. District Treasurer, Patricia Civale, will retain signature authority on the account.

DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Joann briefed our board on ACBL matters. The good news is that 2020 will be considered a financial success. The downside is that only about one-half of the membership has transitioned to on-line play. The ACBL has hired a new Marketing Manager who has authored an article on bridge in a recent edition of the NY Times.

In regards to the streamlining of the ACBL Board of Directors from 25 members to 13, Joann reported that the implementation plan was approved in two consecutive ACBL Board meetings (since a change had to be made to the bylaws). The reductions will be implemented as the terms of office of the current District Directors are completed. Joann’s own term does not end until the end of 2023 at which time Districts 3 & 4 will be combined for the purpose of electing a single Regional Director. Districts will not see any other change and will continue to function independently of each other.

SECRETARY’S REPORT & APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF June 26, 2020

The Secretary presented the minutes of the virtual Valley Forge Board meeting of June 26, 2020. 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 voting representatives that each unit would be entitled to send to Board meetings in 2021.

The membership by Unit as of October 1, 2018, 2019 and 2020 per the ACBL was:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>10/2018</u>	<u>10/2019</u>	<u>10/2020</u>	<u>2019-2020</u>		<u>2021 REPS</u>	
				<u>CHANGE</u>	<u>%</u>		
112	1,203	1,131	1,108	-23	-2.0	5	(loss of one)
120	282	251	234	-17	-6.8	2	
121	183	172	160	-12	-7.0	2	
133	271	255	254	-1	-0.4	2	
141	2,880	2,729	2,708	-21	-0.8	12	
168	934	922	901	-21	-2.3	5	
190	646	598	578	-20	-3.3	3	
217	<u>116</u>	<u>99</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>-3</u>	<u>-3.0</u>	<u>2</u>	
TOTALS	6,515	6,157	6,039	-118	-1.9	33	

A question about whether the decline in membership accelerated during the pandemic. Meyer answered that from the national data, it appears to be the case. Also, disconcerting is that the younger and newer members seem to comprise the bulk of those not continuing to be members (thus increasing the average member age).

Mary Miller asked if she could get a list of the new ACBL members that she has recruited. Joann will look into this request. Secretary’s Note: When I was actively teaching and directing, Carol Robertson (no longer with the ACBL) supplied such a list whenever I asked. I still receive notice of non-renewal for members that I recruited.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Pat Civale noted that without Regional tournaments, the report is fairly simple. Pat reported that the current fiscal year-to-date (June 1, 2020 through October 28, 2020) balance sheet reflects a \$156.4K cash balance (including \$116.8K in the Nationals Account). In addition, there is \$42.8K of outstanding advances to Tournament

Committees for total assets of \$199.1K. Note that some of the tournament advances have been expended for Regionals that did not take place. When the Regionals are finally held, those expenses will be recognized.

Note that the District financial statements are prepared on a “cash” basis and not an “accrual” basis. So you will note that the revenue from the District STaC’s in 2019 was reported in last fiscal year’s report but some of the associated expenses, \$6,347, were not paid out until this year.

While the bad news is that the district has no income without Regionals and District STaC’s, the good news is that fixed expenses are about \$5,000/year. \$3,600 is for storage of District equipment and \$800 for Constant Contact. We have the cash to withstand 30 years of such expenses.

The Board approved the Treasurer’s report unanimously.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Meyer reported that he has read the ACBL’s Guidelines for re-opening clubs and conducting tournaments. He questions who would play and who would run games under the protocols described in the document which he categorizes as depressing.

Meyer also reported that two D4 players reached a negotiated settlement with the ACBL representing the first resolution of a case of cheating on BBO.

RATIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION

The Board ratified the following resolution adopted by the Executive Committee:

Resolved: That District 4 allocate \$5K for an extensive,
ongoing plan to support programs and practices within
D4 to attract newcomers to the game and enable teachers
and club owners to have on-line lessons and games
geared specifically to newcomers.

A committee comprised of Joann Glasson, Mary Miller, John Dickenson and Lisa Mita surveyed all the ACBL-certified teachers in the District and found that 70% - 80% of the teachers did not want to teach online. Mary said that the committee is in contact with Audrey Grant to be permitted her Better Bridge Series teachers’ manuals to be converted into a Power Point version. In return, each student would have to buy her textbooks.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PUBLICITY

Joann Glasson indicated that website usage is about half of normal.

DISTRICT 4SPOT

Janet Johnson reported that the November 1, 2020 4Spot will go out on schedule. Readership (measured by the number of recipients who open the 4Spot) has slipped a bit to 55% from 60% pre-COVID, most likely because there are no tournaments. The click rate is up, however.

Meyer emphasized the importance of the Unit reporters mentioning rank advancements within their respective units. Players love recognition for their achievements.

TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR

Elaine believes her ACBL counterpart has now processed the tournament cancellations that Elaine has submitted to the ACBL. Of course, the ACBL has cancelled sanctions for tournaments through February 2021. Once the St. Louis NABC cancellation is negotiated with the host hotel, the ACBL may extend all tournament cancellations through June.

CHARITY

Mary Miller had no report. Bill noted that 2021 is scheduled to be D4's year to allocate ACBL Charity Foundation funds to local charities.

In regards to holding District-Wide Charity games, Ed Scanlon said that this is possible through BBO and that he would help organize the game if requested. Joann added that the beneficiary of the event would have to be a 501(c) (3) charity.

FINANCE

Dave Kresge was not in attendance.

NAP

John Dickenson reported that there were no NAP club qualifying games held or a District final event in 2020. The 2019 winners who were to have gone to the Columbus Spring 2020 NABC but the tournament (cancelled) will instead go to the 2021 Spring NABC in St. Louis should that tournament be held.

GNT

John Dickenson reported that District Conditions-of-Contest were due to be turned in to the ACBL by September 30, 2020. However, the ACBL CofC's were not published until October 22, 2020. The 2021 District finals will likely have to be held on-line. There are issues like proctoring to address. Perhaps zoom and screens dividing the table will suffice.

EDUCATION

Jerry Manioci had no report. However, Jerry offered a suggestion that new members be supported by mentoring. Bob Priest noted that he uses a Teaching Table on BBO for players who are not ready to play in a 0-25 game. Some Unit officials reported that they receive an "In-and-Out" report from the ACBL that is useful in identifying new members.

INTERMEDIATE/NEWCOMER

Ala Hamilton-Day noted that I/N's appear to be involved and interested in playing in the ACBL tournaments on BBO and in the virtual, limited games at clubs. The open games, however, at some virtual clubs like the (Wilmington) Bridge Studio, are struggling. Unit 190 has engaged two teachers to facilitate players transitioning to play on BBO.

TOURNAMENT

Meyer Kotkin is the Acting Chairperson.

Meyer is concerned about how our playing cards are holding up without regular use. He will get together with Marc Labovitz to assess their condition at the Inner Space facility. Also, Meyer is concerned that our board duplication and caddy recruits may no longer be available when tournaments resume.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON DISTRICT – CLUB COOPERATION

The matter of providing \$20,000 to clubs to assist clubs with pandemic related-financial distress had been tabled at the Valley Forge board meeting. In the interim, Meyer told the proposer, Betty Youmans, that he could not find members willing to form a committee to look into all the questions raised about the proposal. Betty indicated she was willing to withdraw the motion. The procedural way to accomplish that objective was to vote to remove the motion from the table and then the Board voted down the motion.

TOURNAMENT REPORTS:

Note: all tournaments and dates listed below were taken from the ACBL website at the time the agenda was prepared.

- Valley Forge**
(6/21 – 6/27/21)
(6/27 – 7/3/22) - Meyer said the 2021 tournament is cancelled. Deposits are being rolled over.
- Lancaster**
(10/25 – 10/31/21)
(10/31 – 11/6/22) - Jeanne Gehret is getting the 2020 deposit rolled over.
- Rochester**
(8/2 – 8/8/21) - Betty Youmans & Jim Patton are the new co-chairs. No planning is underway as yet.
- Wilkes-Barre** - After the meeting, Bill Orth, Unit President, informed the Secretary that no tournament was contemplated in 2021.
- Syracuse**
(8/8 – 8/14/22) - Betty Youmans & Jim Patton are the new co-chairs.
- Delaware**
(4/4 – 4/10/22) - Mark Henderson confirmed that the tournament was canceled for April 2021. Bob Glasson is working on getting the deposit rolled over to 2022.

Valley Forge I/N - The \$3525 deposit at the Doubletree will rollover to 2021.
(8/10 – 8/12/21)

Allentown I/N - Betsy Cutler reported that no site commitment has been made
(8/12 – 8/15/21) Tournament will be pushed back into 2022.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Joann Glasson requested that the Board accept a donation between \$600 - \$1,000 in memory of Franni Stutman to be used to make a \$100 annual award to the District player under age 21 winning the most masterpoints in a calendar year beginning in 2021 until the donation is depleted. The Board accepted the donation for the purpose indicated.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

District Director Joann Glasson, Nominating Committee Chair, reported that the Committee has nominated current Vice-President Jeanne Gehret of Unit of Unit 168 for President, Betsy Cutler of Unit 133 for Vice-President and current Treasurer, Pat Civale, for Treasurer for one-year terms starting at midnight Sunday (when the Spooky Nook Regional would have concluded).. Since this would be Jeanne Gehret’s first year, Jeanne would be eligible to be re-elected for two more terms if she and the Board are both willing. There being no further nominations from the floor, The Board closed nominations and voted unanimously in favor of the nominees.

The meeting was then turned over to incoming President, Jeanne Gehret. Jeanne thanked Meyer for his 3 years of devoted service to the District and to bridge. Meyer, of course, will become Immediate Past President with voting rights and a spot on the Executive Committee (as well as District Chick Magnet). Joann added her appreciation for all that Meyer has done for D4 bridge. The Board gave Meyer a round of applause.

Secretary’s note: There is normally a \$100 honorarium given to an outgoing District President and a commemorative plaque that cost almost \$200. Meyer has requested that we not do incur those expenses.

Per Jeanne Gehret’s nomination, and with the Board giving its approval, Bill Bauer was reelected Board Secretary. Since Jeanne is still in the process of contacting current committee chairs and coordinators, she will announce her appointments in the coming week. Jeanne also will nominate two members of the District to join the Board. The Board agreed that the confirmation of Jeanne’s choices would be made by the Executive Committee.

NEXT MEETING

The Board will meet via Zoom on Friday evening, June 25, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT – Adjourned at 9:05 PM. Submitted by: William L. Bauer III. Sect.