

District Director, Joann Glasson
November 2019

ACBL Board of Directors

I just returned from from Chicago where I spent the weekend working with four other ACBL board members on a restructuring plan to reduce the size of the ACBL Board of Directors. The Task Force was headed by David Lodge from District 22 (Southern California). Other members of the Task Force are A.J. Stephani from District 11 (Ohio), Jay Whipple from District 9 (Florida) and Margot Hennings from District 6 (Washington, DC).

The current ACBL Board of Directors is composed of 25 representatives from 25 different geographic areas in the United States and Canada. When you have twenty-five people trying to come to a meeting of the minds, it is an incredibly difficult process. The Board also spends a great deal of time on bridge related issues that could and should be done by outside committees and management.

Numerous studies show that the optimal size for problem-solving teams is about six people. After there are seven people in a decision-making group, each additional member reduces decision effectiveness by 10%.

Our task was to find a way to reduce the board in size while honoring the knowledge and service of our existing board members and assuring that all the functions currently being performed will be performed by the appropriate committees.

We started by reviewing all the different suggestions and plans that have been proposed to reduce the ACBL board over the last twenty years before brainstorming about what we might suggest that would be different enough to be both make the ACBL board more efficient and improve board focus on the big issues that are paramount.

After two days of meetings we agreed upon a plan that will reduce the size of the ACBL board from 25 to 13 members. This will be accomplished by combining adjoining districts that will logically be joined into 13 Regions. The existing Districts will remain intact so there will be no changes to District Treasuries, NAP or GNT events, but the combined Regions will send one representative to the Regional Board.

Under the plan, District 4 will be combined with District 3 and instead of two District Directors, there will be one Regional Director representing the area.

We felt it was not in the best interest of the organization to make a drastic change in the size of the ACBL Board. Our current Board has a wealth of knowledge and experience that should be honored, so we have made the reduction in the ACBL Board on a gradual basis, providing for each sitting director to finish the balance of their term and serve an additional three year term during the transition.

Although financial reasons were not the impetus for the restructure, there will be a savings of more than \$100K a year when the transition is complete.

The next step in the process is to bring a motion to the Board of Directors in San Francisco for their vote. Since the restructuring requires changes to the by-laws we will need a two-thirds majority to begin the transition.

I am confident that our Board of Directors will put personal interest aside and support this much needed change.