



Minutes of the District 17 Board of Directors Meeting January 12, 2021 via Zoom Video Conference

Present: Liz Hamilton (President), Cindy Shoemaker (National Board), Lakin Hines, JoAnne Lowe, Steve Nordberg, Jennifer O’Neill, Bill Phillips, Steve Reynolds, Richard Rosenthal, Sharon Smith

Absent: John Grossmann

THE PRESIDENT CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 9:01 AM, MST

GENERAL

Opening Remarks

Liz Hamilton

Liz Hamilton welcomed everyone, particularly Richard Rosenthal and Sharon Smith, who are beginning their initial terms as District 17 Board of Directors members.

Approval of January 2021 Minutes

Bill Phillips

Steve Nordberg moved that the December 2020 minutes be approved as submitted. Seconded by Lakin Hines. Carried unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report

Jennifer O’Neill

[nb: This report was presented at about 9:30 AM. It is included in these minutes in its normal sequence rather than at the clock time.] Nothing has changed except for the expense changes that were approved at the December 2020 meeting. Jennifer O’Neill moved that the Treasurer’s Report be approved as submitted. Seconded by Cindy Shoemaker. Carried unanimously. Jennifer stated that the motion she made at the December meeting was *not* what she intended, and therefore offered the following: Motion by Jennifer O’Neill that *the \$5,000 approved for education grants be the only monies approved, and that it be administered by the Grants Committee.* Seconded by Cindy Shoemaker. This \$5,000 is *separate* from the \$5,000 made available to John Grossmann’s Membership Building Committee. Carried unanimously.

Steve Nordberg stated that he would like to allow Units that do not sponsor Regional tournaments to apply for grants. Liz stated that we need a written proposal. Steve Nordberg suggested that each Unit be given \$500. Sharon Smith expressed the view that Units should be required to apply for funds rather than be given funds automatically. Cindy stated that ACBL has a \$650,000 fund to support Units’ membership building efforts. This money is part of membership dues. Liz requested that all Board members think about the grants issue, and that they send their ideas to Steve Nordberg with a copy to Liz.

National Board Report

Cindy Shoemaker

Cindy Shoemaker reported that the St. Louis NABC scheduled for March 2021 has been cancelled. She also mentioned that there has not yet been a determination about when tournament directors will be made available for sectional and regional tournaments. Currently tournament director staffing has been cancelled through February 2021. [*nb*: in separate subsequent emails Cindy and ACBL informed us that the cancellation has been extended through April 2021.] The ability to run online Swiss team games is very close to coming to fruition. Cindy outlined upcoming ACBL meetings. Committee assignments have been made. Cindy is serving on the Strategic Planning Committee. Key topics include membership growth and a goal or framework for online bridge. A Communications Committee has been approved. It operates under the governance umbrella. Cindy is a member of the Governance Committee. Governance will be looking at the roles of District and Units. Cindy is also co-chairing the Executive Review Committee.

Liz commended Cindy for her hard work and dedication to ACBL and to District 17. Liz also offered praise for D17 Bridge Buzz, mentioning that she has received many favorable comments about the Buzz. Lakin asked whether Cindy had heard anything about North American Pairs, which had been scheduled to be held at the St. Louis NABC. Cindy has not heard anything but indicated that she would keep Lakin apprised of developments. Cindy also stated that a major ACBL website revamp is needed, and that are plans in the works to redesign it. Steve Nordberg asked whether local directors might be used for sectional tournaments, given the problem of obtaining ACBL tournament directors. Cindy stated that this is not permitted.

NEW BUSINESS**District Board Election Protocol (Policy Manual Change)**

Steve Reynolds and Bill Phillips

Bill Phillips has reorganized and revised the protocol and timeline for carrying out elections of District 17 Board of Directors representatives. The proposed timeline is to start the process in June and complete the elections by November 1st. Liz Hamilton suggested that original Policy Manual text should be sent to board members along with proposed changes. Steve Reynolds indicated that Jennifer O'Neill is doing the editing of the Policy Manual including redlining changes. The Committee has more items to be revised, added and removed. The goal is to develop a Policy Manual that will reflect current operating policy. There will also be a historical document that will preserve the record of changes over time. Cindy asked whether the Policy Manual will be on the website. Steve stated that both the Policy Manual and the Bylaws will be posted on the website. Cindy mentioned that the Policy Manual currently posted on the website is out of date and requested that it be removed. Steve concurred. Bill Phillips moved that *the proposed Election Secretary Protocol for Board of Directors positions be adopted as policy*. Seconded by Steve Reynolds. Carried unanimously.

GNT 2021

Liz Hamilton

Bonnie Bagley is handling GNT. She is unavailable for today's meeting. Liz suggested that people send any questions regarding GNT to Bonnie. Things are evolving and changing. Every member of D17 is eligible to play in the D17 finals if they wish. It is not yet known whether the District finals will be held in Denver or whether they will be online. Cindy Shoemaker moved that *District 17 should waive GNT club qualifying games for the 2021*. Seconded by JoAnne Lowe. Carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Website Update

Cindy Shoemaker

90% of content has been delivered to JoEllen Lowry and her team. Cindy is waiting for information on grants, education, and membership building. We are on schedule for a February launch. Liz suggested that mailing addresses and residences of D17 Board members *not* be included on the website. Cindy agreed that we must be very careful about security. The site uses "https," which denotes additional security against hackers. Liz suggested that we hold a dedicated video conference in which Cindy will take us through the website before it is launched.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Liz noted that anything that is to be presented at a District 17 Board meeting must be submitted to her (as President) and to Bill Phillips (as Recording Secretary) at least a week in advance of the meeting.

Regional Tournament Committee

Liz Hamilton

Liz is currently chairing this committee. In view of her responsibilities as President, she is quite willing to have anyone who is interested take over the role of chair of this Committee. Not much is happening until ACBL authorizes regional tournaments. JoAnne Lowe stated that Desert Empire Regional organizers have until the end of February to inform the hotel whether they intend to cancel. JoAnne proposed that the 2021 tournament follow the same schedule as was intended for 2020 except to change the dates. Liz indicated agreement with that approach.

Education Committee

Sharon Smith

D17 currently has 33 clubs enrolled in the 99er Nite Club program. The number of individuals who have played is 72. Table count is about 30 tables per night. The program requests that a liaison from the District participate in the nightly Zoom meetings. Several individuals have volunteered to serve in this capacity. A significant problem in promoting education and membership building is how to get in touch with people we don't know. We need to find new people, for example, individuals who recently moved into town. Local newspaper ads don't work. Cindy suggested that targeting community organizations might yield some fruit.

Cindy addressed the issue of whether teachers should be permitted to post information about their classes on the D17 website. First, is not likely to be helpful to the teacher seeking students. Second, it could easily drift into advertising for all sorts of things. This would dilute the mission and compromise the website. Liz stated that *any* form of advertising should be prohibited from the website. Liz expressed her appreciation for the work Sharon is doing, and for how quickly she assumed a major role in contributing to D17.

Steve Nordberg mentioned that his club is planning to run two face-to-face games per week and asked for approval. Liz stated that District 17 has no control or input into this. ACBL *will* award masterpoints if clubs operate face-to-face games. Cindy mentioned that ACBL has provided guidelines for clubs on this matter, and that she has made them available to Ashley Erwin, Unit 159 President. ACBL is discouraging face-to-face games but not prohibiting them. Neither ACBL nor D17 have any role in a club's decision to hold face-to-face bridge.

Policies and Procedures Committee

Jennifer O'Neill and Steve Reynolds

The Committee is now working on the Policy Manual. Cindy indicated that she would be contacting Lakin Hines (Elections Secretary) regarding what information should be included in the announcement about the elections in Bridge Buzz and on the website. Jennifer stated that the Policy Manual will include job descriptions. The Committee will be reaching out to people for job description information.

Communications

Cindy Shoemaker

The January 2021 Bridge Buzz has a 52% response rate and a 13% "click to" rate, which is above industry standards. There are 1,100 ACBL members who have not provided an email address to ACBL. Cindy will attempt to get as many of those individuals into the distribution list as possible. It very difficult to get individuals who have unsubscribed back. Sharon complimented Cindy for her excellent work in compiling and editing the Bridge Buzz. Cindy complimented Liz for running a smooth and efficient meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by JoAnne Lowe. Seconded by Jennifer O'Neill. Carried unanimously.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 2, 2021 from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM MST, via video conference

Respectfully submitted,

William D. Phillips

Scribe