



## Minutes of the District 17 Board of Directors Meeting Scottsdale, Arizona – August 18, 2022

Present: Liz Hamilton (President), Cindy Shoemaker (National Board), Bill Curtis, Lakin Hines, Neil Hunter, JoAnne Lowe, Steve Nordberg, Jennifer O’Neill, Bill Phillips, Steve Reynolds, Sharon Smith (via video link)

THE PRESIDENT CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 8:35 AM MST

### GENERAL

#### Opening Remarks

Liz Hamilton

Liz thanked JoAnne Lowe for running a wonderful regional tournament. Liz reminded people that they should send their meeting support documents to Bill Phillips in advance. She also asked people to refrain from sending their documents directly to board members. She also encouraged people to read the documents prior to the meeting. This is the last face-to-face meeting for 2022. A Zoom meeting will be scheduled before the end of the year to elect officers for 2023 and to conduct other business as needed.

#### Approval of May 27, 2022 Minutes

Bill Phillips

Jennifer O’Neill moved to accept the minutes as submitted. Seconded by Lakin Hines. Carried unanimously.

#### Treasurer’s Report

Jennifer O’Neill

Jennifer reminded people to sign their Free Play cards so she can keep track of usage. Our reserve will decrease by about \$16,000 in 2022, not including \$6,000 that we spent to purchase Bridgemates. Jennifer purchased a one-year CD to replace a CD that recently reached maturity. Another CD is maturing in February 2023. Motion by Liz Hamilton to approve the treasurer’s report as submitted. Seconded by Cindy Shoemaker. Carried unanimously.

#### National Board Report

Cindy Shoemaker

Cindy described a new pilot program designed to attract and teach new bridge players. Sharon Smith is heavily involved in this program. The National Board has decided to remove grand life master status and hall of fame status from anyone found guilty of ethical violations. Cindy expects to be able to share an IT update with the board in the next six weeks. JoAnne Lowe stated that all of her entries in Tourney Trax were erased. NABC site selection requirements have been changed to permit more flexibility. Finding suitable venues is difficult. There was a discussion of whether there should be a

regional tournament in the same location as an NABC event in the same calendar year. There are problems finding enough volunteers to staff two major tournaments.

## NEW BUSINESS

### Change of Regional Tournament Sanction Fee

Liz Hamilton

Liz proposed that we reduce the sanction fee by \$1, changing it to \$8. She proposed to make this change for one season of regional tournaments. The reduction would apply to Phoenix (either this year or next year per their choice), Las Vegas, Albuquerque, Tucson, Denver, and Taos. The sanction fee would be revisited after this cycle is complete. Jennifer pointed out that our table count is down, which reduces our cash flow. There was a discussion of whether we are spending too much on GNT subsidies. Bill Phillips suggested that it is in our best interests to make it possible for units to sponsor financially successful regionals and to avoid providing post-tournament subsidies whenever possible. Liz's proposal constitutes a shift of funds from one District 17 entity (American Contract Bridge League District 17) to units within the district that are sponsoring regional tournaments. Motion by Liz Hamilton to reduce the District 17 sanction fee for regional tournaments from \$9 to \$8 per table, beginning with the 2022 Phoenix Regional, ending with the 2023 Taos Regional, and excluding the 2023 Phoenix Regional. Seconded by Bill Curtis. Carried unanimously.

### Bridgmate Rental

Bill Phillips

Bill reported that we have purchased 160 Bridgemates, of which 153 are in good working order. In the past some sectionals, as well as regionals, have rented Bridgemates from Bill Michael and Sam Stoxen. Bill has received information that the Phoenix Fall Sectional in Scottsdale AZ and the Kachina Sectional in Sun Lakes AZ may be interested in renting Bridgemates. JoAnne Lowe reported that the DIC for Sun Lakes (Brandon Sheumaker) would be supplying Bridgemates for the Sun Lakes event, so they will not rent Bridgemates from District 17. (*n.b.*: subsequent to this meeting JoAnne informed Bill that the 2022 Phoenix Sectional would be cancelled, so they will not rent Bridgemates from District 17.) Jennifer O'Neill and Bill drafted a rental agreement to deal with potential rentals. A significant issue is how to get rented Bridgemates to and from the venues. Bill would like to get the Bridgemates back whenever possible to check them for damage, test them, and perform general maintenance. Shipping is not a particularly good idea, so some other delivery system needs to be devised. The draft rental agreement quotes a price of 50 cents per unit per table. Jennifer O'Neill suggested that this is less than what we should be charging. Cindy Shoemaker asked about maintenance. Bill reported that maintenance costs are minimal, primarily cleaning the units, cleaning the battery contacts, and replacing batteries. There is a pending request to rent 60 Bridgemates to the Fall Fling Sectional in Salt Lake City Utah (not part of District 17). Arrangements have been made to have these units transported to Salt Lake City from Las Vegas and returned to Las Vegas at the end of the event. Liz Hamilton reported that Elly Larson is renting Bridgemates to tournaments in the greater Denver

area. Liz does not want our rental rate to be substantially different from Elly's rate. Liz suggested that the current rate of 50 cents per table per unit should be grandfathered for Salt Lake City. Motion by Jennifer O'Neill to rent Bridgemates at the rate of 75 cents per unit per table beginning in 2023. The rental rate for District 17 sectionals in 2022, and for Salt Lake City sectional in September 2022 will be 50 cents per unit per table. The rental rate for entities outside of District 17 shall be \$1 per unit per table. Any transportation costs will be borne by the renters. Seconded by Liz Hamilton. Vote was 10 in favor, 1 opposed. Motion carried.

#### 2022 Denver Regional Financial Update

Jennifer O'Neill

Denver reached a table count of 1,154, which is essentially what was projected. There were a number of unanticipated expenses. Denver's loss was \$3,400. Motion by Jennifer O'Neill to reimburse Denver \$3,400 to cover their loss. Seconded by Steve Reynolds. Liz Hamilton proposed to amend the reimbursement to \$2,500. Jennifer accepted this amendment. Vote was 10 in favor, 1 opposed. Motion carried.

### OLD BUSINESS

#### Bridgemate Maintenance Update

Bill Phillips

Of the 160 Bridgemates we purchased, 153 are in good working order. Seven of them have "smudges" on the screens, which makes them difficult to read. Bill needs to purchase about 50 replacement "feet" for the table units at 20 cents each. Screen replacement must be done by Bridgemate US. (*n.b.* subsequent to this meeting Jennifer O'Neill spoke with Elly Larson, who indicated that she would exchange the defective units. Bill will take the defective units to Las Vegas and Jennifer will bring the replacements to Las Vegas.) Bill plans to "rotate the stock," keeping all units in use. Bill suggested that we might want to purchase two additional Bridgemate cases because we currently have five cases, each of which can hold 25 table units and one server. (*n.b.:* subsequent to this meeting Bill decided to purchase only case. This will provide transportable storage for 150 table units and six servers. The other ten table units can be rotated in.) Motion by Neil Hunter to purchase two additional cases and to return the seven defective table units for reimbursement. Seconded by JoAnne Lowe. Carried unanimously.

#### Revised RTP

Bill Phillips

Bill described his work in reorganizing the existing RTP. A committee consisting of Liz Hamilton, Jennifer O'Neill, Steve Reynolds, and Bill (the Bylaws and Policies Committee) suggested some content changes, mostly removing things that were not necessary. Bill divided the documents into: (1) *Regional Tournament Application*, one-page set of steps that need to be executed when endeavoring to sponsor a regional tournament, and (2) *Regional Tournament Operations Guide*, a description of policies, goals, costs, and responsibilities. Liz Hamilton suggested a change to *Regional Tournament Operations Guide, Advertising and Publicity*, to read: "District 17 will provide one email announcement via

its Pianola account at no charge. It is suggested that you send the email announcement in a month that the Buzz it *not* published if possible.” Jennifer O’Neill suggested a change to *Regional Tournament Application, Step 3b*, to read: “Negotiate a contract with the hotel/venue. Contact the District 17 Contract Review Committee Chair for guidance and assistance with this process. Submit the completed contract to the Contract Review Committee Chair for approval by the committee before the contract is signed.” Motion by Jennifer O’Neill to approve the Regional Tournament Application and the Regional Tournament Operations Guide as amended. Seconded by Steve Nordberg. Carried unanimously.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Communications

Cindy Shoemaker

Buzz is coming out on or about September 1st. Cindy needs submissions no later than ten days before the publication date.

### Education

Sharon Smith

Sharon is excited about the ACBL teaching pilot program. Robert Todd is working with ACBL on this project. Unit 360 (Colorado Springs Bridge Center) applied for a \$1,000 education grant. The funds are intended to support an open house for new and experienced players. A previous open house attracted 54 people, including 8 new players. They plan to repeat the event at the end of August and again later in the year. The request includes \$400 for advertising, \$100 for supplies, and \$500 for food. Liz Hamilton expressed the opinion that using grant funds to provide food for experienced players is not appropriate. Motion by JoAnne Lowe to award \$500: \$400 for advertising and \$100 for bridge instructor supplies. Seconded by Liz Hamilton. Carried unanimously. Unit 363 (Northern Colorado Bridge) is running a Bridge In A Day event in September. They requested \$1,000 for newspaper and social media advertising. There were some opinions expressed that the advertising cost expenditure is high. Liz stated that newspaper advertising seldom reaches target audiences and is expensive. Motion by Jennifer O’Neill to approve \$1,000 for the Unit 363 grant. Seconded by Steve Reynolds. Vote was 6 in favor, 3 opposed, 1 abstention. Motion carried.

### Elections

Lakin Hines

Liz Hamilton and Bill Phillips are standing for re-election unopposed. Steve Reynolds and Diana Galis are in a contested election for Unit 356 Representative. Cindy Shoemaker is in a contested election with Robb Gordon for District 17 Representative to the ACBL National Board. This election is being conducted by ACBL.

### GNT

Bill Curtis

Bill Curtis and Bonnie Bagley had a number of discussions about GNT. Their goal is to increase participation. Bill would like people to be able to compete at the championship level if they wish but to retain the right to compete at the A, B, or C level as

well. One question is whether the championships should be held online or whether they should be held at the Denver regional. There were differing opinions expressed about whether GNT events can be held online or whether they should be face-to-face. Jennifer O’Neill expressed dissatisfaction with the preregistration requirement. Jennifer O’Neill also stated that she believes the \$11,000 District 17 spent for GNT is too much. Motion by Jennifer O’Neill that the *entry fees* for any teams in any flights participating in the national finals shall not be reimbursed by District 17. Seconded by JoAnne Lowe. Carried unanimously. Motion by Jennifer O’Neill that District 17 shall not pay any subsidy for participation in the national finals for the *championship flight*, but shall continue to subsidize flights A, B, and C. Seconded by JoAnne Lowe. Carried unanimously.

**STaC**

Liz Hamilton

Three STaC events are scheduled for 2023.

**Goodwill**

Neil Hunter

Neil will be sending reminders to board members about Goodwill nominations. Cindy Shoemaker requested that nominators send her high-quality photos of their nominees for the Buzz.

**NAP**

Lakin Hines

Qualifying games are being held through the end of August. District finals will be held at the Las Vegas Regional. National finals will be held at the New Orleans Spring NABC in March 2023. The 2023 District finals will take place in Taos (assuming that the Taos tournament is held).

**Regional Tournaments**

Steve Reynolds

Cindy Shoemaker reported on the status of the 2023 Tucson Regional. The flyer is complete. Scott Humphrey reviewed the schedule. The contract has been signed. Jack Shoemaker, tournament chair, is working with three hotels. He has negotiated a \$5 per room rebate. Steve indicated that the financial risk for this tournament is low because the expenses are low. There was a discussion concerning whether the number of I/N regionals permitted by ACBL can be increased beyond three per year. There was a discussion about the possibility of holding joint I/N regional shared between units. Neil Hunter reported that Albuquerque is attempting to get some amendments to the current contract to deal with potential Covid-related issues. The Albuquerque contract expires at the conclusion of the 2023 tournament. Phoenix has a contract with Talking Stick Resort for the 2023 tournament. Denver is considering a possible change of venue for 2024 and beyond. Taos has a contract for 2023. Liz Hamilton suggested that we might consider operating *one* tournament internally (operated by the District) *if* we eventually need to add an end-of-year tournament.

**Tournament Coordination**

JoAnne Lowe

JoAnne requested that people submit their requests for tournament scheduling and to obtain their sanctions from ACBL. There was some discussion about the future of the regional sanction that is currently being used by Unit 373.

#### Tournament Supplies

Bill Phillips

Unit 354 supplied all of the bidding boxes for the Phoenix Regional. The tournament used District 17 pair game boards and some of District 17's table mats. McKenzie Myers (DIC) requested seven sets of pair game boards per session (total of 84). There were a number of complaints about the quality of the cards and boards being used in the *team* events, which are supplied by the sponsoring unit. Unloading assistance was provided by Talking Stick Resort personnel. Bill expressed appreciation for the assistance people provide with packing up on Sunday at the end of the tournament. Jennifer O'Neill mentioned that the true cost of tournament supplies is greater than what Bill has been submitting for reimbursement. Jennifer requested that Bill submit mileage costs at the government rate. Bill indicated that he would request reimbursement for his *actual* fuel cost. Jennifer will record the difference between the government mileage rate and the actual fuel costs as a donation. Motion by Jennifer O'Neill the government automobile mileage rate shall be used and shown as a tournament supplies expense, and that Bill Phillips inform Jennifer of how much he wishes to "donate back" to District 17. Seconded by Liz Hamilton. Carried unanimously.

#### Website

Cindy Shoemaker

Cindy indicated that there is no need to hire a webmaster as long as JoEllen (the contractor) is available to maintain the website. Cindy is able to send items to JoEllen, who then posts them.

#### Representative to ACBL Advisory Council

Liz Hamilton

District 17 is entitled to five representatives to the ACBL Advisory Council (formerly known as the Board of Governors). One of the representatives has resigned, so there is a vacancy. Rolf Houtkooper has offered to fill this vacancy. Motion by JoAnne Lowe to place Rolf Houtkooper on the ACBL Advisory Council as one of the representatives from District 17. Seconded by Bill Curtis. Carried unanimously.

#### Scheduling of Next District 17 Board Meeting

Liz Hamilton

We need to schedule a Zoom meeting in late November or early December to elect Board officers and conduct other business. Several dates were proposed. Ultimately it was decided to hold the meeting on Thursday, December 1, 2022 beginning at 8:00 AM PST (9 AM MST).

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Steve Nordberg to adjourn. Seconded by Bill Curtis. Carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 12:45 AM MST.

**Next Meeting: Thursday, December 1, 2022 from 8 am to 9:30 am PST, via Zoom**

Respectfully submitted,  
*William D. Phillips*  
Scribe