

ACBL Unit 143 Board Meeting Minutes, Monday, May 13, 2024

Location: The meeting was conducted on-line using ZOOM.

Attendees: Dennis Abeln, Sandy Bigg, Dian Brazier, Don Chase, Ken Obrecht, Steve Russell, John Welte, and Mark Zellmer

Absent: Mark Boswell, Terry D'Amato, and Jay Shah

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 and met quorum requirements.

### **Vice President's Report**

Mark Z, standing in for President Mark B, expressed gratitude to Dennis for all of his hard work and for taking on the role of Tournament Chairperson, learning the job on the go and doing it well. Mark Z shared that Mark B wanted to ask Dennis if there were anything we could do to support him in his role so that he doesn't burn out. Dennis answered that much of the groundwork has been laid, and so the job has gotten easier. However, he would welcome more help with publicity so long as he retains final approval/control of the flyer. Sandy offered to help. Dian posed the name of someone we might approach for this role, and she will follow up.

### **Approval of the Minutes**

The Board unanimously approved the meeting minutes from April 8, 2024.

### **Treasurer's Report**

The Board unanimously approved the Treasurer's Report.

### **Zero Tolerance Policy (ZTP)**

Dennis shared how he had worked hard to draft an alternative to the ACBL Zero Tolerance Policy (ZTP), based on the board's position expressed at last month's meeting that the ACBL's ZTP is overly strict and not being enforced. He emailed his proposal to our board and to Larry Sealy of Region 7 and Debbie Romero of District 8. Debbie wrote an email detailing her concerns about Dennis's policy, and Larry forwarded Debbie's letter onto the ACBL. McKenzie Myers of the ACBL wrote back to say that he would have to see the proposed policy; he concurred that the ZTP of the ACBL had problems. Nonetheless, he agreed with Debbie on her point that the laws of the ACBL are already in place to handle issues of discipline. McKenzie said we could adopt our own ZTP but he hoped we wouldn't due to the confusion it would cause. Dennis is frustrated by the fact that recurring behavior problems continue without consequences. He believes this hurts our tournaments, and that the ACBL should be doing more.

Don shared his perspective as someone who had a career in risk management and the insurance industry that he believed the ACBL likely took the position it did (against our unit's adopting its own ZTP) out of concern for potential lawsuits.

Mark Z expressed appreciation to Dennis for his efforts to draft a ZTP for our unit. Mark Z pointed out that the ACBL has been doing more to crack down on online cheating and that it has taken over the handling of disciplinary measures from Unit and District entities. He also added that District 8 President Debbie Romero said that she thought any adoption of our own policy would have to be approved by District 8 leadership.

Solutions to the problem of recurring behavior problems included having a talk with the Tournament Director prior to events, informing him about historical problems and encouraging him to take firmer action against offenders, as allowed in the ACBL laws. Don suggested having a board member approach players privately to encourage improvement in behavior; he volunteered to do this for a particular pair.

Dian made a motion to adopt the ZTP policy that Dennis had proposed, but no one seconded the motion, and so a vote was not held. Mark Z tabled the proposal but encouraged Dennis to hold on to it in case we want to revisit it at a future time.

### **Issues in Relation to Collinsville, IL Regional**

Mark Z shared that an Illinois unit from District 8 had moved one of their regionals to Collinsville to be held in September about 3 weeks after the end of our August Regional. Mark Z and Mark B discussed this and both had concerns that this close timing could hurt the turnout for our regional. Mark Z proposed—and the board agreed—to voice our concerns with District 8 but to not oppose the Collinsville event at this time. The board felt that Mark B would be the best person to communicate our concerns with District 8. We can gather data this year and raise the issue at a future point if we suspect a negative impact from the close timing.

### **Tournaments**

#### May Sectional

Mark B will hand out life master pins.

Sandy will send a reminder to board members about the board's clean-up assignments.

Dennis asked Dian to stick to a \$400 hospitality budget, which she agreed to do.

Ken confirmed that he had mailed out flyers more than a month in advance.

Sandy will take winner photos.

#### August Regional

Mark B and Sandy drafted a sign, a letter to hotel guests, and a President's message for the website all aimed at promoting improved behavior at the hotel. Mark B forwarded the drafts to the board. The board unanimously passed a motion to allow Mark B and Sandy the authority to make final decisions on the wording in these communications. Dennis said he would get the signage made.

Dennis bought the PA system and went over his approved budget amount of \$500 to buy the system and create the box for transporting it. The board unanimously passed a motion to increase Dennis's budget to \$550 to cover actual expenses involved.

Mark Z will begin recruiting local players who might give talks/lessons at the tournament while we await word on what pros might be coming. Dennis agreed that a corner of the big room will work for these talks. The Pre-Bulletin and Pianola reminder email can be used to inform players about the talks.

Dennis asked Steve to pay \$200 toward the Pre-Bulletin. This is a standard tournament expense and does not require board approval. Dennis, John, and Sandy agreed to do the editing work on this year's edition, which must be ready to go out a month before the tournament, when the Pre-Bulletin is emailed to all players who came to our Regional last year.

Dennis has reserved a side room for Phyllis's Monday lesson and game; otherwise, we won't be using any space outside the ballroom for education or playing purposes.

#### September 499r Tournament

John shared the flyer for the event via email shortly before the board meeting. Mark Z tabled a vote on the flyer until next month to give everyone a chance to look it over.

#### October Sectional/NLM Regional

Dennis shared the flyer with the board earlier in April. The Board unanimously approved it with none opposed. Dennis will submit it to the ACBL.

The Board agreed that we should continue offering the NLM Regionals, which draw I/N players.

### **Committees**

#### Website:

Dennis reported that he and Terry worked on a summary of the ACBL's slightly relaxed COVID 19 policy. Terry updated the website and provided a link to the ACBL's official policy. Dennis encouraged everyone to take a look at the new policy.

#### Nominating:

Efforts to find people to fill the vacancy on the board have been rebuffed. New names were put forth, and people will reach out to the potential candidates.

#### Education:

Mark Z asked everyone to think about ideas for promoting bridge education in our unit.

### **New Business**

Dennis pointed out that we need to look ahead to our fall elections, especially with Mark B needing to step down from the President's position due to term limits. We need to examine the by-laws to review how many years a person can serve on the board.

**There was a motion to adjourn the meeting that was unanimously passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:57 PM.**

**Next Meeting: June 10, 2024**