

ACBL Unit 143 Board Meeting Minutes, Monday, November 18, 2024

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

Attendees: Dennis Abeln, Sandy Bigg, Mark Boswell, Dian Brazier, Don Chase, Terry D'Amato, Ken Eiger, Steve Russell, Jay Shah, Janet Vontz, John Welte, and Mark Zellmer.

Absent: Tod Moses

Call to order.

The meeting was called to order at 7:06. There was a delay caused by a change in the Zoom access link that was precipitated by a change of meeting date.

President's Report

Mark Boswell welcomed Ken Eiger to the Unit 143 Board of Directors.

Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the September 9 Unit Board meeting.

Approval of the Treasurer's Report

Steve Russell reported that we have approximately \$77,000 in our account and are still receiving bills regarding the Regional.

A non-board member who attended the annual meeting held during the October sectional was disappointed there was no financial report for his examination. No further action is planned.

A motion was made by Mark Zellmer and seconded by Sandy Bigg to approve the treasurer's report.

Regional Tournament

An addendum from the Renaissance Hotel for the 2025 Regional tournament. It did not include anything about the Unit indemnifying the hotel for losses caused by participants.

Mark B asked Dennis to share significant changes in the contract with the Renaissance Hotel regarding the 2025 Regional tournament.

Dennis went over the contract and noted significant changes:

The room nights will be sold at \$120 plus tax
There is a 5% increase in room block

Better office location

Free use of the room Phyllis used on Monday for the entire week of the tournament. .

There are still minor details, but none included a financial impact.

Dennis said we exceeded our room requirements by a couple of percent.

Dennis made a motion to approve the contract. Mark Z seconded the motion and it passed.

Don Chase reported that his conversations the ACBL indicate they have insurance for incidents at Regional venues, but not club events. The liability of the Board is unknown. It was pointed out there could be a problem in today's litigious climate. No one knew of incidents of other Units experiencing lawsuits.

An ad will appear in the July ACBL Bulletin for the Regional mentioning details including cutoff for special bridge room rate. In 2023 we had two ads in the Bulletin, but we decided not to do one this past year. A sixth of a page ad cost \$250. A third of a page is \$500. Dennis and Sandy will be tasked with making publicity decisions. Sandy has been using a list provided by Ken of addresses to mail flyers to. She will add more clubs to the flyer mailing list.

Requests for web movements were fielded at the Sectional and at the Regional tournaments. The board movement is not the usual movement, and players need to be warned to check the Bridge Mates at each round to make sure the proper boards and players are at their table.

Drop the mini Soloway.

The start times were discussed and tabled to next meeting.

The side games will be dropped.

The evening games may be dropped. We do not lose money, but attendance is shrinking. Many tournaments are dropping evening games. This may impact players who are still working. It may impact players who stay overnight and plan to play evening games.

What can we do to improve I/N participation in Regional games? If there is not enough attendance, the players are moved to a higher rated game and are unhappy.

The I/N players seem reluctant to pay higher fees. They played in NLM Regionals when it was free, but much less with a \$10 fee.

A new game called bracketed pairs is being tested. We will learn more details about the game as they appear.

Peter Wilke discouraged Barometer pairs.

The discussion about a free Monday night dinner to attract players was eliminated because of high cost.

The cost of tea is equal to coffee which is approximately \$5 per cup.

The donuts were unacceptable this year because they were messy. It was suggested that Dennis use his good judgement to select appropriate food items.

The entry fees will be dependent on various decisions to be made at future meetings.

Drop free hotel rooms for Unit President and tournament chair.

Dennis gave a free room to two local players who were staying at the hotel and playing in lots of events.

Dian must be at every session and a hotel room would ease her burden

Phyllis needs a room because of her time requirements for partnership chair.

Karen Walker has resigned her position as Regional Chair in Champaign. If that tournament is not held, our May Sectional could be upgraded to a NLM Regional.

October Sectional

We made \$193. Table count was 196, the same as May. It was down from October, 2023, when we had free entries for non life masters.

Dennis requested more participation in clean up of trash after each session.

There were no photographs of winners.

Dennis mentioned that snacks are not critical in the success of a tournament. Dian prefers a party-like atmosphere and feels snacks are a positive attraction for a successful tournament. Sticky and messy food items should be avoided to preserve the integrity of the cards. Diane will be consulted as to what treats seem to be popular.

The caddy for the non Life Master Swiss is unnecessary as the director can handle caddy duties. Jay says he uses the Sectional as an opportunity to train caddies for Regional games. The Regional games have a built-in trainer and there have not been complaints about Regional caddies.

Unit supplies not confined to the assigned shelves in the storage closet at the Bridge Center need to be removed and stored elsewhere. The Bridge Center is okay with the shelf unit holding the cases with boards, anything that can be stored on top, the dolly and the thin box with yard signs.

January Sectional

Sandy put a notice on Pianola. Flyers will be mailed to various clubs.

Sandy and John will get together about publicity about the March 499er.

Peter will use web movements.

Committee Reports

Steve will order more Life Master pins.

Terry requests Director bios from Ken, Don and Janet.

Tod has missed too many board meetings. He will be approached about his attendance.

Election of officers

A motion was made to elect Mark Zellmer to be President. It was seconded and approved.

A motion was made to elect Ken Eiger to be Vice President. It was seconded and approved.

A motion was made to continue Steve Russell as treasurer. It was seconded and approved.

A motion was made to continue Janet Vontz as secretary. It was seconded and approved.

Old Business

The chairman position of the upcoming NABC is unfilled. Mike Carmen is still considering the task. The ACBL will run the tournament if we do not provide a chairman. If we do not provide a chairman, St. Louis will probably not be chosen as a location for a future NABC.

Mark Zellmer offered to assist Mike Carmen, and will call Mike and try to get a decision.

Next meeting is December 9.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26.