

ACBL Unit 143 Board Meeting Minutes, Wednesday June 14, 2023

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

Attendees: Mark Boswell, Mark Zellmer, Steve Russell, Sandy Bigg, Dennis Abeln, Don Chase, Terry D'Amato, Diane Deutch, Ken Obrecht, Jay Shah, and John Welte

The meeting was called to order at 7:07pm. A quorum was present.

The minutes from the April 12, 2023 board meeting were approved as submitted. (There was no meeting in May, 2023.)

The Treasurer's report was approved as submitted.

President's Report:

Mark Boswell explained he would incorporate his report into the meeting.

Tournament Chair's Report:

Dennis voiced concerns about the lack of attendance by I/N players at tournaments. Mark Boswell and Don Chase volunteered to go to clubs that offer I/N games to invite a conversation with these players to understand why they are not participating.

October Sectional/NLM Regional:

The board unanimously approved to hold the fall tournament at the St. Louis Bridge Center (SLBC).

The board unanimously approved an agreement presented by Dennis for 2024 to pay the SLBC \$500/day plus \$15 per table in excess of 160 tables per day.

The board unanimously passed a motion to cancel all future reservations at Blanchette. Dennis reported that the SLBC would like to continue to be the venue for the Unit's tournaments and that they do not plan to downsize their space for the next 6 years.

The board agreed to drop the guest lectures for the fall tournament because no one has been coming. We can modify for the future depending on the feedback we receive.

The board carried a motion to offer free entries for the NLM Regional in October; 10 voted for, 1 against. The goals behind the free entry are to get I/N players to play in these tournaments, since their attendance has been poor, and also to create a buzz that would get people talking and excited. On the flyer, we will emphasize that this is a one-time deal. Dennis recommended the Mark and Don aggressively promote the NLM Regional to the I/N players when they go into to the clubs for their conversations.

The board unanimously voted to have Gold Rush pairs on Friday and Saturday plus a morning 0-49 game on Friday and Saturday that can be folded into the Gold Rush if there are not enough tables. The board passed a motion to have Gold Rush Swiss teams on Sunday with 10 voting for and 1 abstaining. The Board voted unanimously for two single-session Open Pairs sessions for both Friday and Saturday; and Open Swiss teams on Sunday. (When asked why we were not holding a 2-session open pair event for Friday or Saturday, Dennis explained that Peter Wilke had told him that the single-session open pair events paid out more total points than the 2-session events.)

The board unanimously but conditionally approved to have a Friday evening Swiss event pending Peter Wilke's approval to allow Beth Percich or Bob McDill to run it. Dennis will follow up.

Dennis reported that Peter had been pleased with the performance of both Bob and Beth at the May Sectional.

The board approved a motion, 10 for with Jay recusing himself, to have Bootleggin' BBQ provide Sunday lunch for members who want to pre-order and prepay \$15 (must order no later than 7 PM on Saturday). Jay recused himself because a member of his family owns the business. A minimum of 30 orders would be required. The lunch would come with two sides and a choice of two meats. Jay explained that a QR code for viewing the menu and ordering/paying would be available at the tournament, and directions for ordering will also be on our website. Jay also offered to help attendees with ordering if they are unfamiliar with using QR codes.

Dennis expressed concern about clean up; that will fall on the board's shoulders unless we can arrange for 'Bootleggin'' to send someone to help. Sandy proposed using paper table cloths to make clean up easier and quicker. Dennis will follow up with 'Bootleggin''.

Annual Membership Meeting:

The board unanimously approved a motion to hold the Annual Membership Meeting on Friday, October 20, 2023 at 9:45 AM, fifteen minutes before the first session of the Sectional/NLM Regional. Members will vote on the revised by-laws and also vote on board members who are up for re-election. The board unanimously approved a slate of Dennis Abeln, Ken Obrecht, and Don Chase.

The October tournament flyer will be revised to show notice of the meeting.

By-Laws:

Mark asked if everyone had read the revised by-laws emailed to the board. He explained that many of the by-laws were twenty-five years and in serious need of updating. Don raised minor concerns about some of the grammar and punctuation; it was agreed these could be tweaked but that our focus was on the content. The board passed a motion to approve the revised by-laws, with 10 voting for and 1 abstaining. John, who abstained, wanted a comparison of the prior by-laws with the new ones, and Mark referred him to our unit website where the current by-laws are posted.

Notice of the changes to the by-laws and the plan to vote on the revision with the date and time will need to be sent out to the Membership. It was discussed whether this could be done via email or had to go out via US Postal Service. A final vote will take place at the next meeting. Terry will post the proposed by-law revision on the web, in addition to keeping the old version available as well.

August Regional:

All board members volunteered to come for the bidding box party Saturday morning before the Regional. Mark Z is heading this up.

Dennis said we have cancelled the donuts but will bring them back if the room count justifies it.

Dennis plans to do one more email blast (July 15) to remind people to reserve their rooms before the special hotel rate goes away.

The board unanimously approved paying \$19 for the Sunday lunch so that we can offer pasta with vegetables and sauce in addition to chicken.

Data supported continuing to just use 2 caddies/each session for the team events. Jay has put out word to recruit the caddies. Directors will handle caddy tasks for the evening sessions.

Dennis reported that Peter Wilke is willing to have Bob and Beth help with the evening Swiss sessions.

Diane is set for hospitality: she is just doing the candy bowls.

Free rooms for the tournament need to be settled; Mark B is entitled to one but is undecided if he will use it. Phyllis should have one. Dennis is entitled to one but will likely opt to not use it. For free plays, Dennis wants to give Phyllis 2 per day considering all the partnership work she does; the rest of the board members would get 4 each for the tournament.

Phyllis is asking for one board member to help with the Partnership Desk at the Regional for each event. Sandy has offered to email a sign-up sheet so board members can get on the schedule to help with this.

Committee Reports:

I/N Tournaments: John presented the September I/N flyer. The board unanimously voted to approve it.

Nominating Committee: Mark shared two possible nominees to fill a vacate spot on the board: Alan Popkin and Todd Moses. Because the subject came up first with Alan, Mark will await word from him to see if he is interested before going further. The board agreed both were great candidates.

Player of the Year Award:

Mark B shared that Milt Zlatic had tentatively determined, via the usual formula, that the Player of the Year Award would go to Mark Boswell this year. Milt needs to complete his work. If the result is confirmed, Vice President Mark Z will present the award this time!

Meritorious Service Award: Mark pointed out that this award has not been given out for some time but felt that it was time to bring it back because we had someone who was especially deserving: Debbie Romero. The board heartily agreed and approved Debbie's nomination unanimously. Mark will make arrangements for ordering the plaque.

Other Business:

Mark shared that Ann Lemp representing the St. Louis Bridge Center, wanted the SLBC to be able to use the unit's Pianola account so that they could advertise their Larry Cohen seminar in October. The ACBL leadership told Dennis that the ACBL had worked out a contract with Pianola limiting a unit's use to its own business; clubs were not supposed to use the unit's account. However, the ACBL then hedged and said we could go ahead if the Unit agreed. Dennis explained that bridge clubs could elect to have their own accounts with Pianola, but they are quite expensive. He also expressed concern that if we opened this up to clubs that we might have so many blasts that it could annoy our membership and water down our own messages. Jay explained that the SLBC could contact the ACBL to get the unit's email addresses if needed and could do its own email blast.

9 board members, with one abstention, voted to not allow SLBC to use our Pianola account to advertise the Larry Cohen event. Mark will notify Ann Lemp.

The next board meeting will be July 12, 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 PM.

Submitted by Sandy Bigg June 19, 2023