

Gainesville Bridge Club By-Laws

as of December 2018

Article I – Name

The name of this organization shall be the Gainesville Bridge Club (GBC).

Article II – Nature of Business

The purpose of the business of the Gainesville Bridge Club shall be:

- a) Education:
 - i. providing bridge lessons to members and non-members;
 - ii. providing educational material such as hand records and web analysis about bridge hands that members experience at the club;
 - iii. providing an atmosphere where members of the Gainesville Bridge Club can discuss hands, conventions, and other parts of the game of bridge to increase their learning about bridge and stimulate their intellectual engagement with the game; and
 - iv. sponsoring outreach programs to elementary, middle, and high schools to start bridge education at a young age.
- b) Health:
 - i. stimulating memory, visualization, and sequencing as members learn and play bridge
- c) Providing bridge services:
 - i. holding duplicate bridge games, including rating point games, championship games, and special games in accordance with the rules and regulations of the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL);
 - ii. sponsoring bridge tournaments as members are interested.
 - iii. promoting casual bridge games among members and in the community.

Article III – Membership and Dues

Section 1

The GBC is deemed an open Club in accordance with the rules of the ACBL. No restrictions for membership can be made that are not in accordance with the rules of the ACBL. Therefore, any person may make application to the Treasurer for membership in the GBC will become a member upon payment of the annual dues established by the GBC. Membership in the GBC may be revoked on in accordance with the rules given in the following sections: 2 and 3.

Section 2

Any person deemed by the Weekly Game Director and/or Club Manager to be guilty of obnoxious behavior during a duplicate game may be suspended, temporarily, for up to seven days pending adjudication by the Disciplinary Committee. Within 48 hours, the Recorder (see Reference Documents) must be notified by the Director or Club Manager, and the Disciplinary Committee will be notified immediately by the Recorder. The accused will have the opportunity to respond to the Recorder and Disciplinary Committee prior to the final adjudication. The Disciplinary Committee has the authority to

rescind the suspension or extend it to at most 60 days. The accused may appeal any extension to the Disciplinary Committee. In the event of an extension, the Club Recorder will forward a report of the case to the accused, the District 9 Recorder, and to the ACBL Recorder.

Section 3

Any player who in a 12-month period has had three recordings adjudicated as unethical by the Club Recorder will likewise be referred within 48 hours of the third recording date to the Disciplinary Committee. That committee has the authority to suspend the player or players for a period of up to 60 days. The player or players may appeal the decision to the Disciplinary Committee. Further, the Disciplinary Committee has the authority to disallow a pair from playing together for a period of up to 60 days, in lieu of a full suspension. The Club Recorder will forward a report of the case to the accused, the District 9 Recorder, and the ACBL Recorder.

Section 4

Any person deemed guilty of conduct detrimental to the welfare of the club (e.g. felonies) may be suspended for not more than one (1) year by a majority vote of the Disciplinary Committee.

Article IV – Dues and Playing Fees

Section 1

Annual Dues shall be recommended by the Officers and Board of Directors. Changes in the Annual Dues must be approved by a simple majority of the Club membership at a regular meeting of the GBC.

Section 2

Payment of the playing fee shall be required of every participant in the regular rating point games conducted by the GBC, except as noted in Section 4 below. The playing fees shall be recommended by the Officers and Board of Directors. Changes in these fees must be approved by simple majority of Club membership at a regular meeting of the GBC.

Section 3

The playing fees to be charged for participation in all events conducted by the GBC, other than the regular rating point games, shall be established by the Tournament Committee and approved by the Officers and Board of Directors of the GBC.

Section 4

Exceptions from the playing fee for the regular rating point game and/or any other events conducted by the GBC can only be made by a recommendation of the Board of Directors followed by a majority of the voters at a regular or special meeting of the GBC. The current exceptions to the payment of the playing fees are given in Section 5.

Section 5

If the Director is required to play, then the fee shall be waived. If there is an Official Standby player and the Official Standby player participates in the regular game, then the fee shall be waived.

Article V – Officers

Section 1

The officers of the club shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 2

The terms of all the officers shall be one (1) year with the privilege of re-election.

Section 3

The newly elected officers shall take office at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Section 4

The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

- a) **The President** shall be the official representative of the club. The President shall preside at all meetings of the GBC and the Board of Directors. The President shall appoint all committee chairpersons subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. The President shall appoint a Parliamentarian.
- b) **The Vice-President** shall assume the duties of the President in the President's absence. The Vice-President shall assist the President in his/her activities.
- c) **The Secretary** shall keep full and accurate minutes of each meeting of the GBC and the Board of Directors. The secretary shall maintain an accurate record of the by-laws, membership, and committees.
- d) **The Treasurer** shall be the custodian of all funds of the club, collect all dues, fees, and receive all monies. The Treasurer shall make disbursements upon the receipt of invoices and shall insure that funds from the club's treasury shall be used only to secure items or services which will be available to each active member. The Treasurer shall accept all applications for membership. The Treasurer shall prepare a financial statement at the end of June and the end of December which will be presented at the next weekly meeting of the GBC.

The Officers of the GBC will receive no compensation for their services without the approval by a majority vote of the members present at a meeting of the GBC conducted as described below.

Article VI – Meetings and Business Procedures

Section 1

There shall be regular meetings of the club during April and October. If no other time is set by the Board of Directors, said meetings shall be held on the last Monday of the month. A notice of the regular meeting, which includes the agenda for the same, shall be announced at least fourteen (14) days prior to said meetings and posted on the Club Website. Matters discussed at meetings will be resolved by a hybrid of electronic voting, hand delivery, and United States Postal Service. Within a week after the meeting, a link to a ballot will be emailed to all paid up members with email addresses. Ballots will be hand delivered *or* sent by United States Postal Service (USPS) to those members without an email address. Members must complete their online ballots or hand-deliver or postmark their ballots within seven days of the sending of the ballot for their vote to be counted. Hard copy ballots will be considered

valid if they are in an envelope with the voter's signature over the seal, delivered by hand or by USPS. For any vote to be considered binding, at least half of the paid-up members of the club must vote. For any measure to pass, a plurality of the cast votes must vote yes for the measure.

Section 2

The nomination and election of officers and five (5) elected members of the Board of Directors shall be held in October.

Section 3

Special meetings of the club may be called by the President, by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, or by a petition given of twelve (12) or more members of the GBC given to the Secretary. Written notice of a special meeting must be sent to all members at least seven (7) days prior to such meetings.

Section 4

The fiscal year shall be from January 1 through December 31.

Section 5

The Board of Directors may announce or authorize the announcement of votes on club business which do not need a meeting. By a petition to the GBC President, any 12 paid up members may likewise petition the board for a club wide vote on club business that does not require a meeting. Any matters up for a club vote will be announced a week before the voting process is set to start. Any 12 members of the club can petition to have a meeting about the matter in accordance with section 3. Such a petition will delay the vote until after the meeting. Petitions must be acted upon within 30 days of receipt. If no such petition is presented, a link to a ballot will be emailed to all paid up members with email addresses. Ballots will be hand delivered or sent by United States Postal Service (USPS) to those members without an email address. Members must complete their online ballots or hand-deliver or postmark their ballots within seven days of the sending of the ballot for their vote to be counted. Hard copy ballots will be considered valid if they are in an envelope with the voter's signature over the seal, delivered by hand or by USPS. For any vote to be considered binding, at least half of the paid-up members of the club must vote. For any measure to pass, a plurality of the cast votes must vote yes for the measure.

Article VII – Board of Directors

Section 1

The Board of Directors shall consist of Officers and five (5) members elected by the GBC. The Club Manager shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The immediate Past President and Tournament Chairperson shall serve as ex-officio members without voting power. The term of the Officers on the Board of Directors shall be one (1) year. The term of the remaining board members shall be two (2) years with no more than 3 of those seats up for election in any given year.

Section 2

The newly elected officials shall take office on January 1st.

Section 3

The Board of Directors shall have general supervision of the affairs of the club, fix the hour and place of meetings, and perform such duties as specified below:

- a) **Appoint** the Club Manager and Club Recorder. Both the Club Manager and Club Recorder fulfill their ACBL specified duties.
- b) **Elect** three (3) members for the nominating committee for the October elections.
- c) **Approve** committee chairperson appointments.
- d) **Recommend** playing fees.
- e) **Recommend** annual dues.
- f) **Recommend** whether the GBC shall sponsor a Sectional or other Tournament.

Section 4

The Board of Directors shall meet within the last two (2) weeks prior to each regularly scheduled meeting of the club and may hold additional meetings as the President or a majority of the Board of Directors shall deem necessary.

Section 5

A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum, but all decisions shall be made by affirmative vote of the majority of its full membership.

Section 6

The Board of Directors shall recommend and approve any expenditures required to run the GBC such as tables, cards, rental fees for the facilities, social events, etc. However, the purchasing of capital equipment, defined as costing more than \$500, or committing the GBC to any financial obligation extending over a period of eleven (11) months or more shall require a majority vote at a regular club meeting.

Section 7

The use of any equipment or items belonging to the GBC shall be prohibited without the approval of the Board of Directors at a scheduled Board meeting. The use of any capital equipment as defined in Section 6 above, belonging to the GBC shall be prohibited without the approval of a majority of the Board and subsequent approval vote by the club membership.

Article VIII – Nominations and Elections

Section 1

A Nominating Committee of three (3) members, elected by the Board of Directors, shall prepare a ballot of nominees for the officers of the GBC and each member of the Board of Directors up for election for the upcoming club year. This ballot shall contain no more than two (2) names for each position. The nominating committee shall obtain the consent of each nominee before placing his/her name on the ballot.

Section 2

The report of the Nominating Committee shall be received at the annual meeting in October. Nominations from the floor shall be received at this meeting provided the nominee has agreed to serve, if elected.

Section 3

The election will be conducted as directed by the Nominating Committee. Within a week after the meeting, a link to a ballot for officers will be emailed to all paid up members with email addresses. Ballots will be hand delivered *or* sent by United States Postal Service (USPS) to those members without an email address. Members must complete their online ballots or hand-deliver or postmark their ballots within seven days of the sending of the ballot for their vote to be counted. Hard copy ballots will be considered valid if they are in an envelope with the voter's signature over the seal, delivered by hand or by USPS. For any vote to be considered binding, at least half of the paid-up members of the club must vote. For any measure to pass, a plurality of the cast votes must vote yes for the measure.

Section 4

A plurality vote shall elect the Officers and Board of Directors. The current Board of Directors will break ties.

Section 5

Should a vacancy occur in any office other than that of the President, the President shall appoint an interim officer to fill the vacancy until the next annual meeting.

Article IX – Committees

Section 1

In January, the current President shall appoint, with prior approval of those elected to serve as members of the Board of Directors during the ensuing year, Chairpersons of the following committees: Audit, By-Laws, Social, Membership, Publicity, Tournament, Education, and Development. At the same time, the Club Recorder shall appoint the chair of the Disciplinary Committee.

Section 2

With the exception of the Disciplinary Committee, each committee chairperson shall select members of his/her committee without restriction to number and shall immediately file a list of such members with the Secretary. The Club Recorder will select the four members of the Disciplinary Committee. Each committee chairperson shall be responsible to the Board of Directors and to the membership at large for the proper performance of the duties as follows:

- a) The Audit Committee shall audit all accounts of the club and make a report to the membership at the regular business meeting in January and at other times when requested by the Board of Directors or by any five (5) members.
- b) The By-Laws Committee shall receive and evaluate suggestions for changes in the By-Laws and make recommendations concerning such changes.

- c) The Social Committee shall extend hospitality to new members and guests. The Social Committee shall also make proper arrangements for all social functions prescribed by the Board of Directors.
- d) The Membership Committee shall seek to enlist new members, encourage regular play by members and assist members and guests in arranging partnerships.
- e) The Publicity Committee shall work to promote attendance at all tournaments conducted or sponsored by the club and to inform members of the results of play by reporting the activities of the club through appropriate news media. The Publicity Committee shall also prepare and distribute appropriate notices of all special games and Sectional Tournaments conducted or sponsored by the GBC.
- f) The Tournament Committee shall make all necessary arrangements for the scheduling and proper conduct of an annual tournament with a sectional or higher rating by the ACBL, provided the club has voted to sponsor such as a tournament in any given year. The Tournament Committee shall stipulate and procure all prizes to be awarded to winners in all tournaments conducted or sponsored by the club.
- g) The Education Committee will coordinate the club's offerings of bridge lessons, bridge educational material, bridge educational discussions, and bridge educational lectures. It will engage in outreach to provide information about these educational services beyond the membership, and make sure that the membership is also adequately informed about the club's educational programming.
- h) The Development Committee is charged with development (strategic planning and fundraising) for the Gainesville Bridge Club, responsive to members' interests, including but not limited to, work on the charitable organization status of the club, work on finding and fundraising for a permanent home for the club, and providing members with information about the long-term implications of decisions in front of the GBC.
- i) The Disciplinary Committee will adjudicate discipline issues as described in Article III, Sections 2, 3, and 4. Any action of the committee requires 3 members to vote, carried by a majority of voters.
- j) An ad hoc Appeals Committee, appointed by the Weekly Game Director, shall hear all appeals made by any player concerning a Weekly Game Director's ruling and shall be composed of experienced bridge players who were present at the game. They have the authority to award adjusted scores and to report unethical conduct to the Club Recorder.

Article X – Weekly Game Directors

Section 1

The Weekly Game Director (or Directors) shall be appointed by the President with input from the Club Manager.

Section 2

The Weekly Game Director shall be a certified director or qualified director.

Section 3

The Weekly Game Director shall be paid a fee for directing subject to the constraints in Article IV, Section 5 of these by-laws. The fee for each session shall be recommended by the Board of Directors and approved by a majority of voters at a GBC meeting.

Article XI – Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised* (11th edition, Da Capo Press, ISBN030682020X, 2011, or later edition as approved by the Board of Directors) shall govern the GBC in all cases to which they are applicable and in which the club is not inconsistent with these by-laws.

Article XII – Amendments to By-Laws

Notification for by-law amendments must be submitted by the Board of Directors to the full paid-up membership by e-mail or for those without e-mail addresses by regular mail, at least seven days before the voting process begins. The exact wording of the revised and original by-laws must be included. The notification must also include how the issue will be voted upon (Option A or Option B) below.

Option A: A link to an electronic ballot is submitted to the membership for those with an e-mail address and by either hand delivery or United States Postal Service (USPS) for those without within a week of the announcement of the amendment. The ballot is due (or postmarked) within 7 days of the sending. Hard copy ballots will be considered valid if they are in an envelope with the voter's signature over the seal, delivered by hand or by USPS. The amendment passes if (1) At least two-thirds of the voters vote in favor and (2) At least 50% of the members vote.

Option B: At any regular or special meeting of the club, an amendment to the By-Laws may be voted on provided the amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous regular business meeting or copies of it distributed to the membership at least one (1) week in advance of the meeting at which it is to be presented. To pass, the affirmative votes must be the larger of two-thirds of the members attending and one quarter of the total membership. If an amendment fails, a simple majority of members present can require a re-vote using the process in Option A.

Article XIII - Dissolution

In the event of the Dissolution of the GBC, the total assets shall be liquidated and allocated for charitable purposes. No portion of the funds shall be distributed among individual members. Dissolution shall take place only after a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total membership.