



Essex Contract Bridge Association

A constituent member of the English Bridge Union

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 20th June 2012 at 168 Broomfield Road, Chelmsford Essex, CM1 4HF.

Present: Ted Cockle, Nicole Cook, Alaric Cundy, Margaret Curtis, Audrey Hartley, Bernie Hunt, Tony Philpott, Sandy Riach, Dennis Valtisiaris and John Williams.

1. **Welcome and apologies for absence:** John Williams welcomed those present. He read a letter from Dick Green explaining that for health reasons he could no longer attend our meetings. He also accepted apologies from Nigel Bardsley and Graham Foster who could not attend.
2. **Minutes of the last meeting held on April 25th 2012:** These had been circulated prior to the meeting and were agreed to be a true record.
3. **Matters arising from the minutes not already included in the agenda.**
 - a. **Elections and co-options to the Committee (Item 4.a.):** John Williams recorded that Graham Foster had been elected to the ECBA Committee at the AGM. He also reported that Keith Thompson had accepted to serve on the Committee as a co-opted member but that Graham Randall had declined saying that he was happy that Graham Foster would be able to represent the members from the South-East.
 - b. **Venue and timing of future AGMs (Item 4.b.):** John Williams reported that he had raised this matter at the AGM under Any Other Business. He had explained that we tried to have our events at various venues round the County to give different people shorter travel time. The Great Baddow Hall was very convenient for the AGM in price, ease of access for the caterers and existing bridge facilities. Peter Oake had suggested that all events should be held at Barleylands as they were just as convenient as all the other venues. John had agreed that the committee would consider the matter further but that the next AGM had already been booked for the third Saturday in May and he hoped that this would allow more members to attend.
4. **The AGM debriefing:** 29 members had attended the AGM and John Williams expressed concern that this was very close to the 25 needed for a quorum. It was suggested that the low attendance might be caused by that fact that the first weekend in May is a bank holiday weekend and there are a number of bridge events being held. Next year the AGM will be later in the month which may result in a higher attendance but we should advertise more vigorously – free cheese and wine followed by free bridge.
5. **Reports from Hon. Officers:**
 - a. **Hon General Secretary:** Audrey Hartley reported that she had prepared the AGM minutes and reports for the Newsletter and also next season's programme of events. She just needed the event fees to be agreed. (See later.)
 - b. **Hon Treasurer:** Tony Philpott reported that all was going well. He asked that our prize structure should be on the agenda of our next meeting. The prize structure had last been considered in 2004/5 when many prizes had been reduced; in addition, some events were no longer held and there were also other new events.
 - c. **Hon Tournament Secretary:** Ted Cockle reported that more entries to our competitions were being paid using BACS. Margaret Curtis said that not many entries were being paid by BACS for the Essex/Herts event.
 - d. **Hon League Secretary:** Bernie Hunt said he was waiting for responses from the qualifying teams for the Premier League, but that as soon as they came in he would produce the draw. He had received applications from 20 teams for next season's SE Essex League and 8 teams for the W Essex league. The SE Essex League would be in three divisions of 8, 6 and 6 because of

promises made last season. The W Essex League would be one division. He had received 14 entries to the League KO.

- e. **Hon Teachers' Liaison Secretary:** Alaric Cundy reported that the preparations for advertising bridge holidays arranged by Essex bridge teachers for their students on our website had been made and he and Sandy Riach were waiting for the teachers to give them the details. Alaric had circulated by email details of the Meeting of the ECBA Teaching & Education Sub-Committee held on 15/06/12. Those present were John Williams, Graham Foster, Dennis Valtisiaris and himself. In brief, Graham Foster had been instrumental in starting mini bridge in three different groups of primary schools in Springfield (Chelmsford), Southend and Thurrock. The Southend & Leigh and Thorpe Bay Clubs were "heaving", they owned their own premises and between them had 10 teachers with 300 students. There were several sources of good teaching materials and these were being researched by the Sub-Committee.
- f. **Hon Webmaster:** Sandy Riach had nothing to report.

6. Progress on new initiatives/events:

- a. **Pro/Am competition:** There were 13 pairs entered so far – it was hoped that there were more to come but this was a viable number for the competition to be held. It was agreed that entries for these events and other new events should all be sent to Ted Cockle and that Ted would keep Nicole informed about the entries to those competitions where she needed to make decisions.
- b. **Pairs League:** Nicole Cook reported that this was going well. Several players had said how much they were enjoying the event. John Williams was playing in this event and said he thought the competition was exciting. It was agreed that we would plan to hold three similar sessions per year: September, October & November; January, February & March; and May June & July.
- c. **The Jubilee Celebration:** 14 Pairs took part in this celebration event and was much enjoyed. The format was good and it was agreed to hold a similar event each year.
- d. **Regional Club Committee:** Dennis Valtisiaris said that the new EBU Club Liaison Officer would be Andrew Urbanski. Barry Capal had replied to the question asked about P2P by the Chairman of Rochdale and Rayleigh Bridge Club. The Chairman was satisfied by the reply but Dennis felt it hadn't fully answered the question. He asked if he could circulate the club secretaries with information about the EBU simultaneous pairs and this was agreed.

- 7. **Programme of events for 2012/2013:** Audrey Hartley asked that the Committee decide the entry fees for next season's competitions. It was agreed that the fees should not be changed for the coming season.
- 8. **Scales of payment for Directors:** Nicole Cook presented a paper to clarify the rates of pay for Directors. The rates were those currently being paid. The rates should be independent of qualification but reflect the amount of service provided. With 6 or fewer tables Directors should be receive expenses only. With 7 or more tables a Director who only directs or scores should receive £50 per session and a Director who directs and takes care of the electronic scoring, web, etc should receive £60 per session. In general Essex strives to provide non-playing Directors for all two session events; however if a Director chooses to play and direct then they should receive only travel costs plus £10 if they use their own equipment for scoring, web, etc. Travel costs are reimbursed at 42p per mile. The Director and partner should not be required to pay table money. If, at the last minute, due to unforeseen circumstances, a player cannot attend the game and no other substitute can be found, then at the Director's discretion, he/she may play as a substitute and in this case, the Director receives full remuneration. For the Premier County Events, Championship Pairs, Swiss Pairs, Helliard and Fletcher Trophy with Cup for Clubs the County will hire one or more experienced Directors as appropriate.
- 9. **Purchase of Bridgemates:** There was some discussion about the merits of bridgemates and bridge pads and Nicole Cooke said that bridgemate II had been used recently at one of our competitions and players had been favourably impressed. It was agreed that Nicole Cooke, Tony Philpott and Ted Cockle should prepare a paper about costs to be presented at the next meeting.
- 10. **EBU Charity Status:** John Williams would be attending the EBU's Chairmen's Conference in July. Most of the programme would be about the EBU's preparations towards applying for charity status.

Documents had been received by the shareholders and the Chairman with a request for thoughts and questions to be sent to the EBU by June 25th. John Williams, Margaret Curtis and Audrey Hartley had agreed to hold a meeting the following evening to discuss this matter.

11. **Chairmen's Conference:** This meeting would be on July 11th.
12. **Corn Cairdis:** Alaric Cundy had partnered his brother in the recent Corn Cairdis Competition (a friendly competition, held annually, between England and Ireland with three teams of four: an officials team, a host County team and a club team). He had spoken with the EBU team members and they had suggested that he ask his county if it could host the event in 2015. Alaric said that the costs could be as high as £2,000 and that no help would be forthcoming from the EBU. It was agreed that Essex should not offer to hold the Corn Cairdis in 2015 as it was impossible to justify spending that much money for the benefit of 8 Essex members and 4 officials. John Williams said he would inform the EBU that we were not able to host the Corn Cairdis in 2015.
13. **Barbara Cornell's Proposal:** Barbara Cornell had offered to give £200 per year in memory of her husband Ray Cornell; to be given as a prize for one of our competitions. She did not want it used to purchase a trophy. It was agreed that this should be presented to the club that qualified for the Garden Cities regional final in the Helliard Competition to defray the expenses of the team members and the remainder to be used by the club. The Committee Members recorded their thanks to Barbara for her generous gift.
14. **Meeting with Club representatives:** This meeting would be held on September 19th at 19.30. Audrey Hartley would book a venue. It was agreed that non-affiliated clubs should be invited to attend so that they could be informed about things that were happening in the County. John Williams invited Committee Members to join him at the meeting.
15. **New rules for League Competitions:** The rules for the League Competitions were being revamped by Audrey Hartley. One of the changes was with promotions – if there are 7 or 8 teams in a division the 2 teams should be promoted and relegated and if 6 or fewer only one team should be promoted and relegated. However, there should be some flexibility because teams dropping out and new teams enter. There would also be changes in the wording about playing matches in time, arriving late to matches and the final finishing date. Bernie was asked to make the draws for the Leagues and the league KO available earlier this year and he agreed that they should be done late August or early September.
16. **Herts/Essex joint venture:** Margaret Curtis said that entries for this were coming in slowly – but this was usual.
17. **AOB:** There was no other business.
18. **Date of Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be on Wednesday 10 October 2012 at the home of John Williams.
19. **Meeting Closed:** John Williams closed the meeting at 22.30. The Committee members thanked Audrey Hartley for her hospitality.