



Essex Contract Bridge Association

A constituent member of the English Bridge Union

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 16th January 2013 at Audrey Hartley's house – 168 Broomfield Road, Chelmsford CM1 4HF.

Present: Ted Cockle, Alaric Cundy, Margaret Curtis, Audrey Hartley, Bernie Hunt, Tony Philpott, Keith Thompson, Dennis Valtisiaris and John Williams.

1. **Welcome and apologies for absence:** John Williams welcomed those present and accepted apologies for absence from Nigel Bardsley, Nicole Cook, Graham Foster and Sandy Riach.
2. **Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday, October 10th 2012:** These had been circulated prior to the meeting. John pointed out that in the last line of item 5 "Tony's successor" should read "Ian's successor". This was changed and the rest of the minutes were agreed to be a true record.
3. **Matters arising from the minutes not already included in the agenda:**
 - a. **Advertising Barbara Cornell's gift for the Helliard on the website:** Audrey reported that she had checked the website and there was no mention of the gift. It was accepted that Sandy needed to be specifically told when an item should go on the web but that he was very prompt at implementing any request. John had prepared a draft copy (copy attached) of what needed to be said. Audrey would incorporate his words into the description of the Helliard Competition.
 - b. **Sub-committee report about website:** Ted reported that they had tried to arrange a meeting but in the end Nicole couldn't make. They had not been able to arrange an alternative date. Bernie said that it might be useful to ask Bill West for his help as he seemed very competent in organising Bernie's website.
 - c. **Alternative date for "Play with an Expert":** This would now take place on Sunday March 17th 2013 at Mountnessing Village Hall.
 - d. **Letters to new Directors in the County:** John reported that these had been written (copy attached) and sent.
 - e. **Feed back from JW's meeting, visits and letters to clubs:** At the beginning of this month John had written to all Club Secretaries in Essex (copy attached). He had received good feed back from several clubs. Clubs suggested that information about the Essex portion of P2P would be appreciated earlier, before the end of the year. They appreciated the point that extra tables at our events helped to bring down the County's portion of P2P. It was agreed that Audrey should mail Club Secretaries with news of specific events aimed at non-county squad players.
 - f. **Purchase of bridgemates:** 30 bridgemates and two servers had been purchased at the cost of £3,395. Two training sessions in the use of the software had been held. It was felt to be important that directors had regular use of the bridgemates and software as it was easy to forget.
 - g. **Replacement Shareholder:** It was unanimously agreed that Keith Thomson would be the Essex Shareholder to replace Dick Green.
 - h. **Essex Joint Venture:** Audrey had asked Linda Fleet if she would be interested in taking over from Margaret Curtis in helping to run the Essex/Herts GP Joint Ventures. She expressed a willingness to investigate what it entailed and to discuss it with Margaret.
4. **Reports from Hon Officers:**
 - a. **Hon General Secretary:** Audrey had nothing to report not already included later in the agenda.
 - b. **Hon Treasurer:** Tony presented a copy of the income and expenditure from competitions held so far. He said that three of the competition submissions to the EBU had been sent with the wrong code but that the EBU were correcting this from their end. He thought that we looked like having

an excess of income over expenditure in the region of £3,000. In view of this he suggested that we write off the bridgemates straight away. He also said that we needed to spend some of the money reserved for Youth Development. Alaric said that this was in hand with initiatives involving Graham Foster.

- c. **Hon Membership Secretary:** Nigel had sent a report to John who presented it at the meeting. We had gained 97 members in the last year and 52 since the start of P2P.
 - d. **Hon Tournament Secretary:** Ted presented his report of the number of entries he had received to our competitions. He said that 40% of the entries were made using BACs.
 - e. **Hon League Secretary:** Bernie reported that the leagues were progressing well. The only outstanding problem was the Premier League which had only reached the semi-final stage.
 - f. **Hon Teachers' Liaison Secretary:** Alaric reported that he had sent out letters to clubs and teachers in Essex asking for entries to "Play with an Expert" from "Tomorrow's Champions" a name suggested by Margaret from the gardening world to replace non-expert, novice or beginner. It was agreed that he should send the letter to as many of the non-affiliated clubs as he could find. He said that a meeting with Graham, Dennis and himself about the development of their programme of teaching bridge in schools was moving along well. Alaric and Dennis agreed that they needed to contact Graham to arrange another meeting in the near future.
 - g. **Hon Webmaster:** Sandy was not present and had nothing to report.
5. **Schedule of Standard Penalties:** It was agreed that we adopt the Schedule of Standard Penalties at all of our competitions as listed in Appendix A of the EBU's Laws and Ethics Committee dated May 16th 2012.
6. **AGM Agenda:** Audrey reported that last year she had not circulated the agenda in the way it had been in the past and this probably resulted in the poor publicity of last Year's AGM. She hoped to make a better effort this year. It was important that if people wish to make a proposal to be included in the agenda for the AGM it needs to be sent to John or Audrey 14 days before the AGM.

The following alterations to the ECBA Constitution are required which were mentioned last year:

- a. **At the request of the EBU's Laws & Ethics Committee we propose the following addition to our Constitution:**

"The County Association will deal with any disciplinary allegations referred to it from its affiliated clubs using the Disciplinary Procedures set out in this constitution. This may involve investigation, a hearing and an appeal, however if a proper hearing has already been held then the County Association should only convene an appeal hearing. Normally no action will be taken in respect of a complaint relating to an alleged offence which occurred three months or more prior to a formal complaint in writing made to the appropriate Officer."

This to be inserted after 13.6.5

- b. **Ian Moss and Audrey had a problem with "Item 4.10.1 Full Membership" last year and the following alteration would be helpful.**

iii) is an active, bona-fide member of an affiliated bridge club in Essex.

Changed to

iii) is an active, bona-fide member of a *bridge club affiliated* to Essex.

- c. **The EBU Chairman has recommended that we insert an item about electing an Auditor annually at the AGM.**

It is proposed that the phrase "*after which an Auditor for the following year will be elected.*" be inserted in the 4th line of 3.6.

.....accounts duly audited, for each Annual General Meeting, *after which an Auditor for the following year will be elected.*

- 7. Summer Programme:** Audrey asked the committee to review the fees charged for our competitions for the summer programme. The following were agreed:

Competition	Last Year fee	change
Essex Teams of Four Championship	£30 per team	Stet
Essex Switch Cup for Teams of Four	£18 per team	Stet
Essex Mixed Team of Four	£20 per team	Stet
George Curtis Memorial Trophy	£30 per team	£36 – now blue pointed
Warboys Cup	£15 per pair	£20
Pairs Competition for Non-squad members		£10 per pair (32/36 boards)
Senior Day-time Pairs	£26 per pair per event	Stet
Pro/Am	£10 per pair	Stet
Day-time Pairs League for three sessions	£20 members each £30 non members each	Stet
Essex League	£20 per team	Stet

- 8. Regional Club Committee (postponed from the last meeting):** The minutes of the last RCC meeting and Alaric's comments are attached. Southend-on-Sea and Leigh and Thorpe Bay bridge clubs were asking for director and teacher courses. Bernie pointed out that last year there had been a four session director's course held at Barleylands to which they could have gone. 20 people had attended. Alaric said he would tell them to contact John Pain at the EBU.

- 9. EBU Shareholder's Report:** The Shareholders had nothing to report.

- 10. Herts/Essex joint venture:** Margaret reported that plans were in hand for these events. The entry fee would stay the same and so would the refreshment arrangements. She welcomed Linda Fleet's interest in helping her with the event and had already spoken with her.

11. AOB:

- a. **Map for St. Augustine's Church Hall:** A map was required for finding St. Augustine's Church Hall for the Senior Pairs in March. Audrey agreed to draw a map.
- b. **Update on the Central Essex Project:** Alaric reported that a number of clubs from central Essex had held several meetings to see how they could help each other and themselves to encourage bridge in Essex. They were looking into the possibility of acquiring premises that they could share and that they could use for teaching bridge and holding supervised bridge sessions. They were looking for support from the ECBA. John said that the committee were delighted with the progress that this initiative was making. Other clubs in Essex, Thorpe Bay, Southend & Leigh and Bernie Hunt's Bridge Academy, owned their own premises and they were prospering well. The Committee felt that though they supported the project it would be wrong to be involved at this time. However, the ECBA would be delighted to hire any premises they were able to acquire should they be suitable for our competitions; just as we have used the premises of other clubs in Essex. John agreed to write to the Central Essex project showing the Committee's support.
- c. **David Wing's Visit:** Sometime ago David Wing, a London based player, had set himself the project of raising money for the Alzheimer's Association by visiting every city in England and playing bridge in one of the clubs of that city. To that end he purchased a cup for each club to be presented to the winners of the event in which he played and asked that the club and members make donations to his chosen charity. In January it was the turn of the City of Chelmsford's bridge club to receive a visit from David. The club enjoyed a very pleasant game of bridge, raising £250 for the Alzheimer's Association; the cup was won by Sue and Chris Taylor.

- 12. Date of next meeting:** Wednesday April 24th 2013 at John's home

John closed the meeting at 10.10pm and thanked Audrey for her hospitality.