

Draft



Essex Contract Bridge Association

A constituent member of the English Bridge Union

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 25th April 2012 at Beightons, Bassetts Lane, Little Baddow, CM3 4DA

Present: Nigel Bardsley, Ted Cockle, Alaric Cundy, Margaret Curtis, Dick Green, Audrey Hartley, Bernie Hunt, Ian Moss, Dennis Valtisiaris and John Williams.

- 1. Welcome and Apologies for absence:** John Williams welcomed those present. He reported that there was a holdup on the roads and a few of the members were on their way but would be late. He accepted the apologies of Nicole Cook, Jill Hair and Tony Philpott who could not attend.
- 2. Minutes of the last meeting held on January 18th 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. Insurance (Item 7.b.):** Tony Philpott had written to Osbournes, Insurance Oxford Limited, which is the company used by the EBU to provide cover for themselves and all County Associations. He had received the following reply: "As a County Association you are covered under the English Bridge Union's own policy as opposed to an individual club policy. Under the English Bridge Union's policy there is an extension in cover under the Public Liability section of the policy to include cover up to £260,000 for Libel or Slander."
 - b. Meetings with affiliated Clubs (Item 4.a.):** John Williams had been in touch with two clubs since the last meeting.
 - i. Felsted Club's** numbers were up and Chelmsford Club had loaned them some tables to cater for this increase.
 - ii. Brevion Club** was flourishing.
 - c. Non-affiliated clubs (Item 11.e.):** John Williams had written again to all non-affiliated clubs offering to visit them and asking if they would like their club to be listed on our website. He had received nine replies and eight were: "Thanks, but no visit thanks". Eleven non-affiliated Clubs had accepted our offer of including their club details on our website.
 - d. Finishing date for the Premier League (Item 5.d.):** Margaret Curtis raised the problem of the finishing date for the Premier League. The end of September was too early with so many players on holiday during that period. It was agreed to make it the end of November with the trophy presented at the Helliars.
- 4. The AGM:**
 - a. Nominations for the Committee:** There was one vacancy on the Committee and we had received one nomination. Graham Foster was proposed by Jill Hair and seconded by John Williams and was willing to stand.
 - b. Venue and timing of future AGMs:** John had received complaints on the date and venue of the AGM. It was explained that the Great Baddow Hall was very convenient for the AGM as it had good kitchen facilities and bridge tables available for the game afterwards. It also had good parking and was very reasonably priced. Unfortunately the Hall was not available on the second Saturday of May but it was free on the first and third Saturdays. This year we had chosen the first Saturday but we had booked the third Saturday for next year. John would air this under AOB at the AGM.

c. **Honorary Members of the ECBA:** It was agreed that Jill Hair be made an Honorary Member of our Association and awarded the Certificate of "Friend of Essex Bridge" in recognition of her contribution to Bridge in Essex. The existing Honorary Members of our association are: Margaret Curtis, Dick Green, Tony Philpott and Betty Telford. In the past they were not required to pay the annual membership fee but now, with the exception of Dick Green, all are members with P2P and they are refunded the fee which is taken during normal games. Dick doesn't play sufficiently regularly to qualify as a member so his fee is paid direct to the EBU. It was agreed that in addition the names of our Honorary Members should be published on the AGM agenda.

d. **Apologies for absence:** Alaric Cundy and Tony Philpott would not be able to attend the AGM.

5. Reports from Hon. Officers:

a. **Hon General Secretary:** Audrey Hartley reported that she had prepared the Summer Programme and sent hard copies to the Club Secretaries and those without internet access.

b. **Hon Treasurer:** Tony Philpott's report was presented in his absence by John Williams. A Competitions list giving the income and costs of each competition, an Income & Expenditure Account and a Balance Sheet comparing 2011/2012 with 2010/2011 and a review for the year were circulated in advance of the meeting. The income from P2P was more than expected this year because of payment from the EBU being in arrears and includes two months at the old rate and in addition the EBU paid February's sum at the end of March instead of in April. It was agreed that the sums of £2,500 and £1,198 be set aside for a New Equipment fund and the Youth Development fund respectively.

c. **Hon Tournament Secretary:** Ted Cockle presented a summary of our competitions over the past year which was circulated at the meeting. The bank transfer facility was being used by more of our members and it was now on the website that £1 per person would be added to the entry fee for those paying on the day. He reported that he was having difficulty in retrieving the Hope Cup as it was held by some-one who had since died. It was agreed that when it was returned it should be awarded to the non-expert winner of our Play with an Expert Competition. Ted also informed us that he would be attending the Directors Courses that were being held at Barleylands. The EBU are pleased that 21 have signed up for these courses.

d. **Hon League Secretary:** Bernie Hunt said that in the West Division of the league there was only one match outstanding which would be played before the AGM. The winners of the division were Waltham Forest for the second year. The South East Division 1 was won by May and Baker. There had been a recurrence of a problem with one team failing to complete its matches in time. This team was now withdrawing from the league. It had agreed to play one more match but that would have been after the deadline. It was agreed that this match should not be played and that the League Rules for matches not played should be followed. In the South East Division 2 the winners were Ultra Vires and in South East Division 3 the winners were Hadleigh Castle. There were three matches outstanding in these two divisions but they would be played before the AGM.

e. **Hon Teachers' Liaison Secretary:** Alaric Cundy reported that Play with an Expert had gone well but numbers seemed to be dropping slightly each year. It was agreed to hold it again next year – he suggested the second Sunday in February but Audrey Hartley said that in response to a request from Nicole Cook, who felt that an Autumn date would attract more players, she had made arrangements for it to be held in October. Alaric said he had attended the RCC meeting with Dennis Valtisariis as there was a section of the meeting concerning teaching. The message from the meeting was that what is happening to teaching in Essex is much the same as in the rest of the country. The EBU were surprised that probably half of teaching was being done by teachers outside of the EBU Teaching Programme. Alaric estimated that the proportion was even greater in Essex. There were problems in getting learners to progress to affiliated clubs and further. Also entry to schools bridge competition was reduced. We would address this at our next meeting. The EBU (EBUTA) Simultaneous Pairs event was for BFA students only. He received no reply to his inquiries to the EBU about this matter. Alaric reported that a number of teachers in Essex organised bridge holidays for their students and he proposed that the committee consider advertising these holidays on our website. It was agreed that teachers who organised such events should be offered space on the website to advertise them.

f. **Hon Webmaster:** Sandy Riach did not submit a report.

6. Progress on new initiatives/events:

- a. **Pro/Am competition:** Nicole needs help to advertise this. It is on the website. It was agreed to email club secretaries and ask them to email their members with ECBA news.
- b. **Pairs League:** This has started and 14 pairs have entered. It is being run as a single division.
- c. **The Jubilee Celebration:** Bernie Hunt said that some interest had been shown in this event.
- d. **Online Journal:** John Williams had written several articles for this new venture but the editor had not made any progress with the project.
- e. **Regional Club Committee:** Alaric had already reported on the educational aspect of the meeting. Dennis Valtisiaris said that Krys Kazmierczak, the EBU co-ordinator for the RCC had resigned and that an Essex member had applied for the job.

7. **Programme of events for 2012/2013:** These had been circulated in advance. Audrey Hartley reported that she had booked halls for these events including one new venue in Writtle. Margaret Curtis said that there were a couple of clashes and Audrey agreed to investigate these.

8. **Share Holders Report:** Margaret Curtis reported that the main item coming from that meeting was the investigation in progress about the EBU becoming a charity. The Essex Shareholders were unhappy with the lack of consultation about this. The project would be discussed at the Chairmen's meeting in July. The Committee agreed to leave the matter to the Shareholders and the Chairman to discuss the matter at a meeting which would be arranged when further information had been received.

9. **Blue Points:** Margaret Curtis reported that two Blue Pointed 2-session Competitions could be held by clubs during each year and that Counties could hold four such competitions. She said that she had persuaded the EBU Tournament Committee to say that before applying to the EBU for permission to hold such an event they should first seek the approval of their County so that dates would not clash with other events. She suggested that in Essex we should not introduce new competitions as blue pointed events but rather select perhaps two of our existing competitions and up-grade them to blue pointed events. She thought that either the Tony Kelvin or the George Curtis Teams and the Swiss pairs would be good candidates for this purpose.

10. **The Constitution:** Audrey Hartley reported that The Laws & Ethics Committee were recommending the following addition to County Constitutions:

"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."

Ian Moss and Audrey Hartley had encountered a problem with the wording of a paragraph in the Constitution about full membership. It was Item 4.10.1 Full Membership (iii). They would like to change "is an active, bona-fide member of an affiliated bridge club in Essex." to "is an active, bona-fide member of a bridge club affiliated to Essex." This needed to be voted on by the membership at an AGM. It was too late to put it on the agenda now. It could be raised under AOB and put on next year's AGM agenda.

11. **New rules for League Competitions:** There were two minor changes proposed to the wording of the paragraphs about arrangements of matches and promotion between divisions. These were agreed. It was agreed to leave it to Bernie Hunt and Audrey Hartley to organise the wording of problems of late arrival for matches

12. **Herts/Essex joint venture:** Margaret Curtis handed out entry leaflets for this competition to be distributed to clubs.

13. **AOB:**

- a. **Bridgemates:** Nicole Cook reported that she would be using Bridgemate IIs at the coming weekend Championship Pairs Competition. She would appreciate feed back about how good they are/aren't with a view to the ECBA purchasing a set for use in the County and to train TDs. Costings would be in the region of £3000 for 20, plus the necessary equipment to support. We can discuss a paper she would be happy to present at the next meeting - or AGM if it is appropriate then. Tony Philpott said that he agreed with her estimate on costs.
 - b. **A Duplimate machine:** The possibility of purchasing a duplimate machine for dealing cards for our competitions was aired. It was pointed out that someone would have to look after it, deal the boards and organise transport. It was agreed that the current arrangement with Bernie Hunt was perfectly satisfactory
 - c. **Essex County Representation:** Ian Moss reported that the Selection Committee had experienced considerable difficulty in the A Squad this year. Ten pairs, mostly in the A Squad, had split up which had provided them with a problem in selecting teams. They hoped that they had now managed to make all their selections.
 - d. **Date of Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be on Wednesday 20 June 2012 at the home of Audrey Hartley.
14. **Meeting Closed:** John Williams closed the meeting, thanking Ian Moss, who was resigning from the Committee, for his work in the development of the Selection Committee and for being a member of the Conduct Committee. The Committee members thanked John Williams for his hospitality.