



Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting held at West Midlands Bridge Club

Wednesday 26 July 2010

Present:

Darren Evetts (Chairman), Sandra Squires (Secretary and Membership Secretary), Mike Thorley (Vice-Chairman), Leslie Reece (Treasurer), Adrian Knight (Match Secretary), Colin Lang, John Pyner, Nick Woosnam, Nicky Cook, Elaine Meakin (Competition Secretary), Mike Meakin, David Jones, Myra Scott.

1. Apologies

Stephanie Galvin, Peter Nicholds, Hylda Townsend, Carolyn Fisher, Jane Hall, Jon Downing

Before the meeting started Darren congratulated Coventry and North Warwickshire Bridge Club on the successful opening of their new premises. He also welcomed Nicky Cook as a new member of the committee and thanked her for taking on the role of Publicity officer. She was unanimously co-opted to the post. He also welcomed Myra Scott who had agreed to take on the role of Newcomers Development Officer. She was unanimously co-opted to the post.

2. Minutes of last meetings (21 April 2010 & 26 June 2010)

The minutes of the meeting on 21 April 2010 were taken as read with one minor correction (spelling of Hylda Townsend name) and signed by the Chairman. The minutes of the meeting on 26 June 2010 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising

From 21 April 2010: Darren thanked Colin Lang for all the work done on the revised constitution. It was approved at the EBU board meeting on 8 June 2010.

From 26 June: Nick Woosnam reported that Sutton Coldfield are still in discussion with regards to moving their teaching to Wednesdays.

4. Committees 2010/11 (Darren Evetts)

Darren Evetts presented a list of the proposed committees. Members of the Executive have all been allocated to one or more of the committees. There is one new committee this year – Newcomers Development Committee which Myra Scott had agreed to chair. Leslie Reece has agreed to stand down as a shareholder to be replaced by Darren Evetts. Leslie will act as a reserve. After some discussion on the roles of the committees, the following were approved unanimously.

Competition Committee – Elaine Meakin (Chair), George Cuthbertson, Darren Evetts, David Jones, Mike Meakin

Conduct Committee – Mike Thorley (Chair), Jon Downing, Peter Nicholds, Leslie Reece, Nick Woosnam

Disciplinary Committee – Darren Evetts (Chair), Colin Lang, John Pyner, Norman Selwyn, Sandra Squires

EBU Shareholders – John Pyner (Reporter), Darren Evetts, Colin Lang, (Leslie Reece reserve)

Match/Selection Committee – Adrian Knight (Chair), (Darren Evetts), John Pyner, Mike Thorley

Midland Counties Congress Representatives – Jon Downing, Darren Evetts, Leslie Reece

Newcomers Development Committee – Myra Scott (Chair), Nicky Cook, Pete Nicholds, Mike Thorley

Publicity Working Party – Nicky Cook (Chair), Stephanie Galvin, Elayne Meakin, Myra Twyman (Notice board), Roger Twyman (Website)

Website & IT Working Party – Ken Crane, Darren Evetts, Mike Meakin, Roger Twyman (Website)

It was agreed that the committees needed written terms of reference. The Chairmen were asked to draft the terms and forward them to Sandra Squires who will co-ordinate their review and eventual publication.

5. Treasurer's Report (Leslie Reece)

The P2P income is at the top end of the forecast, however C&NW is out of line with expectations. It was noted that sessions for June and July had not yet been uploaded by C&NW. The Green Point event produced a similar profit to last year - £350. The Charity Sims raised £820 for the Air Ambulance.

Under the new constitution all cheques now require two signatures. It was proposed the Darren Evetts, Sandra Squires and Adrian Knight be added as signatories. This was passed unanimously.

A list fees payable to host clubs had been previously circulated to the committee. After some discussion these were adopted unanimously.

The schedule is as follows:

WPL – Per Session	£150 (all in)
Single Session Event	£50 plus £1 per player over 13 Tables
Two Session One Day Events	£100 plus £2 per player over 13 tables
National Pairs Heat	50/50 Split of profits (ie Warks provide advertising, TD/Scorer and manages entries. Host Club will provide room, boards and hand copies)
Green Point Event	(Two Session Event): 50/50 split of profits however boards and hand copy costs are paid to Host Club in the usual way prior to the split.
County Matches	32 Boards counts as a single session event
Board Costs	£5 (plus VAT if applicable) per set
Hand Copies	5p (plus VAT if applicable) per copy (double sided)
WCBA Meetings	Free of Charge (Coffee etc to be sorted with and paid to Host Club)

Sandra Squires will circulate the schedule to all clubs.

6. EBU shareholders meeting 1st July 2010 (John Pyner)

The voting rights for the counties will remain the same for this year's AGM, but a new scale is to be produced based on new membership levels.

Universal membership – the EBU had announced that approx 600 clubs had affiliated and there were about 48000 members. This is an affiliation rate of about 73%. It was noted that a further Warwickshire club (Kenilworth) had recently affiliated.

Business plan

- The original forecast had been for 900 clubs and 50,000 members.
- The uptake for Director training had increased
- The stratification software is due in the autumn
- Costs were being saved as two members of staff had retired and not been replaced
- There is to be a change of angle for the Club Focus and also for the Tournament and Law and Ethics Focus
- The grading scheme had been delayed following the death of John Carter, but Peter Lee has now replaced him
- There are to be a number of minibridge promotions including a Lords versus schoolchildren match. There is to be an alignment of minibridge with the National Curriculum as an adjunct to mathematics. It was noted that there are a lot of bridge players among the new intake of MPs.
- Ron Millet presented a paper on how bridge can prevent dementia and can lead to cost savings.

Treasurers Report – The number of player sessions in the forecast is likely to be higher than the 1.8 million estimated. The P2P fee of 29p is likely to rise next year, but would need approval at the October AGM. The organisation made a £46.5k surplus for last year against a budgeted £48k loss. Sponsorship for domestic and international events had proved difficult to obtain.

Charitable status – This has been agreed in principle, but it is unlikely to be auctioned before April 2012.

Meeting Schedule – At the AGM, it is proposed to reduce the shareholders meetings to two per year with a chairmans meeting in addition if needed.

Changes to the Articles

- A three year tenure for board members was agreed
- Standing committee chairman from board on a 50/50 basis
- Definition of 'junior member' deleted, therefore 'relevant player member' changed to 'player member'. A 'member' is a shareholder.
- The minimum age for directors is 18
- The directors are eight elected and two appointed
- Bridge for all players are not included in the total of members to calculate shares (are they members?)

Law and Ethics – Artificial 1H and 1S now at level 5

Tournament– There is now a proposal that to play for a club in national tournaments (NICKO or Garden Cities) the player must have played in the club a set number of times (suggested 12) in the previous year.

This was felt to be an unnecessary restriction on club's ability to choose players. It was agreed that Darren Evetts would contact the EBU to express the committee's concerns. It was felt that length of membership at a club was a more relevant proposal.

Charity events

Stratford upon Avon had expressed serious concerns re the charging of P2P fee on charitable events as they run a number of events during the year. It appears that there was a change of policy possibly brought about because the EBU realised that they would lose a significant number of player sessions if all charity events were excluded. Clubs can now nominate one session for exclusion from P2P and all Children in Need sessions are exempt.

The committee agreed it was unlikely that the EBU would change their policy for this year. However it was agreed to contact the EBU to request that in future clubs be allowed to nominate a charity of their choice rather than Children in Need or to have two exempt P2P sessions.

Future Governance

The EBU is consulting on the possible future governance of the EBU. The systems being considered are as follows

1. Leave the system unchanged (so counties have up to 4 shares based upon the number of members).
2. Strengthen the current system in some way (eg Shareholders being elected at the County AGM, requiring shareholders to periodically visit clubs).
3. For Clubs to have a direct vote (postal or electronic) but only on the election of the EBU's officers and Directors and Members of Standing Committees. On all other voting issues the current system of Shareholder votes at General Meetings would continue.
4. A one member one vote system – which would mean each member having one vote.

Clubs will be circulated with the proposal and comments will be requested.

7. Membership Report (Sandra Squires)

Sandra reported on the current membership numbers as shown by the latest EBU spreadsheet. The county has 1737 members of affiliated clubs. There are 76 BFA members and 28 members who have joined the EBU as direct members, but who have not yet joined the county. The list also highlights 108 people who were EBU members last year who do not belong to an affiliated club and have not joined the EBU directly. The direct members need to be contacted and encouraged to join the county. Sandra Squires agreed to design a standard letter and application form and to contact all the direct members.

The list of non joining members will be circulated to the committee once Kenilworth has uploaded its membership data. Committee members will be asked to contact people that they know on the list to encourage them to join the county and EBU.

8. Competition Secretary's Report (Elayne Meakin)

WPL – Elayne Meakin noted that only 18 pairs out of 60 had currently paid. It was agreed that we need a written commitment by 24 August 2010 to enable the leagues to be formulated. Payment after 31 August will be £80 per pair per session as previously agreed.

Ian Hendry will assist with the organisation on the night. He will deal with book rulings and will take details of any judgement rulings which will be discussed by the senior county TDs. Elayne Meakin and Maggie Pyner will assist with the administration.

The event cannot run without the use of Bridgemates. West Midlands BC will be buying a second set and have asked the county to pay £500 (20%) toward the cost as they will be using them regularly. The county would also be agreeing to 20% of maintenance and battery costs. Leslie Reece indicated that the county can afford it. The proposal was passed unanimously. The Bridgemates can be used by the county for their offsite competitions. Darren Evetts is to confirm that the equipment will be covered by insurance when off site.

Frank Cup – The proposed format for the event had been circulated and was taken as read. The event will be a handicapped teams event. It was noted that the handicaps proposed were a first guess and may need to be revised for subsequent years. The top teams prior to adjusting for the handicap would go forward to the Goodman Cup. There would be a minimum number of 4 and a maximum of 8 depending on the entry level.

This was agreed unanimously.

9. Match Secretary's Report (Adrian Knight)

The Dawes team were congratulated on winning the National playoff final of the Inter-county League winners. The new season has started well against Worcestershire. The Dawes team won 19 – 1, the Porter team drew 10 – 10 and the Markham team won 15 – 5. The next match is away to Staffordshire on 10 September.

Adrian reported that he currently has three pairs for the Edgar Foster cup pairs from the top of last season Warwickshire Championship. A fourth pair is required and Adrian was asked to select an appropriate pair.

10. League Secretary's Report (Jon Downing)

Application forms for entries to the league have gone out.

At the AGM Dan Crofts had proposed that all matches should be played on a specified date each month. It was noted that most of the proposal was covered by the existing arrangements; however the committee considered that the proposal was not practical. Darren Evetts will write to Dan to thank him for his input and explain the decision.

The rules on the website say that there can be unlimited numbers in the team. The limit has always been 8 and the change to the published rules needs to be clarified..

11. Midland Counties Congress (Darren Evetts)

The MCC had been hit by severe weather this year. To avoid bad publicity all non-shows had been given a full refund of their entrance fees which had resulted in a loss in a year which was due to be the best for some time. Although reserves are sufficient to cover the commitments for next year, the MCC committee are concerned about their financial viability. It was proposed that WCBA, as one of the three founding counties, would agreed to pay up to £500 if the event was unable to meet its commitments as long as the other two founding counties also agreed. This was passed – 12 for and 1 abstention.

12. TD Training (Darren Evetts)

Darren Evetts reported that three people had expressed interest in training to be County TDs. They were Ian Hendry, Nicky Cook and Peter Nicholds. (Nicky Cook left the meeting while this item was being discussed.) It was agreed to support all three applications and the county will pay for all necessary courses. It was also agreed that each person would have a mentor from the existing county directors during their training period. (Nicky Cook returned to the meeting.)

There was a discussion whether the training guidelines should include a specific period of commitment after the training. The proposal that the period be two years was put to the vote. There were 9 for, 4 against and 1 abstention. The training guidelines are attached to these minutes.

13. Secretarial

Correspondence – The application form for the 2012 Green point event has been received. It was agreed that the event would be Swiss pairs. The EBU also requested any nominations for Dimmie Fleming awards. This is for long service to bridge at county or club level. Clubs will be circulated via the newsletter for them to consider possible nominations.

Calendar – The National Pairs qualifier is now Tuesday 11 April. Some minor modifications to start times were also made. All changes will be on the website. Ladies and Mens date changed to Thursday 14 April 2011

Website usage – There have been 165853 hits on the website, an increase of 18415 since the April meeting.

14. AoB

Colin Lang suggested that an additional trophy with prize money should be on offer in the Frank Cup for the lower ranked teams to help encourage players who would not normally enter county events. It was agreed that that should be looked at by the competition committee.

15. Next meeting - Wednesday 29 September 2010 @ 7 pm @ WMBC. Coffee available on arrival.



WCBA

Tournament Director Training Policy

WCBA will undertake to support the Training of Tournament Directors up to County Level on a case by case basis and the following conditions would apply:

- The TD will contact the EBU to discuss what, if any, courses he/she should do in preparation for the County Course.
- The TD will work with TDs at County Events, ideally this will be the Warwickshire Pairs League – WPL (3rd Wednesday of the month), to gain experience of TDing at a county level where he/she will be the TD on the floor undertaking book rulings and gathering facts in judgement based matters.
- The TD will become proficient with the Jeff Smith scoring program in order to score County events. Also the TD will learn to use the Bridgemates. Help and guidance is also available from there and his or her mentor.
- The TD will commit to carrying out TD duties for the County upon successful completion of the County TD Course for a period of two years.

WCBA will undertake to:

- Pay the course fees associated with becoming a County TD (NB the County only agrees to pay these once per applicant).
- Support the TD through his/her experience gathering at WCBA events and him/her becoming proficient with Jeff Smith Scorers and Bridgemates.
- Provide a mentor to assist and support the TD with queries etc throughout the training period.
- Once the TD has completed his/her training the County will pay the TD for the work he/she undertakes.