

MINUTES OF AGM 30TH OCTOBER 2017

An Attendance Sheet recording the arrival of the members at the AGM recorded the attendance of forty-one members and a representative of the Social players present.

1. Apologies for Absence – Nine apologies had been received by the Secretary prior to the meeting and a further four were received at the meeting.

2. John Mayo (JM) opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the AGM. He stated the different people saw his position in the club differently and there was some debate as to whether he was currently – just a committee member, Deputy Chairman, Acting Chairman or Chairman. As the last Chairman had resigned someone has got to run the AGM. He stated his willingness to serve as Chairman, as long as the majority of the members were happy for him to do so. JM was therefore altering the order of the agenda so that the meeting could vote for or against him and the other committee members and so that the meeting could proceed with a committee that had the full backing of the members. If, however, they felt that he was the wrong person for the job he would happily stand down and let someone else try to sort things out. He stated that if the membership did vote for him as Chairman he would like to think that the membership would support the suggestions that he and rest of the committee put forward, otherwise it was a pointless exercise.

3. Chairman's Report – JM stated that he would only deal with what had happened since he had been acting as Chairman. JM reported that the last year or so had been an unhappy time for the club away from the bridge tables. Marion had resigned from the role of treasurer, after many years of dedicated service. Peter Taylor, who had spent a considerable amount of time and effort trying to steer the Club through a very difficult period resigned the Chairmanship. On the Club's behalf he wished to thank them both for their past service. Subsequently the remaining members of the committee have done their best to come up with a way forward and JM thought it fair to say that all the decisions reached were unanimous, or at the least, almost so, and that anything the Committee were proposing had the backing of them all. JM stated that it was impossible to please everyone all the time, but he hoped that the decisions taken that evening would be accepted by all the members so that we can all forget about "crossing the Ts and dotting the Is", worrying about small print and concentrate on playing bridge in convivial company.

4. Election of Officers and Committee Members – JM informed the meeting that there would be one less member on the Committee this year as Ian Wood was standing down, and the Committee would revert to the numbers of members in place two years ago and as stated in the Club Rules. JM stated that all the Officers and Committee Members seeking re-election had been proposed and seconded by members of the club and that he would ask the meeting to elect each of the Officers, individually, followed by the re-election of the existing committee members and the election of the two new members. Following the individual votes, the Officers and members of the Committee were unanimously elected.

5. JM said that before the meeting moved on to the next item on the agenda he wished to mention that the Committee had received a proposition from Peter Smith (PS) that social players should pay £1.00 more table money than members. This subject had already been an ongoing topic at Committee

meetings for some time. PS withdrew his proposition after the Committee included the differential in the Bye-Laws. However, it remained a controversial decision and JM asked for an informal show of hands to see what support there was for the differential – it would not be binding, but if the majority voted against the increase JM would ensure that it was brought up again at the next committee. JM asked for the show of hands, and a majority voted in favour of the change.

6. Minutes of the SGM 22nd August 2016 – PS stated that they were incomplete as both the proposals presented at the meeting were not attached to the Minutes. Peter Taylor (PT) stated that the complete document had been published on the Club's website for over a year. The Chairman asked the meeting to vote on acceptance of the Minutes. There was a very substantial majority in favour of accepting the SGM Minutes.

7. Minutes of the AGM 7th November 2016 – PS stated that the amended Rules of the club were incorrect and they did not mention the Social Players. JM said that the Social Players were not members of the Club so were not governed by the Rules, but by the Bye-Laws which had been amended to include matters relating to Social Players. Marion Shewell (MS) asked why there had been a change to Point 8 In the Rules – general meeting of the Club from October or November to “on a date to be fixed by the committee”. Did this mean that the AGM would be moved to end of the year instead of the current period . JM responded that the AGM would take place within the current time frame and that it was not necessary to move it. MS did not agree. PS was not in agreement with the amended Rules and offered to review them again and present them at another meeting. JM stated that the Committee were very grateful for all the work that PS had done on the Rules over the last year or two, but, the members would be asked to vote on the document put before them at this AGM. The AGM Minutes were overwhelmingly accepted by the membership.

8. Matters Arising –

i) Social representative – JM invited Stewart Anderton (SA) a representative of the social players to address the meeting. SA explained that the social players were not a cohesive group, but individuals who were very dissatisfied with the behaviour and performance of the WBU , especially the problems caused to clubs in the region by their decision that all clubs had to be affiliated to WBU. The increase in table money was very disappointing. Some players would have been prepared to make a donation to the club, but were not prepared to pay funds to the WBU. SA did not feel that they were a drain on the club finances, but were contributing to the profits of the club.

ii) The updated Bye-Laws for the Conduct and Affairs of the Club were presented at the meeting, including the fact that there would be no requirement for members following their 90th birthday (who been continuous members for at least ten years) to pay an annual club subscription. Doreen Griffiths asked if that included WBU membership and this was confirmed. There was also a query regarding the number of times that Visitors could play at the club before being asked to become members. JM agreed that there was no particular logic to the number, that it had been in the Bye-Laws for some time, but that he felt this was a matter of discretion for the Committee. Bridget Evans suggested that the members should put their trust in the Committee to do what was necessary, and this was met with approval by the members.

9. Treasurers Report – John Whiteside (JW) thanked Marion for her hard work as Treasurer. He informed the meeting that he had opened a Bank Account with Barclays for the Club and this would mean that the account could be managed on-line, and that he would be able to write cheques for payments by the Club. He went on to say that attendance at Club evenings had dropped this year, and there had been occasions, particularly on a Wednesday evening when there had been as few as 3 tables. In the long term this would be unsustainable and JW will monitor the situation. JW also informed the meeting that he understood that The Palmer Centre were going to undertake a review of rental charges (this was confirmed by Marjorie Terrill) and whilst the rent charged to the Club was very reasonable, an increase instituted by The Palmer Centre would result in a review of the table money paid by members, and would probably result in an increase in table money. There was a suggestion from the floor, that prize money was abolished, and a show of hands following the suggestion resulted in a majority of members willing to abolish the table money. It was agreed that this suggestion would not be adopted at this stage, but the Committee would discuss the position at the next Committee meeting. JW then thanked Hugh Green for auditing the accounts for the Club and gave a brief overview of the figures, explaining about the depreciation of assets and confirming that the Clubs finances were in a healthy state. MS asked when the AGM would be moved to – JW responded that the AGM would be held within the normal timescale after the completion of the annual accounts. Marjorie Terrill proposed adoption of the accounts and Doreen Griffiths seconded

10. Appointment of Auditor – The Treasurer stated that Hugh Green had indicated that he was prepared to continue in the role. Sandra Gregory proposed and Alethea Tonner seconded that he should continue. This was overwhelmingly accepted.

11. Motions Received –

i) “A member shall be eligible to play in Club competitions provided that he/she has been a member for three months or longer” Proposer Peter Smith, Seconder Marion Shewell. PS explained that Clubs such as Newport and Bristol imposed this restriction to prevent new people joining their Club (whose ability was unknown to the Club) and then immediately entering competitions where there were large monetary prizes, and winning. The three month period gave the Clubs time to assess the players ability and impose handicaps as necessary. PS acknowledged that CABC was not holding competitions of that nature, and it would simply be putting the rule in place in case it was needed for the future. Brian Harden disagreed stating that is more important for the Club to be as flexible as possible to encourage new members to play. The motion was put to the vote and defeated there only being 9 members in favour.

ii) “that a vote be taken to decide whether or not to keep the dealing machine which is on sale of return”. Proposer Gail Jones, Seconder Helen Street. Gail firstly questioned whether the Committee had the authority of the members to purchase the Dealing Machine. PT referred back to the Minutes of the previous AGM and clarified that the Committee did have the authority to proceed with the purchase. Gail then went on to explain why she had proposed the motion, stating that she found the distribution of the hands very odd and that they were difficult to play, and that the Newport Bridge Club dealing machine did not deal such odd hands. Tony Waters also said that he found the hands awkward and not

enjoyable to play. Richard Stevenson responded by stating that the deals were completely random and more distributional than hand dealt cards, which were generally very poorly dealt, and the hands coming out of the board was very similar when it had been dealt and put back in the board. Those dealt by the machine were random and that one would develop the ability to play these hands, with more practice, and this would lead to improved play and better competition. Graham Eele endorsed Richard's comments on hands dealt by the machine saying that they were genuinely random – that you would get hands that would include extreme distribution , hands that got passed out and hands that were played at the one or two level. Greg Howell responded to Gail's comments on the Newport dealing machine, explaining that they used exactly the same software and machine as the Club. Several members including BH and Pam Robinson(PR) expressed a preference for the Dealing Machine Hands, and PR suggested that if there was a demand there could be an occasional evening when they went back to hand dealing the cards. The motion was put to the vote 26 members voted in favour of keeping the machine and 7 against.

12. Any Other Business –

- i) Greg and Richard said the Club would need to purchase another set of Boards if it was decided to have hand dealt cards as they needed to be kept separate from the Machine Dealt cards.
- ii) PS requested that a copy of the Committee Meeting Minutes be placed on the Notice Board as well as the website and the agenda be circulated in advance of the meeting. JM agreed to discuss with committee.

13. AOB – BH thanked JM and JW for taking over their respective roles and stepping into the breach. JM also thanked Carolyne Ogden for all her work leading up to the AGM.

The meeting closed at 19.00hrs.