

We finished yesterday the last of 5 online board sessions totaling 8 hours this past week.

From my point of view, one of the big things we accomplished is a new email communication protocol to be used by ACBL when communicating to all Clubs, Units and Districts. I worked with Larry and others to get this implemented. As you may know, ACBL has been inconsistent with who is copied, especially not getting key information to Unit and District Presidents. I think what is being written and sent to club managers is generally quite good, but it had been mostly directed to clubs without copying others involved. From now on, if an email from ACBL HQ goes to all clubs, Unit and District presidents will also get it, as well as the ACBL Board.

We voted down 20 to 5 (I voted with the majority) a proposal to start up online Unit Sectionals and Regionals. It turns out there is quite a bit of complexity to doing this. There are substantial technology problems with getting this done, both on the ACBL and BBO side. So, we can't get it done tight now even if we wanted to. Next, we believe that this could hurt virtual club attendance about 25%. Some clubs are already barely hanging on, despite the tremendous success of the virtual club games. We believe that right now, and in the coming months, our focus must be on the survival of ACBL and the clubs. We will likely revisit this topic in the future, if we end up with a substantial amount of long term virtual bridge.

We have asked management to construct a detailed and rolling 6 month operating plan. These are unusual times, and the need to update our planning frequently is critical. We want to give management as much flexibility as possible. This process allows the board to stay current with the key things going on, and weigh in as needed without slowing down managements need to act quickly when needed. In this way, management will always be clear what they can and cannot do. Ordinarily this is not a problem, but with the massive changes to online bridge in the CV 19 world, the ACBL codification that provides boundaries to managements actions, has yet to "catch up".

We have unanimously authorized the creation of an Online Ethical Oversight Committee, running parallel to the EOC (Ethical Oversight Committee). We want to make sure that our focus is strong in this area. If you know someone that should be considered for this committee, let me know immediately.

We have unanimously authorized the creation of a "Future of Online Bridge in the ACBL" committee. I call it a "blue ribbon" committee due to its diverse skill set of its committee members. It will meet at least 2x per week every week with a high degree of urgency. Jay Whipple will be the chair. This was urgently needed and I am really excited about this!

We are pushing all involved to figure out how to get us online Swiss team and KO tournament events. Stay tuned – this is not easy or we would have it done already, but it will be done.

Another regional is in the works with a much improved schedule from the first one. We are considering having more boards per session, but this is another thing that is harder to do than it sounds. We will have enough of these to help the ACBL survive, but not so many it will cause problems for the virtual clubs. Probably at most, 1 big event per month, including this kind.

The fall Tampa Nationals is very much under discussion right now and during the next few weeks. Our first responsibility is to the safety of our players and staff plus we need to do everything possible to minimize the loss. That said, we do not have a decision yet as to if it will be held.

The board gave up its stipend (vote was 22 yes including myself, 2 no, 1 abstain) for the rest of the year; these are monies that would have been spent on the tournament trail in each District, getting out and visiting our tournaments.

Please let me hear from you – make sure your voice is heard!!!

Thanks and regards.

Ned Irving  
District 10 director, ACBL Board  
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