

District V Executive Committee Meeting May 25, 2024
Embassy Suites 8:00 AM

Members Present: Barb Bacon, Barbara Grzegorzewski, Jim Overcashier, Marc Sylvester, Jim Knirsch, Sandi Bross, Ron Franck, Sharon Fairchild and Davis Heussler.

Guests: Margot Hennings and Pat Levy.

President Bacon called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM. She noted that we have a very full agenda and that people speaking during the first half of the meeting will be limited to 5 minutes each.

Barb then introduced Margot Hennings, ACBL President and the Executive Committee introduced themselves to Margot.

Barb is planning to review our regionals and set goals for the future to make them successful and a benefit to our players.

Approval of the minutes

Davis moved and Ron seconded to approve the minutes from January 6, 2024 as written. Motion carried.

Marc moved and Jim K. seconded to approve the minutes from February 20, 2024 as written. The motion carried.

Treasurer's report

Sandi passed out a paper that showed our cash position as of April 30, 2024,

Edward Jones account	\$106,388.59
Checking account	\$ 19,683.98
Advance Buffalo	\$ 500.00
Advance Pittsburgh	\$ 3,750.00

Total	\$130,322.57
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There was also a tax return history from 2018 to 2023 which showed the contrast of our program revenue before and after Covid. Our revenue was cut in half.

The GNT event in Erie this month suffered a loss of \$611.72 and that was before the \$1000 per flight contribution from the District that will cost \$3,000-\$4,000 depending on how many teams compete in Toronto.

Rock and Roll Regional 2025

Jim K reported that the contract had been signed for next year.

Jim K also reported that he had attempted to gather information on I/N programs in the District. He received reports from 6 units summarizing what had and had not worked for them. He requested any suggestions on improving the information before he sent it out.

Advertising that worked included:

- TV coverage on local stations
- Facebook/X/Next Door Digital promotion
- Word of mouth (Bring promotions to Non-ACBL games particularly promoting Learn Duplicate Games) Also stress how warm and fuzzy we are.

Training that worked:

- Learn Bridge in a Day
- Learn to play Duplicate
- 8 Session training when paid in advance (Steven Grzegorzewski has a complete 8 week course that he will give any District 5 unit)
- Libraries seem open to supplying free rooms and some help promoting free lessons.

Parties worked

- Mentor/Mentee games especially set up as a party to get people into trying more serious bridge, but follow-up is crucial.
- Novice/Master games get players more interested in tournaments.

Behavior is critical

- It is critical that units and clubs stress very good behavior. One nasty comment will send a newbie away for good.
- We talk about zero tolerance, but we need to mean it and enforce it.

Only one unit did any work with Colleges, but I think there is an opportunity there.

The ACBL sent out info that they set up a booth playing bridge at a festival that attracted people and seemed to get them interested (no data yet).

All American Regional

Jim O reported that the table count this year are similar to last year's.

For 2025, the contract needs to be signed after we see how this year goes. The schedule is almost ready to be sent to ACBL.

Pittsburgh Regional

Ron told us that the regional will be held Tuesday August 27th through Saturday August 31 at the Masonic Center. Last year they had over a 50% drop in attendance on Sunday and Monday so he is shortening the tournament. They will hold Gold Rush events every day and guarantee a partner for everyone.

They negotiated a 30% drop in price with the Masonic Center. They will have limited hospitality before the 1st session and for lunch.

The hotel will be the Hampton Inn Sewickley, an easy 10 minute drive from the playing site. The price is \$109 single and \$129 twin. Breakfast is included.

Buffalo Regional

The tournament will be October 21-25, 2024 at the Main Transit Fire Hall in Williamsville NY. The days are Monday through Friday. Donuts and bagels will be provided before the first session and there will be Food Trucks at lunch time. Alex suggested that they could save money by using some local directors. They have two available in Art Morth and Kathy Pollack. Using them with Alex should save about \$1000. The goal is to break even on the regional.

Report from Margot Hennings

District 6 is having the same kinds of problems with regionals that we are and she thinks we are doing what we have to do in moving out of hotels and convention centers for our tournaments and holding weekday tournaments. She also reminded us that people who can't play in a weekday tournament, could play online in a two-session event on the weekend before or after the tournament or 2 sessions in the evening during the tournament if we make it available for them.

Tournament Coordinator

Pat Levy says there are lots of sectionals and regionals that are not turning in flyers. ACBL wants them 6 months to a year in advance of a tournament. If tournaments aren't sanctioned in a timely fashion, they could lose their preferred dates.

NAP/GNT

The NAP will be held at the Erie Bridge Club October 5-6, 2024. Pairs need to qualify at their clubs to play in this event. Ron is working on a calendar for qualifying club games in the District. Conditions of Contest are posted on the ACBL and the District 5 websites.

Ron mentioned that the ACBL does not reserve rooms for the GNT players at the host hotel. Margot said that it used to be a policy to set aside rooms for the players in this event and she would mention this to them.

Ron is considering changing the conditions of contest for the GNT because we have so few teams. He would favor conditions that would have the teams play a round robin for 2 days so that everyone who came would know they were playing both days.

A discussion was held about the District's policy about paying entry fees for the teams after the first 2 days of the competition. ACBL covers entry fees for A, B, and C teams for the first 2 days. Marc moved and Davis seconded a motion that the District would cover the entry fees for our teams after the first two days. The motion carried.

STaC

We have a new STaC director for the third time in a row. Marc asked Margot if there is a way to have more consistency in the directing assignments.

A discussion took place about whether it should be a regular STaC or a Royal STaC. Some players value the opportunity to get silver points and some the diluted colored points. We will put it on the agenda for the fall. The June STaC this year will be a regular STaC.

Education

Steve G. did a presentation about his teaching and mentoring program at the Cleveland sectional and will be doing another one tonight.

Report from the Bylaw Committee

Sharon, Davis and Jim O met to review our bylaws and suggest some changes. They will be approved here and sent out to the units in advance of the Pittsburgh meeting and the changes will be voted on at that meeting.

The items covered included:

Approving electronic meetings and electronic voting for the Executive Committee and

the Full Board Meetings.

Having officers terms expire after one year or as soon as their successor has been elected.

The number of representatives per unit for the meetings will be determined by ACBL's official count on April 1.

There was a motion to accept the changes to the bylaws made by Barb G and seconded by Jim K. The motion passed.

Regional Tournament Review

Barb B. passed out graphs to show regional attendance in the district from. 2017-2024 that showed that our table count is about one half of what it used to be.

Another graph showed the number of tables, the rent and the amount we paid for hospitality. Hospitality has to be trimmed to make our regionals more profitable.

We need to grow new members and eventually lure them to tournaments.

Length of tournaments

Do we want to continue with week long tournaments or should we shorten them?

Perhaps people would like a shorter tournament with a packed room rather than an extended one.

Weekday tournaments cater to the retired, not the employed. Sunday and Monday in the week long tournaments show drastically reduced table counts. We are testing shorter tournaments in Pittsburgh and Buffalo. Perhaps that will give us an idea. But contracts are being discussed now and we need to know what our dates will be.

In planning, we should consider that running a pair game along with a team game on the final day of a tournament might help with our table count. It was mentioned that a two day team event might be popular at the end of the tournament along with a pair option. Pat volunteered to create a dummy schedule to pass to the executive committee for feedback.

A motion to eliminate Monday from the 2025 May Regional was made by Jim O . seconded by Davis. Sharon suggested the motion be amended to the regionals in 2025

and 2026 since both those contracts were under discussion now. The amendment was accepted and the motion as amended was approved.

Other new business

The item to discuss board perks will be handled at the Pittsburgh meeting.

Suggestions for other bylaw changes will be also handled at the next meeting

The next executive committee meeting will be August 19th at 7:00 PM by zoom. Marc will set it up.

Meeting adjourned at 9:28 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Fairchild, Secretary