

UNIT 533 BOARD MEETING—August 26, 2022—8:30am Via Zoom

Board Members Present:

Chip Graves
Vicki Graves
Linda Hahn
Rob Martin
Bonnie Sipkins
Deann Young

Absent: Diane Jobin, Barb Wegener, Sandy Young

Treasurer: Bill Dani

Guests: Guy Brackett, Nancy Erickson, Sean Lui

MINUTES from the April Board Meeting were approved by electronic vote prior to the meeting.

Also approved via email vote since the April meeting:

May 2: The Board voted to donate \$100 to the National MS Society in honor of Guy Monroe's life and his many contributions to the game of bridge.

May 11: The Board voted to waive the one time maximum of \$1000 and give Mick Riccio \$1250 for his Beginning Bridge class of 8 sessions which started in February (30 students) with the knowledge that he had offered a similarly sized class in May as well. Our Education Budget for Beginning Bridge educational support for 2022 is \$1250.

June 12: The Board voted to close our Storage Unit before our lease expired in September. This will save \$1500+ each year. Most of the contents of this 10'X10' space have not been used since 2019. *Addendum: the contents of the Storage Unit were donated to the CVBF, ACBL, the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission and the remainder disposed of before June 30.*

FINANCIALS

Reports were sent to board members online and there were no questions.

MEMBERSHIP

The current membership is 773—down from 898 in January. This is a typical summertime drop from a snowbird impact perspective but overall, for the year, Vicki thought it was in line with pre-Covid overall ACBL total numbers: -10%.

FALL SECTIONAL on NOVEMBER 11-12, 2022

Everyone thanked Linda for all her background work prior to the meeting. Our focus is to get players back to tournaments while at the same time insuring those who historically play still do so. In 2021, ACBL tournaments have been running at approximately 50% of pre-COVID table counts with an even lesser percentage of I/N players. To put that in perspective for us, prior to the meeting Bill had sent out financial projections reflecting table counts of 50%, 55% & 60% of pre-COVID averages for our fall sectional.

Vicki noted that in the financial projections, Bill had included the fact that we had been successful in our efforts to get ACBL to let us use only one of their directors and a local assistant DIC. (Sean had agreed to serve in this role.) As a result, we had saved approximately \$700 in expenses. Linda, who petitioned ACBL for this change, suggested that we lower the player card fee to \$10 to draw more people to the tournament. (Historically a Sectional charge was \$12.) All agreed with this proposal.

Linda also recommended that we eliminate our tradition of ordering lunches for the players as there are so many restaurants near the Duncan Bridge Center. All agreed.

There was a discussion about team games which have traditionally been offered at each session in addition to pairs games—and have represented 30% of our table counts. Linda suggested that we offer team games only at the Saturday afternoon session. To entice players who haven't played in team games, a presentation on Friday between sessions could educate on how team games are played, scored, & the strategy. Team games in the past have been two-session Swiss, but Sean said he believed this was too long a day for many players. Nancy commented that we could possibly reduce the team game offerings in November but not at the February sectional as snowbirds would expect them. After additional discussion, it was agreed that we would offer a single session team game on Saturday P.M. with a side games pair offering. Nancy suggested that Linda talk to Brandon, the tournament director, about

these format plans. *Addendum: Brandon felt that a team game and a pairs game on Saturday afternoon would dilute attendance in each to the point that there were not enough tables in either.*

Chip & Bonnie suggested that we need to think of more ideas as incentives and to make tournaments more fun. Linda suggested an MC-type person to welcome people as he/she arrived. Guy said they could put a banner on their BBO games announcing tournaments a month in advance. Vicki said we should each also personally invite people to play in the tournament. Linda said the flyer would go out in the next couple of weeks and there would be email blasts in and beyond our area in the weeks leading up to the tournament. ACBL's 20% increase in masterpoints for the coming year will be emphasized.

Guy asked about a host hotel. Nancy asked about vaccines as she didn't believe ACBL would allow us to use our records of past proof of vaccines. Linda will follow-up on both.

INTERMEDIATE NEWCOMER SECTIONAL

Vicki said that Nancy and Guy had suggested we run a NLM sectional in January or March of 2023. Since 70% of our members are below 500 points (50% below 100), this could be an additional way to attract these players to tournaments. She noted that in 2018 we had such a tournament and there were only 77 tables, but since ACBL directors aren't required in a limited tournament, it is less costly to run. Vicki noted that half the tables in 2018 played teams and half played pairs.

Sean thinks January is the best month, and Nancy commented it would be a good lead into the Sun & Fun Sectional on February 17-18, 2023. It was agreed that this idea will be pursued.

EDUCATION

Vicki reported for Diane that she had pursued the Bridge in a Day program which ACBL is publicizing as a means of attracting beginners or those trying to brush off their skills. It is a six-hour day and includes lunch and the idea is to eventually move the players into beginning bridge lessons, supervised play, and mentor assistance. Other cities have drawn 60-90 people who pay \$25-\$30 for the day. The instructor must be ACBL certified but it's a quick online process. If we do this Diane envisions that we could use part of our education budget for next year to pay for it.

Sean commented that he had observed the program in Long Beach and there were 100 people in attendance. However, he felt the program went too quickly into bidding and didn't spend enough time on card evaluation and how to take a trick. As a result, eyes glazed over, and he didn't believe that many signed up for further lessons. He also thought the day was too long. He liked the 90-minute nature of a program like Mini-Bridge better. Guy said he thought Karol Monroe was familiar with both programs. Vicki said they would pursue this additional information.

Sean was asked if he planned to offer a 0–20-point game this season and he said *maybe* he would on Saturday's. Chip & Deann mentioned ideas for an 'ask the expert' or mentoring volunteer effort in that regard.

EVENTS

Vicki suggested the following dates for unit sponsored events/luncheons next season (all Sundays and all selected to avoid holidays and other outside conflicts):

HOLIDAY PARTY--December. 4, 2022

ANNUAL MEETING--February 5, 2023

AWARDS GAME--March 19 or 26, 2023

OTHER

Nominations for the 2023 Board will be coordinated by Chip. The election process is specified in our bylaws. There was a reminder for all of us to recruit potential candidates. Rob is coordinating the Goodwill Award nominees. Send any recommendations to him before mid-September.

NEXT MEETING DATE: To Be Determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 am

Respectively submitted,

Bonnie Sipkins
Board Secretary