

MINUTES OF UNIT 533 BOARD MEETING

OCTOBER 2, 2025

The meeting was called to order by President, Vicki Graves, at 10:30 a.m.

Board Members Attending:

Vicki Graves
Diana Seeb
Sue Blom
Kathy Kroll
Martha Hancock
Denyse Raskin
Cornelia Gould
Bill Dani, Treasurer

Guests Attending:

Guy Brackett, President CVBF
Sean Lui, Club Manager
Ed Gould

Board Members Absent:

Scott Coleman, David Combs

Prior to this Meeting:

The Minutes of the May 15, 2025 Board meeting were previously approved by the Board electronically.

On June 19, the Board voted electronically to appoint Denyse Raskin to the board as a replacement for Christine Andrews who had resigned for health reasons. This motion was made by Kathy and seconded by Sue.

On July 27, the Board voted electronically to award a \$1000 grant to Randy Bissett for the beginning bridge classes he has taught this year. This is per our Educational Reimbursement Program. The motion was made by David and seconded by Vicki.

On August 20, the Board voted to appoint Martha Hancock to the Board, as the ninth member of the Board and ultimately as a replacement for Cornelia Gould who was elected to ACBL's National Board (replacing David Lodge). Cornelia will leave the Unit Board at the end of 2025. The motion was made by Diana & seconded by Vicki.

Discussion:

Vicki welcomed new Board Members Martha Hancock and Denyse Raskin.

Bill distributed the financials. As of September 30, 2025, Unit 533's assets total \$41,820.74. Bill presented a budget for the remainder of 2025, including for the Harvest Sectional to be held November 7 and 8, and the Holiday party. He had reduced last year's table count for the 2025 Harvest Sectional in anticipation of a possible loss of our snowbirds from Canada. He also reduced the Membership Reimbursement payment for the 4th quarter in anticipation of the impact of ACBL's free guest membership program.

Our Eight is Enough Swiss Teams/Unit game will be held on Sunday, October 12. The event will start at noon with Pizza, salads etc. and Sue will be in charge of the food. Ed Gould is working on partnerships for the tournament and will give a presentation on team game strategy at 12:30. Ed said we had about 14 teams to date and Vicki voiced concern that there were three teams of all level 1 players which could keep level 3 players from being able to participate. She said she'd talk to the teams involved as needed. David White will direct, the Unit will pay the table fees, the Unit and CVBF will split the cost of lunch and CVBF will pay the other costs of the event and keep the card fees.

The Harvest Sectional set for November 7 & 8 is being co-chaired by Kathy Kroll and Scott Coleman. Kathy reported that she is working with John Kubisty on the food, and that she has plenty of volunteers to help on the days of the tournament. Sean reminded us that he needed people to be available each session to be a partner for those who walk in without one. Mick is donating trophies for the winners of the Sectional tournament limited games. In addition to newsletter publicity and flyers, Vicki said the Pianola program will be used a month before the event to send an email notice to players within a 100+- miles from Palm Desert. (She said Pianola can also be used to target specific groups so we could email the 0-750 players, for example, about the trophies. The cost is about 3 cents per email.)

The Non-Life Master Sectional is scheduled for January 9-10, 2026. Vicki noted that Mick had volunteered to design the flyer, and it was available.

The February 14-15 Sun & Fun Sectional tournament was discussed. There will be single session pairs games only on Friday. On Saturday there will be a double session bracketed team game, and single session pairs games. Times will be 9:30 and 2:00. Vicki noted that the single session bracketed team game that the Board had voted to run at the Harvest Sectional had subsequently been ruled illegal by ACBL so, noting the ongoing problems we've had with team game table counts given some arbitrary definition of Open and Limited, we were going to try a double session bracketed event in February.

The Holiday Party will be December 7 and Martha is organizing it. Martha said the budget Bill had noted for food would not be enough and Bill said we could be flexible. She also said she was going to ask some players to donate home-made cookies or another dessert since it is the holiday season.

Vicki mentioned that Mick will offer supervised bid and play for limited players at the Palm Springs Regional. The charge will be \$12 for 18 boards. The Board should think about how to promote this to get newer players to attend the Regional. She talked about getting class lists from Randy and Cookie

as a source of potentially interested names and said she'd like to discuss other ideas at our next meeting.

Denyse has taken over responsibility for the 5/5/5 Membership Reimbursement Program and has been working to contact people whose ACBL membership is about to lapse. Vicki briefly reviewed how the 5/5/5 system works and talked about how the new ACBL 'all members join as guest members for free until they have 20 masterpoints' will impact our 5/5/5 recruitment dollars—i.e. these guest members are held in a fictitious Unit 999 until they become paying members. As such the Unit will get no financial credit for growing the membership nor do recruiters (predominantly teachers and club directors) until these guest members convert to a paid membership. Vicki also noted that 26% of our Unit's members have less than 20 MPs so it could be years before they had to join ACBL as paying members.

ACBL's newly released Sapphire program in support of guest members was also discussed. This gives Guest Members partial credits toward masterpoints for 'first' events like first F2F game or first bridge class or first slam—and two MPs when they become paying members. Denyse noted that the report of names of those who had received sapphire point rewards was not useable because it had no sorting reference/location to find 'ours'. It is not clear if Sapphire awards continue after the guest member becomes a paying member.

Vicki passed out a copy of a list of 13 guest members who live in the Coachella Valley that she'd just received—noting that as these people 'join' ACBL they're asked only for their names, emails & zip codes. The question is what can we do to motivate these people to become paying members? A paying membership does offer a few 'perks' like the ability to get glitter points, play in regional tournaments, and get a printed Bridge Bulletin but do new players even know why they'd care about those things? She said the Unit had previously voted to offer to pay the \$29 first year annual ACBL membership fee for new members who had finished bridge classes and we could continue to offer that from our WIN funds. There was discussion about changing this amount but it was agreed that we would revisit this at the next Board meeting. In the meantime, Denyse will contact a few of the names on this list to get a feel for whether a free first year full membership would be a motivation for them. Vicki will also reach out to the clubs to see if they might want to use these names on their distribution lists/notices of games available.

Kathy reported that people love the new Mentor program. It is working.

Discussions of potential changes to our Educational Grant Program and NAP/GNT reimbursements were tabled until November's meeting. Vicki noted that we still need a volunteer to serve as the Board Secretary starting in 2026.

The next Board meeting will be held on Thursday, November 20, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Submitted by Cornelia Gould, Secretary

