

## BHBC BOARD MINUTES 4/16/20

In attendance: Marcia Fisher, Lee Hausner, Stephanie Campbell, Dawn Lee, Susan Lava, Nancy Heck, John Ramos

This was a special meeting called to discuss a proposal from the Alliance Bridge Club in Syosset, NY, to include BHBC in their newly-formed web site. These minutes are a combination of the ones I took and John's summary of the Alliance bullet points.

John's bullet points:

Thanks for your attendance today! I ran the below by Silvana and she confirmed it was accurate. So I'd say please read it over and ask me for any clarifications or further information you feel you'll need to make an informed decision about joining the Alliance. As needed, I'll circle back with any further information and then Lee and Marcia can schedule a meeting to discuss. -- John

-- The Alliance is a collective comprised of several of the premier teaching clubs in the US. The vision is for these clubs to pool their resources to bring bigger games and better teaching resources to current and future members and to grow the game.

-- As an Alliance member, rather than run our own games, we would participate in Alliance-run games, meaning our members could play in any games on the Alliance schedule (<https://www.alliancebridgeclub.com/>). These games will have higher table counts and greater masterpoint awards and will afford our members more opportunities to play in more varied types of games than we could provide doing games on our own.

-- Currently, after BBO and the ACBL take their cut, we receive the remainder of the money collected from entrants in our games. This would not change under the Alliance; anyone associated with our club who plays in an Alliance game would generate the same percentage revenue for us. (This is superior to SYC games, which only pay us a pro-rated share when one of our members is associated with another club as well.)

-- Part of the vision of the Alliance is to continue the collective's online presence even after we all return to our physical spaces. This would allow us to offer our members games at times that historically have been difficult to populate. It would also give us flexibility in offering more lessons, which as we all know has been a challenge due to our space requirements. And of course, if anything happens in the future that similarly threatens physical bridge, we'll be in the best possible position for the mass return online.

-- On the lesson front, the Alliance also has extensive online teaching resources. We can learn from the most progressive teaching minds new options for teaching, plus gain access to the entire Larry Cohen database, which would be an invaluable asset for our instructors.

-- Distribution of our revenues would be handled monthly by an Alliance-hired bookkeeper.

-- Our directors would be given the opportunity to work for the Alliance. The pay is the standard BBO rate of \$25/hr. With the greater schedule of games, they would likely be able to earn more than we can provide with our current schedule. They also would still be free to direct games for Barrington as desired.

-- If we decide after a period of time the arrangement isn't working and we'd like to exit the Alliance, we can do so with no entanglements.

My additions:

Silvana Morici is a teacher and owner of Sagamore Bridge Club in Syosset, NY. She and her husband decided to pool their resources to create an alliance of similarly-minded bridge clubs across the country. BHBC is one of the clubs they're talking to. The web site is [alliancebridgeclub.com](http://alliancebridgeclub.com). There are currently 4 clubs in the alliance, i.e., Sagamore, Essex (NJ), Westchester (NY), and Boca Raton (FL).

They are trying not to work with clubs that share lists **(JOHN: IT SOUNDED TO ME LIKE OUR PROPOSED ARRANGEMENT WITH BBC WOULD GO AWAY IF WE GET INVOLVED WITH ALLIANCE. IS THAT CORRECT? ALSO, DID SILVANA SAY THERE WOULD ONLY BE ONE CLUB IN ANY CITY?)**

You can get directly to BBO from their site. Users can join in games they organize and each club has the option to add in its own space. In that space, for example, we could establish a 20 pts or less game. As long as we're not competing with the games on the main site, we can establish what we believe we need.

You do not have to be a member of one of the clubs to play.

Lee asked if they're building the alliance to use after the coronavirus situation is over. Silvana said yes, and she doesn't believe they'll lose any money when that happens. Since it's possible, even likely for at least a time, that the table count in the clubs will go down after the CV situation, they believe building traffic on the site now will help keep the revenues up.

John gave us his perspective on the alliance with Alliance (!). He said he had seen some negatives but had talked through them with Silvana before our call. His view of the positives is:

- Access to the entire Larry Cohen database
- It has been a struggle to populate games because of LA traffic. We could potentially shift to daytime only at the club and leave nighttime games on the site.
- We could get more work for our directors through the alliance.
- There is a lot of uncertainty about the future of bridge. This could be a path to that future.
- So far, research shows people are more interested in playing in more games than playing with the same people all the time.
- The pricing is similar to ours.
- It is less work for more \$.
- It allows us to ally with the most forward-thinking people in the country.

Marcia asked is there's a free game structure. Silvana said there is no free game structure on BBO. You can't run a free game but there is a free teaching area.

Lee pointed out that it offers a more competitive environment.

In regard to teachers, John pointed out they can have saved hands in BBO (Silvana showed us how to access) and the Larry Cohen library has thousands. Also, you can input your own hands.

Dawn asked about overhead costs. Silvana replied they pay their bookkeeper \$200@month and directors \$25@hour. Our directors can be on that team. They run 6-hour shifts.

John asked us to think about it and send questions to him. He'll respond to Silvana.

**We scheduled a board meeting for 11AM Tuesday. However, Lee has since asked if we could do it Sunday morning. That's fine with me!**

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Campbell  
Secretary