

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Minutes for the GCBA committee meeting held at Cheltenham Bridge Club on Monday 2nd March 2020.

In attendance were Patrick Shields (President), Andrew Bull (Secretary), Ian Sidgwick, Richard Butland, Roger Williams and Judy Sanis (CBC rep).

For the first topic, Ro Kaye, Jim Simons, Anne Swannell and Paul Clark from the CBC committee were also present.

Cheltenham Congress

1. With the possibility of the Covid-19 virus becoming epidemic in the near future, it was discussed whether the Congress (due to be held on May 8th-10th) should be cancelled before the next 25% of the deposit for the hotel is due (on March 13th). It was agreed we should wait until March 11th to decide, but would then need to be prepared to decide quickly; it was acknowledged that information would still be incomplete, and we would be forced to gamble on the likely outcome. The GCBA supported the suggestion from the Congress committee that in the event of cancellation we should offer full refunds to anyone who had entered.
2. We also noted that club and County bridge was subject to similar concerns about cancellation. Richard emphasised that the first rule should be to stay away from the club if you are unwell, followed by the government's hand-washing advice.

Finance and Publicity

3. Mike (who had sent his apologies for being unable to attend) had sent out the latest accounts before the meeting. The Stanley Swiss Teams had been run successfully; due to an underestimate of the UMS costs, this was run at a small loss (about £20) to GCBA. It was agreed that we would not pursue this in light of the forthcoming donations towards Youth Bridge.
4. The Cotswold Cup raised about £800 for the Sue Ryder hospice. It was suggested that this would have been good publicity for bridge in the county if it had been covered in the local press. Patrick noted that while we have a contact at BBC Radio Gloucestershire, we do not have a contact at the Gloucestershire Echo. He suggested that we could submit an article to the paper and see if they would publish it.
5. Judy noted that she had had little success in getting other people involved in publicity and marketing GCBA. It was noted there was difficult generally to get people to volunteer, and that we need people to realise that (at all levels) it is a volunteer-run society.
6. It was suggested that people might be more willing to join a team responsible for publicity, and that we could have a full meeting on the topic, with a view to getting together a Publicity/Marketing group to come up with ideas to help promote the game and GCBA. We will start this once the current health scares have died down.
7. As a consequence of the Stanley Swiss Teams, GCBA has taken out insurance on its assets. Patrick noted that GCBA had deliberately reduced its assets some time ago to lessen the need for insurance, but that in any case we needed employer insurance. It was agreed that we should take the £75 per year policy.
8. The EBU have insurance for all affiliated clubs' committee members against the possibility of being sued. It was agreed that we would co-opt Judy onto the GCBA committee so she would also be covered, and that we should adopt the same approach for anyone acting as a director for GCBA.

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9. Patrick reported that he had (just) received comment from Hampshire & IOW CBA who had converted to being a CIO some years ago, and that no downsides were reported. It was agreed that we should wait to see if becoming a CIO proves straightforward for CBC before pursuing this idea further for GCBA.

Clubs in the county

10. Representatives from five or six clubs from NE Gloucestershire are meeting on 22 March (to be funded by GCBA). The plan is for Patrick to talk about the role of GCBA and EBU (including support for directors), and for the club representatives to talk about their concerns, and to come up with an action plan. It was noted that we are happy for clubs to meet in this fashion without GCBA involvement, and that we would encourage nearby clubs from neighbouring counties to be involved.
11. There will be a GCBA visit to the club at Fairford in the near future.

Other Business

12. There is to be a get-together for tournament directors in the county in May. It was agreed that GCBA would fund the refreshments.
13. Patrick had claimed travel expenses for attending the quarterly Midlands County Working Group, and bi-annual EBU meetings in London. It was agreed that this should be standard practice.
14. It was noted that the change in UMS (universal membership scheme) charges from April will cost us approximately £900 per year.
15. It was felt that we needed a longer meeting as many items for discussion were having to be deferred, and so we agreed to start the April meeting at 17:30.