

## Oxfordshire Bridge Association

### Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting

held on Monday 7 September 2009 at 7.30 p.m. at Oxford Bridge Club

#### PRESENT:

John Briggs [JB]	Chairman (Elect – confirmed at meeting, see item 3)
Sandra Nicholson [SN]	Secretary (Elect – confirmed at meeting, see item 3)
Dinah Lintott [DL]	Treasurer (Elect – confirmed at meeting, see item 3)
Stephen Brown [SB]	Chief Tournament Director
Maxine Henry [MH]	Membership Secretary
Alan Grunwald [AG]	Tournament Secretary
Brenda Harris [BH]	Publicity Officer/EBU Shareholder
Sue Maxwell [SM]	EBU Shareholder
Nick Smith [NS]	Match Secretary
Geoff Nicholas [GN]	President/Chester/Wessex Secretary

Andrew Speyer	Abingdon	Kathy Talbot	Oxford
Nick Perceval-Price	Menagerie	Richard Sills	Oxford
Esmé Alden	Oxford	Joe Clacey	University
Peggy Manuell	Oxford		

JB, as Chairman Elect, welcomed those present. He hoped that meetings could be made more effective by taking a high-level approach to issues raised, avoiding too much detail and allocating actions outside meetings to relevant individuals.

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Peter Baxter                      EBU Shareholder (*absent for good reason – in Brazil as NPC to the Seniors Team who, as it turned out, were winning the World Cup at the time!*)

Lynne Hayes                      Cups, Noticeboards and 2010 Congress – see below

Mike Baker	Abingdon	Erica Sheppard	Summertown
Ian van Maanen	Abingdon	Bill McCarthy	Thame
Mike Webley	Aylesbury	Peter Bowen	Thame
Alison Nicolson	Blewbury	Norman Gascoyne	Wallingford
John Barlow	Frilford	Ina Merriman	Witney
Chris Kerr	Oxford	David Marsh	Witney
Krys Kazmierczak	Summertown		

## 2. Report from Management Committee meeting of 15 June 2009

Owing to the fact that the previous Secretary had resigned at the AGM and had not been immediately replaced, no minutes of this meeting were available. However JB, who had been present, confirmed that the discussions at the meeting had either been about the forthcoming Congress (see below), or had related to items that were on the agenda for the current meeting.

## 3. Confirmation of changes to Committee Officers

JB explained that since the date of the AGM, he, DL, and SN had offered to take up the positions of Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary respectively. It had obviously not been possible to approve these appointments at the AGM itself. SB proposed, and Peggy Manuell seconded, a motion that they should now be approved by the Committee: this was agreed nem. con. JB proposed, and SN seconded, a motion to co-opt Lynne Hayes [LH] (who had kindly volunteered to organise the 2010 Congress) on to the Committee: this was also agreed nem.con. **ACTION:** SN to advise LH of this ASAP.

JB added that he believed that, in principle, one of the key Committee officers should also be a County shareholder. In recent years none of the individuals holding these posts had volunteered, but SN had now indicated she would be willing to do so in future, and would even take on the role immediately if any of the current shareholders would be prepared to stand down. **ACTION:** JB to approach the shareholders separately and report to the next meeting.

## 4. Other matters arising

It was noted that the minutes of the AGM itself were not yet available, but were expected shortly.

## 5. Officers' reports

All officers' reports had been circulated with the Agenda for the meeting. JB thanked all the officers for preparing their reports in time to do this. He asked them, where appropriate, to highlight any particularly critical points very briefly, before moving on to questions and discussion on each report.

Chairman: Was hoping to make good progress on issues mentioned in his report during the course of the year.

Treasurer: Whilst not yet being fully au fait with the accounts, was able to confirm that the County's financial position was good. The Congress had been financially successful, as seen from the previous Treasurer's report.

Secretary: Had not yet received the promised information from the EBU about club affiliation from 2010 onwards, but could confirm that the Henley-on-Thames Wednesday club no longer wished to be affiliated. **ACTION:** Provide updated information on club contacts to SB and AG for the brochure and website.

Chief Tournament Director: Would welcome more people learning to use Bridgemates for scoring on Tuesday evenings – noting that this would entitle them to a free game.

Membership Secretary: Confirmed that the prospectus would be sent out later that week. Had received a query from a club enquiring whether it was necessary to be affiliated to the County in order to play in the Wessex League. The meeting agreed that whilst all clubs playing in the League should normally be affiliated, even in Division 5, some leniency could be permitted for the remainder of the current membership year.

Tournament Secretary: Wished to emphasise the problem with taking entries for novice events – when these came via teachers, details were often inadequate. The meeting agreed that we should be more pro-active in encouraging learners to participate in OBA events aimed at their level and that both teachers and club representatives should act as ambassadors in this respect. The next such event would be the Oxford Times cup on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, so this needed to start immediately. **ACTION:** AG to contact club secretaries, in time for this event, to ask them to identify a key person in each major club who can take responsibility for liaison with novice players – including taking entries for novice events and passing them on to AG (with all necessary contact details). In the meanwhile, AG to publicise a contact phone number, as well as an email address.

Publicity Secretary, Match Secretary: no further points to raise

President/Chester/Wessex Secretary: GN was congratulated on the way he had dealt with the Aylesbury clubs. There was some discussion about how we could increase entries for the Presidents and Chester cup competitions. The conclusion was that what was really needed was a new competition aimed at encouraging entries from players at intermediate level (those moving on from novice events). This might, for example, take the form of a pro-am teams. **ACTION:** Better promotion for Presidents' Cup and Chester Cup, to include articles in County Newsletter, entry forms sent to clubs with information sheet - GN/BH; Devise new intermediate-level event(s) for those moving on from novices – working group (see below).

## **6. Business to be dealt with (including matters arising from AGM)**

- a) Report on 2009 County Congress, consideration of any changes proposed for 2010, and confirmation of dates for 2011

The 2009 Congress had generally gone well and the financial return was good. The food provided was considered to be an improvement. However, it was unfortunate that the results had not gone up on the website for nearly a week, due to a problem with SB's internet connection. Otherwise no changes were envisaged for the format or venue in 2010. SN explained that the EBU had suggested it would be better to move the date of the 2011 Congress forward one week, to avoid a possible clash with a biennial Berks & Bucks event. It was agreed to move the date to 18/19 June 2011. **ACTION:** SN to advise EBU of new date; LH to book the venue for 2011 ASAP.

- b) Implementation of P2P, including final confirmation of P2P charge

JB said he was conscious that clubs would need to know the amount of the County P2P charge but that we were not yet in a position to confirm the figure. He was aware that the EBU had advised OBA clubs that the provisional rate was 3p per play, but felt that the estimate of 6p mentioned at the AGM might be nearer the mark. Once he and the

Treasurer had had time to review the figures, he would send a paper and resolution out to members by email and hoped that by this means the figure could be confirmed before the end of November. **ACTION:** JB to prepare and circulate paper and resolution.

Meanwhile, Joe Clacey to investigate the status of the University club.

NS pointed out that Menagerie was still trying to convince the EBU that it should be allowed to affiliate despite not having a regular club night. If this did not prove possible, he hoped that the committee would endorse GN's proposal for allowing them to continue to take part in the Wessex League, on the assumption that direct EBU members would also be able to become direct members of the County [*this has been checked and is correct – SN*]. He also hoped that the committee would agree to write to the EBU in support of their case for affiliation. It was pointed out that if such a letter were to be sent, it would also need to refer to both the University club and Highworth, who were similarly uncertain whether they would be allowed to affiliate. After discussion, JB said that he would carry out some further research and prepare a proposal as to whether, and if so how, the County should officially support these clubs, for email circulation and voting by all Management Committee members (votes to be per individual member not by club, including those not on email, and to be returned to the Secretary, who would collate numbers for and against without listing individuals). **ACTION:** JB to prepare and circulate proposal for voting. If approved, letter of support to be sent to EBU before date of EBU AGM (7<sup>th</sup> October).

c) Education and Training – officer post currently vacant

No one had yet volunteered to fill this post. Anyone with any ideas or suggestions was asked to let JB know.

d) Constitution: EBU have not approved current version

JB explained that the EBU had asked for further amendments to the draft County Constitution circulated at the AGM. This included a requirement to ensure that all members of the Management Committee were elected, not just the officers. Joe Clacey suggested that this could be done by following the mechanism by which clubs nominated members for the selection committee, with more formalisation at club AGMs. It was agreed that the amendments would be left until the next AGM to resolve. In the meanwhile, the Association would follow the provisions of the draft Constitution.

e) Priorities for 2009/10 and significant issues to be addressed by new committee – to include:

- *Operation of “executive committee”*
- *Progress on implementing the report of the electronic workgroup*
- *Content and maintenance of County website*
- *County Newsletter*

JB explained that these were the areas he saw as priority issues for the year going forward and that he would like to involve individuals to work on them outside the committee, with the aim of bringing back recommendations for approval by the full committee. The idea of having an “executive committee” would be to find ways of making decisions more effectively than via quarterly meetings of a large group of people.

Joe Clacey suggested, to general agreement, that “Youth Bridge” should be added to the list of priority areas. He said that he would like to see Oxfordshire as one of the main youth bridge centres of the country, and would definitely like to be part of a group working on this topic.

**ACTION:** JB to send out a note to officers and committee members with more detail; members then invited to let JB know where they would be interested in becoming more involved.

Regarding the website, it was noted that ideally we would prefer not to use a member’s private website for OBA purposes, but to achieve this, there would need to be a dedicated scoring area of the existing site with a different password. Meanwhile, the website needed more articles, stories and other items of general interest. **ACTION:** JB to discuss possibilities for a better system for uploading results to County website with AG and SB, before next meeting. BH to include a request in the next County newsletter to encourage more contributions to the County website.

## 7. AOB

(i) DL asked for further clarification on the decision made at the AGM regarding expenses for those who played in the County teams. In particular, she felt there was some ambiguity over the cost of the meal at the recent national C team competition. It was agreed that students should not be asked to pay for this, but one person who was not a student was refusing to pay. **ACTION:** JB and DL to explain the position to all who played, especially those who have not yet paid.

(ii) Kathy Talbot was unhappy with the lack of clearly defined responsibility for locking up, turning off electricity, clearing up cups and glasses etc. at the end of Tuesday evening sessions. It was felt that this should be the responsibility of the Assistant TD for the evening (except when learning how to use the Bridgemates). Esme Alden mentioned that one person had also complained that the bar was not always open before the start of play on Tuesdays. Kathy added that not everyone was paying for coffee. It was suggested that maybe the entry fee should be increased by 50p so that coffee could be included rather than paid for separately. **ACTION:** JB and KT to discuss possible improvements ASAP.

## 8. Dates, times and venues for future meetings – currently listed as:

Thurs 10 Dec, OBC; Wednesday 24 March, venue TBA; Monday 14 June, AGM

These dates were agreed. **ACTION:** AG to investigate possible venues at Wantage for the meeting due to take place on 24 March.