

## Oxfordshire Bridge Association

### Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting

held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012 at 7.30 p.m. at North Oxford Association

#### PRESENT:

Robert Procter [RP]	Chairman
Sandra Nicholson [SN]	Secretary/EBU Shareholder
Claire MacDonagh [CM]	Treasurer/Tournament Secretary
Vicky Fleming [VF]	Membership Secretary
Brenda Harris [BH]	Publicity Officer/EBU Shareholder
Rob Dixon [RD]	Assistant Chief Tournament Director
Alan Wilson [AW]	EBU Shareholder/Team Leader, County Team
Barbara Jordan [BJ]	Team Leader, Social Team
Clive Keep [CK]	County Pairs Organiser
Peter Finbow [PF]	Congress Organiser

Chris Dawe	Oxford	Christopher Sheppard	Summertown
John Fleming	Oxford	Erica Sheppard	Summertown
Frank Harris	Oxford	Francis Glassborow	Wallingford
Kathy Talbot	Oxford	Gillian Weatherley	Wallingford
Robert Gasser	Summertown		

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Stephen Brown [SB]	Chief Tournament Director
Geoff Nicholas [GN]	League Secretary
Alan Grunwald [AG]	Internet Officer
Marryat Stevens [MS]	Youth Officer
Mike Fletcher [MF]	Team Leader, Youth and Duplicate Bridge Promotion

Michael Allen	Blewbury
Alison Nicolson	Blewbury
Esme Alden	Oxford
Richard Sills	Oxford
Colin Jones	Wallingford

#### 2. Minutes of Management Committee meeting held on 28 March 2012

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved and signed.

### **3. Draft minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 12 June 2012**

Formal approval of accounts: RP apologised for not having realised that it was necessary, according to the Constitution, for the AGM to give formal approval to the Association's accounts after they had already been signed by the Auditor. AW proposed, and RD seconded, a motion that the 2011/12 accounts should be approved forthwith by the Management Committee. This was carried unanimously.

Eligibility criteria for County competitions: this issue was covered under item 7, below.

### **4. Action points and matters arising from previous Management Committee meetings/AGM, not otherwise on the agenda**

Midlands League: It was noted that the vote among participating counties had resulted in the competition being left as it was, with all teams still as before; however, the scoring system may change.

Teacher training course: RP reported that this was on hold since he had been unable to raise any enthusiasm for such a course from the clubs in the North of the county, where he had hoped that it would be held.

Andrew Robson seminar: Another Andrew Robson OBA seminar has now been arranged for April 2013. He will also be running a weekend event at Heythrop Park in March 2013.

Assistant Chief TD: Rob Dixon had agreed to become Stephen Brown's assistant and would attend the County Director's course in September.

Budgets: RP was still waiting for budgets from team leaders.

### **5. Officers' and team leaders' reports: updates since AGM**

County Team Management: AW reported that a survey of county squad members had been carried out and the team were looking at the responses. The A team, which had won the Dawes League, had qualified to play in the National Final for inter-county league winners, where they had come 4<sup>th</sup> out of 5.

Social: BJ had received a lot of useful feedback on the Welcome Pairs event which she felt had gone very well. For the coming year, she had set a target of running 6 events of some kind, with at least one in each of the main areas of the county. Sandra Claridge had offered to help and she was gradually gathering contacts in different clubs. The committee offered a formal vote of thanks to BJ for all her work in organising the county's first Welcome Pairs event and making it such a success.

Youth and Duplicate Bridge Promotion: MF had sent through a brief note saying that he had no material progress to report, and that the next tasks of the team would be to consider budget requirements, and to contact all schools not yet known to be teaching minibridge.

The committee noted that youth bridge generally is a huge growth area for OBA. In the absence of MS, VF presented a short report showing that, together with Berks & Bucks, we are now teaching nearly 500 children, having gone from teaching in 8 schools to 34 in the past two years. It was hoped that the initiative could soon be expanded to cover secondary schools.

SN reported that MF, having originally agreed to take over the organisation of a repeat of last year's OBA stall at the Oxford Open Doors event on 9<sup>th</sup> September, had now said that he would be away and could not undertake to run the event himself. It was agreed that we should still try to repeat it and that SN should attempt to identify an alternative organiser. If this was not possible, however, the event would have to be cancelled.

**ACTION: SN**

**County Night and Competitions:** It was noted that the recent County Congress had made an excellent profit, very similar to that from the previous year; and that, once again, many entries had had to be turned down due to lack of space. PF reported that for 2013, we had therefore booked a new venue at Marlborough School in Woodstock, which for an extra £500 would provide enough space for 125 tables on both days, plus side rooms to be used for refreshments etc. SN would advise the EBU of the details for the competitions calendar. **ACTION: SN**

Owing to the change of Treasurer (see item 6, below), RD would be organising a rota to collect table money on Tuesday nights.

**Infrastructure:** RP reported that he had attended the recent EBU Chairmen's Conference at which a number of interesting points had been raised. It had been recommended that all counties should have a disciplinary panel in place, but the committee felt that this was not necessary at present. There had also been a discussion on whether shareholders should act as representatives (entitled to vote as they saw fit on key issues), or as mandated delegates. There was no single answer, but counties had been urged to clarify the issue with their own shareholders. The committee felt that OBA shareholders should be representatives but should be instructed to report back as to how they had voted on critical issues. It was also agreed that in future, the agendas for shareholders' meetings should be publicised in advance on the OBA website, with a note of who our shareholders are, so that members with an interest in any issue listed on the agenda could make their views known. **ACTION: Shareholders**

RP also reported that he, DL, SB and SN had been reviewing a draft formal agreement for the use of OBC premises that had been put forward by OBC and had identified a small number of issues which, in their view, remained to be resolved. It was not anticipated that these would cause difficulties and once they had been dealt with, he would circulate the final draft to all committee members for final approval before signature by himself and SN on behalf of the Association. **ACTION: RP/SN**

## **6. Officer and team leader vacancies**

**Treasurer:** Dinah Lintott had resigned at the AGM, subject to a replacement being found. CM had since volunteered to take over the Treasurer role as well as continuing to be Tournament Secretary. Her appointment to this role was proposed by Kathy Talbot, seconded by AW, and unanimously agreed.

**Education Officer:** RP explained that he was hoping that one of the existing officers would move into the vacant role of Education Officer and that someone else would then backfill. *[subsequently confirmed – Vicky Fleming will become Education Officer and Emily Middleton will take over as Membership Secretary, both appointments to be formally confirmed at next meeting – SN]*

Team Leaders: AW and BJ were happy to continue. MF had only offered to take on the role for a year, which would be up in November. SB was caretaking the Competitions team for the time being in order to get the brochure agreed. The Education and Infrastructure leader roles were still vacant. RP stressed that any additional volunteers, either to lead or join teams, would be welcome.

## **7. Changes to competitions**

Kathy Talbot explained that whilst the Competition Bye-Laws required a number of changes, most of these would be non-controversial as they were updates rather than substantial differences to current practice. However, some proposals (a list of which had been circulated before the meeting) were considered to be “material changes” and were therefore being brought to the committee for consultation, before final implementation by the Competitions Team.

A discussion was held focussing mainly on the proposed changes to the Wessex League rules. Whilst those present were in general agreement with the spirit of the proposals, it was felt that some of them had not yet been expressed in a way that would be workable in practice. The team was authorised to include the proposals provided that they could be suitably reworded.

A list of proposed changes to the rules regarding eligibility to compete in OBA events, and to the nature of some events, had been circulated to clubs in survey format by SB. The responses were overall in favour so a number of changes were approved and would be included in the forthcoming Competitions Brochure as well as in the Bye-Laws where appropriate. Wallingford representatives asked that in future, such surveys should be sent out by email as well as post, to give them the best chance of reaching the person to whom they were addressed in good time.

It was noted that the question of who was eligible to represent the County in inter-county events such as the Midlands League was not covered in these proposals and was still to be addressed by the County Team Management team.

**ACTION: KT/Competitions team/SB/RD; AW/CTM team**

## **8. New team structure: budgets and ground rules**

RP said he felt it was necessary to have some ground rules for how the new teams should operate, to make sure that both the team leaders and the officers could operate effectively. The team leaders should be primarily communicators and enablers rather than executives. The officers still had their previous executive roles but needed to ensure that they kept in touch with the relevant team leaders, especially as regards budgets and expenditure. It was up to the teams exactly how they wished to work within these parameters, but it was suggested that it might be helpful for officers to copy team leaders in on any requests sent to the Treasurer.

## **9. Integration between clubs and County**

RP explained that he had asked for this item to be on the agenda in order to stress that he recognised the different approaches taken by clubs around the county and had no intention of interfering with what they were already doing. He did, however, want to find ways that the County and its clubs could work together more effectively to fill in gaps in the current provision.

The committee agreed that this was the correct approach, and felt that the efforts being made to provide more opportunities for social players to attend events outside their own clubs represented a step in the right direction.

## **10. Any other business**

Wallingford Bridge Club presented a request for the Association to nominate one of their members, Phillip Simmonds, for an EBU Dimmie Fleming award (given in recognition of longstanding contribution to the development of bridge at county or club level). AW proposed and (*in absentia*) Alison Nicolson seconded, that the request should be approved. This was unanimously carried. SN would forward the nomination to the EBU with the endorsement of the Association. **ACTION: SN.**

## **11. Date and venue of next meeting**

The next meeting was listed as Monday 29 October 2012. In 2011 this date had been used to hold an open meeting rather than a committee meeting. As there appeared to be no call for another open meeting this year, and no need for another committee meeting until later in the year, it was agreed that the next meeting would take place on the next listed date, i.e. Thursday 6 December 2012, at a venue to be notified nearer the time.