

Oxfordshire Bridge Association
Management Committee Meeting
Wednesday 8th March 2017 at 7.30 pm
The Village Hall, Oxford Road, Horspath OX33 1RT

Minutes

Present:

John Slater (JS)	Competitions, in the Chair
Peter Litchfield (PL)	Abingdon
John Edwards (JE)	Abingdon
Lawrence Haines (LH)	Oxford Festival
Peter Briggs (PB)	Membership
Sandra Nicholson (SN)	Honours Boards and Trophies
John Rowe (JR)	Joint Chief TD
Peter Stevenson (PS)	Oxford
Kathy Talbot (KT)	Joint Chief TD
Mike Bennett (MB)	Wallingford
Alison Nicolson (AN)	Education
Joan Bennett (JB)	Youth Bridge
Robert Gasser (RG)	Summertown
Ken Langdon (KL)	Secretary

1. Apologies for absence

John Fleming, Michael Robinson, Richard Sills, Peter Jordan, Matthew Wilkinson, Sandra Claridge, Alexander Bain. Marian Day, Robert Procter

The meeting was sorry to hear that Robert Procter, the Chairman of OBA, was in hospital, elected John Slater as the chair for the one meeting and instructed KL to send a card from the MC to Robert Procter in hospital wishing him well and a speedy recovery.

2. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Management Committee meeting on 21st November 2016 - None raised.

Actions taken forward:

4. RP to review social page of website

6. KL to send a Thank you note to Stephen Brown for his work on the "clubs" page of the website.

Other actions had been completed or would be discussed later in the meeting.

There being no further matters arising the meeting approved the minutes and the Chair signed a copy.

3. Matters arising from Chairman's Report

The meeting accepted the report and agreed that any issues arising from the Chairman's report would be covered in later items.

4. Best practice review

KT presented the main recommendations of the report and there was some discussion of some elements. There was an interaction with the production of Job Descriptions. SN said that because the recommendations are so widespread, the main thing now is to prioritise what needs to be done. KL suggested that a small group should get together for a planning session to prioritise and form action plans. The meeting agreed to this and JS suggested a working party made up of KL Chairman, KT, JS, AN with RP joining if he wished. KL would bring in other people as required.

The working party will report back to the next MC meeting in July.

5. Matters arising from Competitions' report

SN and JB proposed that we run the Oxford Times Trophy for novices as a sim pairs event, to be held in clubs over the course of a given week, with copies of the hand file sent to participating clubs for dealing and a suitable commentary provided. Several local clubs running supervised play sessions had already been contacted and had said they would be likely to take part. The meeting agreed that in addition to the existing cup, there would be a prize of £20 and that there would be no extra charge for table money. PL said he felt there should also be a competition for more experienced "novices" already playing in non-supervised sessions. The meeting agreed to review the use of the Sandra Landy trophy as well. The meeting asked Vicky Fleming and SN to come up with a plan by the end of April, consulting both with AN, and with KT and JR for dealing and scoring purposes. The hope is to do something in this area this year.

JB and MB pointed out that EBED already runs a sim pairs for novices in March each year. For next year, it might be possible to simply award the Oxford Times Cup to the top Oxon pair playing in this event.

The competitions team agreed that County night is now at an end. The meeting agreed to that and that club heats of the County Pairs would not be reinstated, following the 6-1 vote by clubs to that effect.

The meeting welcomed item 12 of the report and agreed the proposal that there should be events aimed at county team development and the development of others coming up. The first one will be run by Patrick Shields from Gloucestershire and Wales. JB's proposal that the best juniors be invited to the event was agreed. Responsibility for organizing future events will now rest with AN, with help from Diana Nettleton and Emily Middleton, and liaising as needed with the County Captain.

6. Youth: matters arising from the County Juniors' report.

The meeting greeted with enthusiasm the terrific success of the Dragons, Will Wauchope, Thomas Potter, Freddie Yu and Richmond Young in coming 3rd in the Schools Cup beating the usual prestigious schools, the Perse, Haberdashers Aske, Manchester Grammar, Loughborough Grammar, RGS Malvern and managed to trounce Eton College in the playoff for 3rd place! They succumbed only to the winners, Westminster and the runners up, St. Paul's! The meeting instructed KL to put the team prominently on the website. The committee also gave a huge vote of thanks to Holly Kilpatrick for her tremendous work in coaching and preparing the team for the competition and asked KL to pass this on.

Alison reminded people of the residential weekend at Cheltenham Ladies College and, responding to a question from PL, explained how young people could be safely managed to and at the event.

7. Update on the Oxford Festival

LH put some flesh on the bones of the report on the website. The emphasis of the marketing effort was to bring together players from affiliated and unaffiliated clubs in the ratio, 80 county players, affiliated, and 120 unaffiliated. To get to the unaffiliated players Lawrence needs to build a better list of those clubs and appealed to committee members to support him in this. This is an urgent need to ensure that the marketing effort hits the right people. The team have put together a poster, fliers and a draft programme. KL was asked to send the draft programme to people attending the meeting prior to its finalisation and sending out to everyone. RG raised the issue of whether players could attend for less than all four days. Lawrence explained that the committee had authorized a four-day event. However, in the light of market reaction there may be consideration of an a la carte approach. The committee agreed that Lawrence should go with what the market demands.

SN suggested that we should prepare small gifts and incentives for clubs and people to assist in the marketing and other functions of the festival – e.g. perhaps specially printed Festival cards. Simon Husband was suggested as a contact who had knowledge of this area. LH agreed to look into that.

8. Review of Job descriptions

The Best Practice team had emphasized in their report the requirement for these. Only the Chairman had made any progress on this despite the resolution from the last meeting. KL agreed to send the original document on the subject to KT, JS and JR who took responsibility for producing their own Job descriptions, and to circulate these to committee members. KL took responsibility to follow this up with people who were not at the meeting referring officers to the website for completed documents. KL stated that this is not an onerous task and PB proved this by doing his at the meeting. He only has to write down what he said.

9. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is the AGM and KT and KL took on the task of finding and booking a venue on a suitable date. SN reminded KL that notifications had to be sent out to members in accordance with the timescale set out in the County Constitution.

10. Any other business

JS raised the issue of John Fleming's report on the EBU's proposed change to the rules on hosts being able to exclude their scores from the NGS. KT asked for the committee to support what they were going to say to the EBU on the topic. The meeting agreed to send a note to Jeremy Dhondy on the topic. KT and John Fleming to draft and send to KL. AN's said, "EBU say that playing with a novice does not affect NGS and that in reality, either way it does not matter. It is the perception of the hosts that matters. The change will make it very difficult to get hosts, seriously affecting the viability of the session that turn learners into players." KT expressed doubts on the EBU's view and PB stated that the best option would be to change the EBU's scoring software such that NGS exclusions could be done only at the start of a session and not retrospectively. If some clubs refuse to use EBUScore with this inbuilt restriction, then they are not allowed exclusion.

OBC were also concerned about P2P charges for novice sessions where, to get new sessions off the ground, a few more experienced players fill in when required. The meeting agreed the OBA strongly supports OBC's efforts at bringing further people into the game. They felt that the EBU is acting as an obstruction to this effort. AN and John Fleming will send the OBA suggestions and paperwork for what they want the committee to do.

SN reported briefly on the Congress. Everything appeared to be under control and on schedule. Nigel Birks is taking over from Claire MacDonagh in dealing with entries and fees. There is now a separate bank account for the Congress with on-line access so that entries can be easily

reconciled with payments, and an on-line entry system set up by Stephen Brown. Gary Conrad is doing the logistics and will be assisting Stephen Brown with scoring and directing, other directors will be brought in as needed when we have more idea of numbers. Catering will be as last year, with some extra food available to buy on the day. We will need volunteers to help set up and pack up the tables and equipment.

Stephen Brown has offered to train KT and JR in certain more complex aspects of scoring, with a small fee to cover his expenses etc. The committee agreed that this should be pursued by KT and JR making direct contact with SB.