

Unit 141 Meeting – November 13, 2023

Attendees: April Apfelbaum, Jay Apfelbaum, Ellen Berkowitz, Randee Braslow, Mark Cohen, John Dickenson, Joan Goldstein, Andy Rosenberg, Cathy Strauss

Regrets: Becky Levinson, John Nothdurft

John Dickenson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm via Zoom, and the board addressed the following topics:

Financial Report

Ellen Berkowitz reports that the unit has almost \$89,252 in our savings account. District 4 sent us a check for \$444 from the Silver Tournaments at Clubs (STACs). ACBL gave us a quarterly reimbursement of \$2250 for our membership numbers. September and October expenses included \$535 for board meeting dinners and a business zoom account, and \$50 for the unit website maintenance. The business zoom account allows board members to conduct meetings which last more than one hour. We also incurred a \$1900 loss on the October Cherry Hill Sectional.

District 4 Board Meeting News

The D4 Board met at the Spooky Nook (Lancaster) Regional. The board members are trying to remedy a poor financial position for the district. Throughout the pandemic, the district continued to incur fixed expenses such as equipment storage costs without offsetting revenues. Currently the unit receives 75% of the table fees for STACs; the district receives 25%. District 4 plans to flip those percentages. The district also mandated a 7.5% profit for all Regional Tournaments, one of several contributing cost increases which will necessitate higher card fees.

Upcoming January and Future Sectionals

Cathy Strauss and Pat Andrews are co-chairing the January 2024 split Sectional; Cathy is responsible for the open events at King of Prussia Bridge Club and Pat is responsible for the Intermediate/Newcomer (I/N) events at North Penn. Cathy will provide Ellen with the tournament flyer and accompanying verbiage so that Ellen can do an e-blast advertising this novel split site event. Bob Cole is the director in charge of the Tournament. Each club has a limit of 21 tables, so pre-registration is advised. Joan offered to email news of the I/N events to her database of 600 players who have played at I/N events in the past.

Bala Golf Club is not available for an April 12-14, 2024 Sectional; the kitchen has reopened for golf season, making food service prohibitively expensive for us. Bernadette Hennessy May has offered Cherry Hill Bridge Club as an alternative location. She has developed a working relationship with Wegman's and believes that flexible game-day food ordering will provide enough food, while avoiding a cost overrun. Jay will look to secure a contract with Bala to host March sectionals for 2025-2027.

New ACBL Ruling on Fees Paid to Units

The ACBL is creating an incentive structure for fees paid to the units. There are no real specifics yet, but the plan will include retention of members as a criterion for where we land on a 5-10-15% payback, as opposed to the current structure of 11% for all. For our unit, that payback would range from approximately \$5,000-\$15,000, according to our retention scores. The proposed roll out date is March, 2024. Unit 141 suggests a delay in any decreases until potential increases can be appropriately measured over time. There will be an ACBL Board meeting at the upcoming national tournament in Atlanta with this incentive plan on the agenda.

Welcoming Committee

Each month committee members reach out by email and phone to new ACBL members. Assignments are based on geography. Success is defined as ACBL membership renewal. We don't yet have longitudinal data to measure, but member retention has become increasingly important for our unit financials, as the ACBL plans to implement a sliding scale of fees paid to the unit as discussed above.

Mentoring Program

The board agreed to delay the start of a mentoring program until more program options might be considered. Karen Pollak, Unit 190, has reported that Jill Kolodny has a detailed project plan for their mentoring program, which we would like to review. Bernadette would still like to pilot the program in Cherry Hill.

New Business

Jay has posted information on the upcoming board election on the unit website. Three individuals have been slated to run for the three open one-year positions. There is a thirty-day deadline for anyone else to submit a nominating petition to be added to the slate. If no one else is added, current bylaws allow for us to bypass the election and add the three candidates to the board.

Ellen Gordon would like to hold a Sectional at Yorktown. Their capacity of 16 or 17 tables is an obstacle, unless they might host one half of a Split Sectional. There are not many I/N players at Yorktown, so hosting the I/N games does not make sense for attempting to bring out their regulars.

Next meeting: Monday, January 16, 2024, in person

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03pm.