

Unit 191 Board
Minutes of Meeting on January 5, 2021

Members Present: Ian Cloudsdale, Ann Fisher, Suzie Goldberg, Eric Hamilton, Deanna Larus, Hugon Karwowski, Ray McEntee, Marian Meyer, Chris Moll, Paul Morrissette, Donna Walther and Phylliss Woody

Deanna Larus called the video conference meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Minutes of the December 1, 2020 meeting were approved.

Membership Report by Phylliss Woody dated 1/5/21 was approved and commended for its enhanced and detailed format. Membership total is 629.

RealBridge: Deanna led a discussion on the subject of RealBridge, a new online bridge platform created to provide an online bridge experience closer to face-to-face bridge in that it allows users to see and hear others at the table. It is not affiliated with ACBL and master points are not awarded. Henry Meguid, owner of The Bridge Academy, is experimenting with RealBridge, has run one game, with plans for more. Deanna tried to determine the Board's interest in promoting RealBridge.

The issue seems to have several sides to it:

- It potentially brings new players to the game which is consistent with Unit 191's objective of promoting duplicate bridge, but it does so outside the auspices of ACBL and therefore violates the unit's objective of preserving and stimulating interest in the ACBL.
- Henry wishes to avoid conflict with Unit 191 games but made the unfortunate mistake of scheduling three conflicting games. (The error has been corrected.)
- Henry intends to charge a fee to play but as Paul argues, "No one will pay to play if there are no master points."
- Eric notes, "There are no convention cards, that's not duplicate bridge."
- Deanna says, "We post Unit 119's schedule on our website, why couldn't we post TBA's RealBridge schedule?"

- Unit 191 uses the ALERT bulletin to announce games to Unit 191 members. Henry maintains his own proprietary mail list, thus some folks will get two announcements of events; possibly not too concerning but suggestive of conflict, not cooperation. Deanna stated she wants no conflict by a club against the Unit.

Status:

1. Henry will be invited to present his views to the Board.
2. Ian offered to speak to Henry regarding potential conflicts, should that become necessary.

State of Virtual Clubs:

Deanna reported that for most of 2020 (after Covid restrictions) TBA averaged about 70 tables a week and TBC about 60. Play has fallen to the point that after Oct 15, 2020 both clubs average about 29 tables per week, an unsustainable level.

Notably, lots of regular pre-Covid players have not played online.

Suzie volunteered, with help from Chris and Ian, to write an article for the ALERT encouraging members to play online via BBO.

Meeting adjourned 6:00 p.m.

Next meeting TBA

RJM 1/6/21