

Notes from January 18, 2021 – Unit 191 Board Meeting

Board members present: Deanna Larus, Paul Morrissette, Hugon Karawowski, Eric Hamilton, Marian Meyer, Ann Fisher, Ian Cloudsdale, Chris Moll, Suzie Goldberg, Phylliss Woody, Ray McEntee (by phone only for most of meeting). Absent: Donna Walther

Guest: Henry Meguid

Meeting was opened at 4:35.

1. Minutes from January 5, 2021 meeting were approved.
2. Decision to purchase updated version of Quickbooks for Unit use was approved. Suzie Goldberg will evaluate the options and make the purchase.
3. Henry Meguid was welcomed to the meeting and asked to inform the Board about his new Real Bridge program. It was described as a means of face to face bridge games using the Real Bridge online platform geared mostly to people who are interested in a social bridge experience. It offers a valuable platform for bridge education, especially during the pandemic. It is currently being run as a free program but Henry intends to charge members a fee to cover costs in the near future. While it does not offer sanctioned ACBL duplicate games, it's value to the bridge community is that it allows more people to play online and will hopefully draw more players to our Unit and to the community of bridge players throughout the world. It is designed to more of a social experience rather than a competitive experience. It also offers the opportunity for face to face contact that is not available at this time on BBO. The Board recognized the value of such a social bridge program and is happy to promote it.

Members of the Board expressed concern that such social games would compete directly with our sanctioned ACBL games and affect participation in Unit 191 virtual games. Members were disappointed when Real Bridge games were scheduled in time slots in direct competition with our Unit ACBL games. Since the pandemic began, the Unit Board has encouraged club owners to work together to set a Unit virtual game schedule so virtual games did not overlap allowing for more participation in virtual games for all Unit members. Both TBC and TBA owners agreed and a shared schedule was developed. In recent months, however, conflicts in scheduling have been made. Henry Meguid apologized for mistakes that were made in recent months and plans to arrange his Real Bridge game and other special games so that all are scheduled in accordance to the original agreement. At this time, both Henry Meguid and Chris Moll plan to continue to carefully schedule virtual games to minimize the extent to which Unit 191 games overlap.

The Board has agreed to share information for The Bridge Academy's Real Bridge program in our Unit communication venues. However, we asked our club owners to

use the Alert as the primary means of communication with Unit members rather than separate Unit 191 email blasts so as to minimize the number of emails sent through the Unit system. We don't want to bombard our members with too many emails!

Finally, Henry Meguid offered to use his Real Bridge online platform for the Mentor/Mentee games when he serves as host touting the video component of the online platform and ease of partnership communication. The Board considered this idea but ultimately decided that they prefer to offer ACBL sanctioned game opportunities for this program. A unanimous vote was held. Thus, these games will continue to be run on BBO through the virtual club game program as instituted in September on a monthly basis with alternating hosts.

Meeting was adjourned at 6pm.

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