

MINUTES
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
THE UNITED STATES BRIDGE FEDERATION
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2011
9:00 PM EST
BY CONFERENCE CALL

Directors Present: Cheri Bjerkan, Joan Gerard, George Jacobs, Howard Weinstein, Ralph Katz (part of meeting)

Others Present: Jan Martel, Barbara Nudelman (part of meeting), Joe Stokes

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Joan Gerard, president, at 9:15 pm

II. ATTENDANCE: ESTABLISH QUORUM

The president noted that at least a majority of the directors were present at the meeting, thus establishing a quorum for the purpose of transacting business by the Board.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MEETING OF 7/25/2011

Minutes were approved as distributed.

IV. DISCUSSION OF \$1.95 ACBL “CHECKOFF”

Joan reported that we have been receiving less money from the \$1.95 check box on ACBL dues payment, probably because at the moment the Educational Foundation is listed first and we are listed second. Joan will try to make sure that ACBL continues to reverse the order of the “checkoff” requests so that we are first part of the time.

V. VELDHOVEN REPORT

Joan reported that the playing conditions in Veldhoven were excellent and much appreciated by all of the players. The tournament was very efficiently run by the well-organized Netherlands Bridge Federation. Volunteers were available all the time to help players and others with any and all problems they had.

VI. SPORTACCORD WORLD MINDSPORTS EVENT

The USBF sent an Open and a Women’s team to the first annual SportAccord World Mindsports Tournament in Beijing in December. Our Open Team (David Berkowitz-Alan Sontag, Fred Gitelman-Brad Moss, Michael Rosenberg-Chris Willenken) finished second in the team event. Our Women’s Team (Lynn Deas-

Beth Palmer, Irina Levitina-Kerri Sanborn, Tobi Sokolow-Janice Seamon-Molson) won the Women's team event. Deas-Palmer won the Women's Pairs event; Gitelman-Moss were 3rd and Rosenberg-Willenken 4th in the Open Pairs. In the Individual competition, Willenken and Seamon-Molson won their respective events. In the Open, Moss was 3rd, Sontag tied for 4-5, Rosenberg finished 6th and Berkowitz and Gitelman tied for 7-8. Sokolow was 3rd in the Women's. All in all it was a very successful tournament for the USBF teams.

The Board also discussed the fact that SportAccord has announced that this tournament will be an annual event and we will need to have a procedure to select teams in future years. Joan appointed Cheri to chair a committee to make a proposal of a way to choose these teams. Others serving on the committee are George Jacobs, Howie Weinstein and Beth Palmer.

VII. 2012 TRIALS

We have arranged with the hotel in Chicago to provide buffet lunch for the players for the first 2 or 3 days of each Trials. Players will be given coupons good for lunch and we will pay the hotel. For the rest of the events, when there aren't so many players, we will be serving lunch in the Hospitality Suite. Throughout the events, we will serve a continental breakfast in the Hospitality Suite and the Suite will be open throughout the day and after the end of play for casual socializing, snacks and watching BBO.

We have been losing money on all of the Trials the last few years – we lost a significant amount on the Open Trials this year, because there were so few teams, but even with a more normal number of teams, we are losing money because the cost of Directors, supplies, hotel incidentals and hospitality have all gone up. The Board approved a proposal that we increase the Session entry fee from \$120 per session (there are two sessions a day) to \$150 per session – an increase of \$10 per day per player for a 6 person team. Jan will include that information on the website with the entry forms for the Trials

VIII. JUNIOR REPORT

Three of our five teams for the World Junior Championships in Beijing have been appointed. They are:

Patiño Cup (Under 26):

USA1: Roger Lee-Mitch Towner, Kevin Dwyer-Owen Lien and a third pair to be selected later.

USA2: Zhuo Wang-Zizhuo Wang, Lei Jin-Erli Zhuo-Stephen Drodge, and a sixth player to be selected later.

Damiani Cup (Under 20)

USA1: Adam Kaplan, Zachary Brescoll, Adam Grossack and Zachary Grossack, who have asked to add Richard Jeng & Andrew Jeng.

The second Damiani Cup team will be selected in an online match on Sunday, January 22nd. The two teams remaining in the Trials, who will compete for the second spot in the Damiani Cup are Dhir: Arjun Dhir, Ricoh Das, Brandon Harper and Matthew Weingarten and Snowden (Burke Snowden, Hakan Berk, Ben Kristensen, David Soukup and Anam Tebha.

Rona Cup (women under 26)

We are trying to recruit women for the Rona Cup team, with the help of Valerie Westheimer (who has an active Junior program on BBO) and Karen McCallum, who has volunteered to coach the team when it is selected.

Joe Stokes reported that we need NPCs for all of the teams. The Board discussed possible NPCs and hopefully we will soon be able to appoint them.

The Board discussed requiring that our Junior players give something back to bridge. There was general approval of this idea and Joe will discuss with ACBL what things our young “stars” can do to support bridge.

The Board discussed NPCs and agreed to waive the requirement that an NPC must be under 35 in order to appoint Joel Wooldridge (33) as NPC for the USA1 U26 team.

The Board thanked Joe Stokes for all of his work with the Juniors.

IX. USBF REGIONAL

The Board discussed the USBF Regional, which will be held in Minneapolis in 2012. The Board agreed to once again send a letter to all District Directors describing the USBF Regional and asking if any of them had any interest in running it in a future year. The Board agreed to continue its current policy of not being active in running the tournament but trying to encourage our “star” members to attend.

X. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Joan had appointed George, Cheri, Steve Robinson, and Joe Stokes to the nominating committee, but the committee had not yet met. Joan appointed Jan to be a fifth member of the committee and the Board established the “Ballot Mailing Date” of Thursday, Feb. 16th, which means that the Nominating Committee slate should be determined by Jan. 17th and members have until Jan. 27th to nominate additional candidates by petition.

XI. FUTURE TRIALS SITES

Joan proposed that we work with Hilton Hotels to find sites for our future Trials. They are being very helpful with regard to a site for 2013 and if we have a regular relationship with Hilton, hopefully we can find better hotel sites. We will also work on scheduling our Trials farther ahead – at least 2 years in advance.

XII. INTERNATIONAL FUND GAMES

The Board is grateful to Clubs that have held International Fund games during the year, and agreed to send a letter to all clubs that ran games that contributed over \$1000 (or \$100?) to the International Fund.

XIII. SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, January 30th, by conference call.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00pm EST