

MINUTES
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
THE UNITED STATES BRIDGE FEDERATION
5/25/2005
8 PM CST
VIA CONFERENCE CALL

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Martel

II. ATTENDANCE: ESTABLISH QUORUM

Board Members Present: Jan Martel, Shawn Quinn, Steve Beatty, Bill Pollack, Rose Meltzer

Others Present: Bobby Wolff, Joan Gerard, Mike Becker, Peter Rank, Gary Blaiss, Rena Hetzer

A quorum was established.

III. BOBBY WOLFF ADDRESS TO BOARD

Wolff presented his position and opinion on the various topics listed below with the exception of those noted as not discussed. He started his presentation with a brief history of the trials and the formation of the International Team Trials Committee consisting of members of the expert bridge-playing community. Wolff stated that bridge had been his life and indicated that his interest lay in creating and maintaining the best possible environment for the expert level of bridge play as well as encouraging the upcoming younger generation of talented and dedicated bridge experts.

1. Importance of an experienced Conditions of Contest committee for the premier events, including the Vanderbilt, Spingold and Reisinger, which play a large part in the qualification of all our international teams.
2. Touch on alternate methods of qualification for our teams, never forgetting the possibility of one day having the three best pairs (at least at that time) represent us in the World Championship, especially when we are allowed two separate teams to qualify in all three events (BB, Venice Cup and the Senior Team).
3. The responsibility of handling our money (dues, other forms of income, and ACBL responsibility, if any). Are we really responsible for spending large chunks of money for such things as petty (at least to many of us) differences and ugly arguments?
4. Rigidly setting up procedures for handling heavy subjects such as cheating and other recorder duties, eligibility to play for the US, timing our events with appropriate penalties for slow play, and augmentation rules with the idea of being fair and consistent in all areas. **Not Discussed**
5. Create a specific liaison to the ACBL BOD who will represent us on ACBL committees which directly effect us.
6. An update on the Mind Sports Olympic involvement which is doing quite well at the WBF level, but as of now has absolutely no input or even, as far as I know, basic interest by us. Other federations involved include the IOC itself (President Rogge), the COE (chess) Mr. Pescante, the GAISF (go) Mr.

Verbruggen, World games, Mr. Froehlich and ARISF (non-Olympic International Federation) Mr. Fransoo. This subject may give a much greater insight to the USBF BOD of the value and work ethic of the WBF besides, of course, of setting our sails toward a major form of Olympic participation.

7. Deal with the total apathy and dislike coming from many of our ACBL BOD, including some who are already ACBL reps to the WBF and others about to run for that position. It seems advisable to me that the USBF set up direct communication with the home office of the WBF and Jose Damiani located in Paris as well as entertain reports from our WBF reps as to what is going on.

8. Our group should also, in my opinion, provide some constructive input to the Hall of Fame committee as to procedures with the ultimate goal of making the HOF as good as we can make it.

Not Discussed

9. Clarify, as well as we can, the role of the sponsor and the professional player as to what is expected from them now and how we can all grow to serve our group together in a joint manner making our relationships better and keeping things in perspective.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MEETING OF APRIL 6, 2005 AND SPECIAL MEETING OF MAY 3, 2005

The April 6, 2005 Minutes were approved as amended regarding augmentation.
The May 3, 2005 Minutes were approved.

V. PEPSI REPORT

Pepsi gave Bill Pollack a copy of his passport to verify dates he entered and left the United States. Based on that he complied with our requirements for resident membership. Pollack gave a closer look at the dates on the passport and found no evidence that Pepsi failed to meet the residency requirements. Given this, the Board decided to reaffirm its previous action in accepting Pepsi's application for membership.

Becker will informally report to the anonymous inquirer that the Board has investigated the additional information provided by Pepsi and found him to be in compliance with regulations and confirms his eligibility to play in the 2005 USBC and his eligibility to represent the United States had his team won the event.

VI. REVIEW OF USBC/DREAM TEAM CHARITY EVENT/HOUSTON REGIONAL

Quinn reported that the Dream Team Charity Event went very well and a profit of \$9,000 is expected from that event. The Regional table count was substantially lower than "normal" Houston Regionals, and although a final accounting of all revenue and expenses is not yet available, it looks as if the Regional lost money. Overall, taking into account the Regional, the Charity Event and the USBC, as well as the \$30,000 sponsorship, Quinn expects a net profit of about \$28,000.

Quinn recommended that future USBCs always be held in conjunction with a regional tournament and the charity event be continued. Quinn reported that the local area players were very excited and enthusiastic over the opportunity to play with and against the very best US players. In addition, Quinn believes that having the USBC in conjunction with a regional provides the USBF with sorely needed

exposure to the general bridge-playing population and provides the best opportunity to obtain sponsorship either national or local in the area of the site of the USBC.

Additionally, Quinn recommended a party be organized to thank the Houston volunteers who did so much to ensure the smooth running of the USBC and the regional. She suggested a budget of \$1,500 for such an endeavor.

Quinn also suggested that in the future it would benefit the USBF if its board members made a point to attend the USBC – the premier event organized by the USBF.

VII. USWBC AND USSBC PREPARATIONS, BUDGETS

Martel reported the good news that negotiations with the Golden Nugget had produced their agreement to provide the pipe and drape necessary for security purposes at no charge instead of the large fee quoted at an earlier date.

The bad news reported by Martel was the quoted cost of internet connections for the vugraph. However, Martel expects to significantly lower the quote once it is explained to the Golden Nugget the relatively simple needs of the USWBC.

At this time the USSBC has no budget but Martel expects one soon. She is in contact with the local tournament chair and will keep the board informed of progress in the planning for the USSBC.

VIII. VUGRAPH COSTS/POLICIES

Martel discussed the advisability of having a knowledgeable and experienced vugraph supervisor on site at the various USBCs. This person could train the local volunteers recruited to do the at-the-table input and be available to trouble shoot when the inevitable loss of connection occurred or be standing by to help the volunteer operators until they became comfortable with the job.

The Board agreed in principal that the vugraph presentations were essential, providing much needed exposure for the USBC and the USBF and that the cost of providing a smooth operation was a reasonable expense. It is hoped that such a person might be found if airfare, hotel room and a modest per diem can be provided. Martel will explore options in this area.

IX. WAGERING

After hearing from Stan Tomchin, an expert on internet wagering and placing bets on the outcome of the USBC or the outcome of a particular match, and being assured by Stan that the betting patterns were monitored and those placing bets were known to Pinnacle Sports, it was decided that no action by the USBF concerning wagering be taken at this time. It was agreed however that a close eye be kept on wagering.

All agreed that in general having bridge on the site was a good thing.

X. AUGMENTATION

The Board affirmed its previous decision with regard to augmentation procedures for this year, and specifically noted that at this time it is our policy not to allow a sponsor to "buy" a spot on a qualified team. The board tabled any discussion of the possibility of a different procedure for next year, until Mr. Hamman was present to argue his position.

The Board passed a resolution thanking Bobby Wolff for his many years of service on USBF Credentials Committee and directed President Martel to draft the specific language of the resolution and send it to Mr. Wolff.

XI. 2006 USBC

No final conclusion was reached as to where the 2006 USBC should be held or if it should be held in conjunction with an existing regional. However, it was determined that there will be a USBC in 2006.

Becker expressed the opinion that if no sponsor was found that he believe that the majority of the players would prefer to return to Memphis.

Becker and Martel will work on an exit poll of the participants and expect to have that poll ready to go by the weekend.

It is essential that a decision be made very soon so negotiations with whatever site is selected begin soon.

XII. 2007 USBC, USWBC & USSBC

The Board discussed the pros and cons of holding the US Bridge Championships in different sites each year and of holding them in conjunction with a Regional. No decision was reached at this time about the site for the 2007 Championships. The Board will take into consideration the responses of the players in this year's USBC to the "exit poll" we will send them and will also ask for input from the ITTC, the WITTC & the SITTC.

XIII. OLD BUSINESS

The Board approved payment of Martel's credit card bill in the amount of \$5,912.35 for deposits on hotel rooms in Estoril

The Board discussed the drop in \$1.95 contributions since the ACBL bill notice was reformatted. If the current proceeds from the \$1.95 contribution requests don't improve, our expenses will exceed the income from dues and the \$1.95 by approximately \$18,000 per year. The suggestion was made that we ask the ACBL for interim support. That is being discussed further. In addition, Beatty and Quinn will move forward with a proposal for a second membership class in the hope that that will raise operating funds.

XIV. SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for 8:00 CST on Tuesday, August 9.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.