

DISTRICT 11 BOARD MEETING
September 9, 2023 Dayton Columbus Regional
Approved 8 November 2023

In attendance:

Officers – Billie Brown, President; Maribeth Ransel, Vice President; Steve Moese, Secretary

Voting Members - **Unit 117** Dotty Losey; **Unit 124** John Altman; **Unit 130** Charlene Lutz; **Unit 136** Bob Stitt, Stefanie Stitt; **Unit 164** Terrell Holt, Sondra Holt (Alternate); **Unit 193** William Lea.

Members: Siraj Haji, Ryan Schultz, AJ Stephani and Vangie Smith (by Zoom).

Absent: Potter Orr; **Unit 117** Hannah Davis; **Unit 124** Jim Barrett; **Unit 130** Marsha Callahan; **Unit 164** Robert Korten; **Unit 193** Stephen Brouillette

CALL TO ORDER – Billie Brown at 8:05 AM ET

Billie called the meeting to order and immediately requested a moment of silence in memory of Sandy Orr, Potter Orr’s wife who died September 2, 2023. The Board of Directors send their condolences to Potter and Sandy’s family and friends.

Billie thanked our hosts and providence for the breakfast we shared.

Steve Moese confirmed that a quorum was present.

Billie welcomed members and alternates. She reminded everyone that those with a yellow name card were voting members (eligible to make motions and to cast votes.) and that the meeting will be recorded (audio) with the recording published to the google drive and the draft minutes to the website. Billie also reminded those present about the best way to make a motion.

The Board added the discussion of STaC Game Fees charged by the District to the agenda.

MINUTES –

The Board approved the minutes for the Cincinnati meeting in July 2023 as written by unanimous consent.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT –

Billie Brown shared her experiences at recent large regional tournaments. She felt as she did prior to the pandemic. We should encourage new people to go to tournaments. Billie recognized all the good things being done in our District and urged Board members to take new ideas home and put them to use. Billie highlighted recent work by teachers who are teaching people to play bridge and create new members.

Billie commented on the ACBL Management Report from Chicago in July. She discussed the lapsed member program and the work expected of District and Unit officers. She also discussed the 4 priorities highlighted by Bronia Jenkins.

Our next meeting is in Louisville on Wednesday November 8, 2023. Billie requested a brainstorming meeting with teachers in Louisville. Billie asked Siraj Haji to follow up on date and time of day.

REPORTS

LOUISVILLE NABC REPORT– Dotty Losey.

NABC report is on the Google Drive. The Regional and I/N schedules are final pending last-minute tweaks. Sponsorship committee has received \$1700 so far. Still looking for event sponsors. Deadline is Oct 15 for broad publication in the ACBL Bridge Bulletin. Later sponsorships will have written publicity on site.

Sign-up website for volunteers expected to go live in December 2023. Will send to units outside Louisville first to enable best participation. Louisville will then fill gaps if any.

Online store selling NABC shirts closed, but it may open again. Shirts ordered are delivered at the LBC during the November Regional. Dotty can arrange shipment in case of need.

BOOST has increased new player teaching. 3 teachers teaching two daytime and one evening classes plus one at the library. Some students are actually playing at the club. Expanded 0-20 game to 0-99.

Lapsed member program effort underway. Results are not yet compiled. Response not overwhelming. Fifth Chari Game (one coach per table) was a success. Intend to run one per month. Barbara Seagram Dec 2, 2023 at 9:30 will teach classes at the LBC. Last time she sold books and shawls, and made a contribution to the LBC from the proceeds.

DAYTON COLUMBUS TOURNAMENT – Bob Stitt and Tom Bishel

240 tables through yesterday. We hope for 300 tables with today's results. People seem to enjoy the new venue. People didn't know what to expect from this new venue, but they were very accommodating. We have 48 tables in the playing area, with the option to expand in this gym if we have an overflow. Tom and Dallas set the schedule and it really worked great.

The Board congratulated and thanked all the volunteers, the tournament organizers, and the tournament directors for a well-run successful tournament this week. AJ mentioned that the World Bridge Federation invited Mike Roberts to run the World Championships in Marrakesh as one of only 3 ACBL directors so honored.

LOUISVILLE/LEXINGTON REGIONAL – Dotty Losey

David Kotterman confirmed that the LBC can fit 60 tables. They are exploring extra space if demand requires. Andra Gyor and Bill Cook have defined the event schedule. We have a back-up place for next year – a community park where people do events and weddings. Will check on square footage for this alternative.

Dotty Losey mentioned that Louisville's NLM Sectional saw the same pattern. Louisville ran an 8 is enough Swiss. They suspect NLMs were not aware that they needed to create their own teams for a regular Swiss Team game. Will provide partnership help next time.

INDIANAPOLIS REGIONAL – Charlene Lutz

Attendance at clubs improving. Offered a "Get Ready for Tournaments" workshop attended by 48 players. Maribeth Ransel shared the folder with handouts from the workshop. D11 will post the materials to the website for all to use. Attendees help about 25 MPs on average. Get players thinking about tournaments early. New players can't absorb everything all at once so workshops like these are useful. Sunday Aug 27 IBC started free beginner classes. 95 attendees. Most have an interest in continuing on with duplicate bridge. Started a new limited game at the same time as their introductory classes. Also started a Wednesday evening game for people who work. Running about 6-7 tables. We run classes 3 times per year. Getting ready to start the mentoring program – 25-30 people participating. Have run 2 social bridge games. Goal is to have social bridge players to experience the bridge center in a comfortable setting.

Saturday September 30, 2023 Special game honoring Maribeth Ransel and Liz Brown. All are invited. Party at Noon, game at 1:00 PM.

Regional will be at the Drury Inn host hotel on the north side of Indianapolis.

EVANSVILLE/CINCINNATI SPLIT REGIONAL – Billie Brown

We have a new location for the tournament right on the Ohio River at the Hadi Shrine Temple. Veterans Memorial Parkway 2nd floor above the Riverwalk Restaurant. Tuesday through Saturday. June 2-8, 2024.

UNIT 164 REPORTS - Sondra Holt

We are hosting an open house today, for people past the beginner stage where they can choose their learning journey. LBIAD (Carol Fox teaching, morning and evening) has 44-46 new prospects with advertising through Boost. Printed 800 ¼ page flyers and shared them at churches, community centers and other places in town. Tom Stanwick Hay is teaching OLLI classes starting Tuesday 4 PM.

Also starting a 999er game and 99er game. Used to be a “study hall” (up to 7 tables).

UNIT 136 REPORT – Bob Stitt

Mentor program with 36 pairs starts next week. Mentor Pairs pay half price for the next 3 months. Expecting an increase in attendance. This flowed from the classes that began in May. Next set of classes begin in October (Taught by me). 108 Tables in August Sectional up from 68 one year ago. NLM Sectional in July was us 118%. 2 good tournaments in a row. Start from the Boost Classes got more involved at the club.

UNIT 124 REPORT – John Altman

Mentor program underway. Mentor pairs pay half price at the Cincinnati Bridge Center. Not as big as Indianapolis or Dayton. Several game types available – 4 is enough pairs, unsanctioned game for social bridge, Thursday Morning game is big, 8 is enough teams. The social bridge game charges less for rent and table fees. The social game does not have access to club and unit websites.

UNIT 122 REPORT – Tom Bishel

Siraj Haji has been teaching classes as part of the Boost program. NLM Tournament in July did well on Saturday (9 table) but attendance waned on Sunday (4 tables).

UNIT 193 REPORT – Billie Brown

Nancy Irwin Starting LBIAD Septemebr 13, 2023 – 25 or so people lined up. Also planned for November Saturday for people who work.

DISTRICT TOURNAMENT CHAIR REPORT – AJ Stephani

Busy month for the District Tournament Calendar. Appreciated unit tournament chairs flexibility. Board approval required for:

- 1) Joint STaC with D7 and D10. Will be run by D7. Cannot run two stacks in back-to-back weeks. Worked with Maribeth and Bob Stitt to be sure everyone was ok. One sticking point is the STaC fee. Mentioned that D11 STaC fee is \$7. D10 was \$6 but they just raised it to \$8. Raising the fee to \$8 drastically increases the funds raised for Louisville. Estimate is \$2000 at \$8 fee. This will be a Royal STaC. GOLD/RED/SILVER/BLACK. Overalls will be much bigger. District benefits in two ways: more masterpoints and \$about 2000 raised for Louisville NABC. STaC runs December 11-17, 2023 and replaces the Indianapolis Winter STaC.
- 2) Shall we do this going forward? D7 and D10 currently share 2 STaCs. Each keep the profits. There are some questions regarding the finances that need deliberation. Indianapolis would likely run the STaC for D11. Likely to generate \$6000 - \$7000 easily. Current D11 STaCs earn about \$700-800 each. D11 runs 3 STaCs per year. In 2022 we tried running one STaC each month. Monthly STaCs did not increase attendance except for the Royal STaC which saw a 40% increase in tables. In D11 Dayton runs the spring STaC, Cincinnati runs the Summer STaC, and Indianapolis runs the Winter STaC. While Units sanction STaCs, the District Tournament Coordinator at the direction of the District Board must approve their application. District 7 runs STaCs as a District.
- 3) Am working with Tom Bishel as my replacement for the D11 Tournament Coordinator.
- 4) The 2024 Cincinnati Regional changed to June 2-8, 2024 due to venue needs in Cincinnati. Want to avoid running a regional next to the week of a neighboring regional. The Greenville SC Regional asked us to move Cincinnati because of their venue issues. They agreed to run theirs in the third week of June every other year.

- 5) Split Regional Start Times have to be within an hour of each other.

NAP/GNT REPORTS – Ryan Schultz

Referred us to his report on the Google Drive. Urges all Units and Clubs to get the word out to all players. Should include information on the NAP and GNT in the Tournament Workshop. Players don't understand that they can win GOLD points at the club even if they choose not to go to the NABC event. Flyers are on the website.

Terrel Holt advocated printed materials and posters be distributed to clubs. He said the website is not being used. Steve Moese mentioned that the clubs and Unit can print flyers from what is available on the website. Ryan Schultz mentioned that flyers were printed in the past but that the number of unused flyers was so great that we decided to eliminate the extra cost to the District.

The District 11 website is open to the public and club managers have access to everything posted there.

Bob Stitt mentioned that he went to Kinkos and printed a 24x36 poster for his classes. \$5 for one black and white print.

EDUCATION CHAIR – Siraj Haji

Will coordinate the education event in Louisville at the Regional. Dotty Losey has a meeting this coming Wednesday. We have 2-3 teachers gearing up and are using BOOST. Working on a venue for East Columbus. Looking into Lifetime Fitness as a possible venue for bridge Classes (Aurora, life time experience).

Steve Moese asked that the District assemble the data on BOOST and new player classes to post on the District website and to advise ACBL

SECRETARY'S REPORT – Steve Moese

- 1) Asked for feedback on the meeting form – how we register regrets and our replacement. Terrell Holt didn't get a meeting notice. Steve suggested they check their spam folder.
- 2) Louisville, Lexington provided reports. We ask that all other Units provide their reports. Steve asked that one person from each Unit provide a report going forward.
- 3) Asked the Board to provide the webmaster with all new player events active in the District by Unit. Since our website is indexed by Google, this can help direct people to events in our District. Steve asked for: Topic, Contact Name and email of teacher, Location, Time, Date and price, web page (optional) and flyer. He will assemble the information for the website.
- 4) BOOST Summary – option to publish our data to the website.

Steve mentioned that the Treasurer's Report was submitted by Potter and is in the Google Drive.

ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT – Steve Moese and Ryan Schultz

Steve discussed the recent August 1, 2023 action by ACBL management to eliminate any restriction on who could play in Online Virtual Club Games. He outlined the different games available online and the presence of large alliances. The top 5-7 alliances provide over \$500,000 to the ACBL. Knoxville is close to 50,000 table this year alone.

The impact of the decision is to shrink teachers and clubs new players and new members games. The ACBL was unresponsive. Steve mentioned the discussion with Al Smith (SoCarolina dn SE Florida), and Kevin Wilson (Knoxville) regarding 2 proposals:

- 1) Have open games available to all that share profit back to a club designated by the player.
- 2) Have all other games limited to District wide accept lists.

Bronis said she would not allow socialism nor would she accept any geolocation restrictions on player access to games.

The issue remains that virtual club games take away from the income stream available to clubs and teachers who work hard to create new players and new members.

On top of all of this the ACBL started a community game twice a week for 0-50 players with a free lesson afterward.

The ACBL is looking to promote online bridge. They say that they want to promote face-to-face bridge but their actions are just the opposite.

The ACBL justified the change by claiming that smaller games would grow at the expense of larger games. They claim data supports their assertion. However the data overlooks the disappearing small games (0 tables) in the average number of tables. Be careful about what you hear from the ACBL on data.

The ACBL earns \$1.10 from club games and small VACB games. From large VACB games they earn an additional \$4 per table. Guess which games get attention.

During the Tuesday call, Bronia wanted to focus on how to make VACB games better and more efficient. We asked them to reset their focus to the impact the change has on clubs and teachers trying to train new players and recruit new members. We want to be able to show people all that we are doing so that ACBL Management can better understand the impact of their choices.

Siraj Haji mentioned that his predecessor mentioned over 30 years ago that he never would have started a bridge club if he knew that the ACBL would be competing with him.

Steve Moese mentioned that the ACBL is complaining that bridge club managers don't want to do anything new and they just want to run their games. When you sell a special sanction to BBO who can run 62 games a day for \$500000 per year, ordinary clubs cannot compete.

Ryan Schultz mentioned the approval of the old and new convention cards. The Bridge committee offered a simplified version for newer players and were rebuffed by the C&C committee. The C&C rejected the new card

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION: Tom Bishel

To approve D11 joining the D10/D7 year end STaC December 11-17, 2023.

Seconded: Dotty Losey

Passed Unanimously

MOTION: Terrel Holt

To raise the STaC fee for District 11 from \$7 to \$8 effective immediately

Seconded: Bob Stitt

Passed Unanimously

Lapsed Member Program

Postcard and 2 QR Codes. The process was that the District distribute the lists to Units who were to follow up and urge lapsed members to rejoin. There is data collection work to do as a part of the program to help determine why people allowed their membership to lapse. The intention was for personal contact.

We have only two responses so far – Evansville and Lexington We need the data from Cincinnati, Louisville, Dayton, Columbus, and Indianapolis. Please advise if you are not going to do this work.

Terrell Holt mentioned that several people said they do not have a club to play in anymore.

Element3 Health Partnership

Selective Medicare Insurance programs might pay you each time you play bridge. Can use the payments toward membership renewal.

OLD BUSINESS

BOOST has been a major success for Dayton. However, they are dropping the District wide VACB game for the Louisville NABC. Attendance has been poor.

There being no more business before the Board, Tom Bishel motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 9:39 AM.

The next meeting will be in Louisville at the Louisville Bridge Club on Wednesday November 8, 2023 after the second session (approximately 6:00 PM).

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Moese, Secretary