

DISTRICT 11 BOARD MEETING
November 9, 2023 Louisville Lexington Regional
Approved Jan 20, 2024

In attendance:

Officers – Billie Brown, President; Steve Moese, Secretary; Potter Orr, Treasurer

Voting Members - **Unit 117** Dotty Losey; **Unit 124** Jim Barrett; **Unit 130** Marsha Callahan; **Unit 136** Bob Stitt, Stefanie Stitt; **Unit 164** Terrell Holt; **Unit 193** William Lea.

Alternates: **Unit 130** Jerry Brelage; **Unit 136** Tom Griswald; **Unit 136** Mike Thill; **Unit 164** Elizabeth Johnson.

Members: Siraj Haji.

Guests: Joann Travers **Unit 117**; Andra Gyor **Unit 164**.

Absent: Ryan Schultz, **Unit 117** Hannah Davis; **Unit 124** John Altman; **Unit 130** Charlene Lutz; **Unit 164** Robert Korten; **Unit 193** Stephen Brouillette

CALL TO ORDER – Billie Brown at 6:22 PM

Billie Brown welcomed members and alternates. She wished Maribeth Ransel a speedy recovery and an early return to our Board.

Steve Moese confirmed that a quorum was present.

Billie Brown reminded everyone that only voting members are 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. No additions were offered to the agenda.

MINUTES – The Board approved the July 2023 Cincinnati minutes by unanimous consent.

Andra Gyor reported on the success of the Regional after two days. **Billie Brown** questioned the entry fee and Andra explained that the District agreed to charge \$1 per person toward the March 2024 Louisville NABC. **Bill Le** asked about putting the entry fee on the flyer. Andra explained that it is not required by the ACBL and that Lou/Lex has not put the entry fee on the flyer in the past.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT –

Billie Brown reviewed the District Priorities. She shared reflections over her first year as President. The four District Regional Tournaments were all in different venues - Evansville in a Golf Club, Cincinnati in a Hotel, Dayton/Columbus in the Sinclair Community College, and the Louisville/Lexington Regional in the Louisville Bridge Club. Billie mentioned the first Teacher’s Meeting since the pandemic is scheduled for Thursday between session. She mentioned the Lexington Swiss Sectional and their great attendance. She urged us to put all four District Regional tournaments on our calendars for 2024.

Billie recognized the Owensboro, KY Club was forced out of their space from end of last December until March 2023 due to burst water pipes. They relocated to a temporary space at the Oddfellows Hall. Ginny Wilson got the parish hall from her church for the Sweetheart Swiss Sectional. When the Mall reopened they returned to their space and faced replacing water damaged assets. In August 2023 the Mall changed ownership and the club was evicted. They are now back at the Oddfellows club and looking for a permanent home. We applaud their resilience and persistence.

Billie offered a shout out to all teachers and club owners who are teaching new people to play bridge. We need to support their efforts.

Billie thanked the Board for the year we shared. We are a team. We can do much when we work together.

Next Board Meeting is Saturday January 20, 2024 at the Indianapolis Regional.

NEW BUSINESS

Lapsed Members – Steve Moese reported that only 3 of 7 District 11 Units reported lapsed member survey results. How do we energize our Units to energize our membership more to create the appropriate environment to bring lapsed members back to games. Steve mentioned the **new online tool** sent to clubs and units that show who their lapsed members are. Units can now contact lapsed members. Membership Committees can take on this work immediately. Data from the August exercise has been shared with the Board as pre-reading. The key is to reestablish communications and rebuild a relationship so that lapsed members feel comfortable returning.

Split Regional – Steve Moese mentioned that whenever we run a split regional we have more regional tables than when run at a single site. Steve described the cost of running the online pairs game now allowed by the ACBL. 23 tables are necessary to cover costs. D11 has no guidelines as to how an online game can be run equitably when we are hosting a split regional. The sense of the Board was that the two cities should decide who takes the risk and how to split the income if an online game is run. Jeff Chapman opined that with a split regional, demand for online games from the Evansville Unit would be much less.

Steve mentioned the District level Medallion Awards given at the June Regional. We will hold the Board meeting on Monday then Billie would take the awards to Evansville that evening. The Awards will be given at each location at a time to be agreed by the tournament committees.

Regional Table Fees – Steve Moese discussed whether the Board wanted to set a price range to avoid price competition among our regionals. Discussion ensued about how costs varied in other cities. The Board decided to simply publish the expected range for the coming year to guide decisions. We report table fees for 2024 to fall in the \$15-17 per person range.

Grass Roots Table Fees – We charge \$12.50 per person per session for NAP and GNT D11 Finals. They are regionally rated events. We operate our regionals at \$15-17 per person.

Terrel Holt – U164 Lexington

Motion: District 11 raise the Grass Roots Entry Fees to \$15 per person per session effective immediately.

Second: Jim Barrett, U124 Cincinnati.

Passed Unanimously.

Cost of Regional Third Session – We discussed a proposal to be brought to ACBL Management to reduce the risk of loss for the weakly attended third daily session. The proposal to use Trained Local Sectional Directors was met with resistance. Many leaders did not want gold points available from games so directed. We are proposing an alternative pricing plan that shares the risk of loss between Districts and the ACBL for director coverage. The Board thought that local directors should be allowed to run gold point games at regionals. The Board also endorsed the pricing proposal to mitigate risks.

A separate opportunity for Regionals is to offer club managers space to run one if their club games on site.

Communication – How do we get Units more engaged? How do we get more people to our websites. 48% of our emails are not read by members. We need to talk to members to raise their awareness and improve communication.

Royal STaC with Districts 10 and 7 – Tom Bishel confirmed the plans are underway. Awards will be big. HE mentioned that games need to be at least 5 tables to combine for overall awards across the 3 districts. Tom mentioned that future STaCs across all 3 Districts will depend on our experience with this one in December 11-17, 2023. We will discuss next steps at our next Board Meeting.

BBO Contract – Steve Moese discussed the BBO contract and its exclusivity. Steve shared the Teacher and Club Manager Committee proposals for the next contract. We expressed concern that the BBO contract is taking funds away from local clubs unfairly. Steve mentioned that the \$500,000 paid by BBO to the ACBL allows BBO to run 62 pair games, an unknown number of robot games, and several pair games every day.

Steve mentioned that the ACBL Board will look to District Boards to engage on key issues as the ACBL Board completes its downsizing from 25 to 13 members.

OLD BUSINESS

Unit Membership Committees – The ACBL has no Membership Committee Handbook at this time. The last one (2013) offered how to read the Unit I/O Report and what Unit Games every Unit should run. No guidance is available about using social media or how to create social engagement for newer players.

District New Player Offerings – now on the Website. **Siraj Haji**, the Education Chair will keep this up to date going forward.

District BOOST Participation – Unit activity is reported in the pre-reading for this meeting. We choose not to post this data to our website. Siraj will also keep this information up to date.

Louisville NABC – Joanne Traver, Chair of the Louisville 2024 Committee, discussed fund raising status. Sponsorships will be available until March 1, 2024. We encourage clubs and Units to sponsor games or days. The printed schedule cuts off game names in early December, but sponsorships after that will be shown in the online daily bulletin.

The NABC **schedule** is set. **Flyers** are arriving to us to take to our Units and clubs. Joanne made arrangements for Board members to take their allocation.

Online sign-up for NABC volunteers coming in December– courtesy given to out-of-town volunteers – first come-first served. Lunch and possibly Parking help (TBD) will be made available to volunteers for a few hours work.

The room rate at the Galt House is \$184+/night (East Tower) \$164+ (West Tower); Parking is \$20 per night. Pre-covid prices for concessions are locked in. East Tower is NABC events Registration, Prizes, Welcome Desk. West is I/N and Regional events. An indoor bridge connects the two.

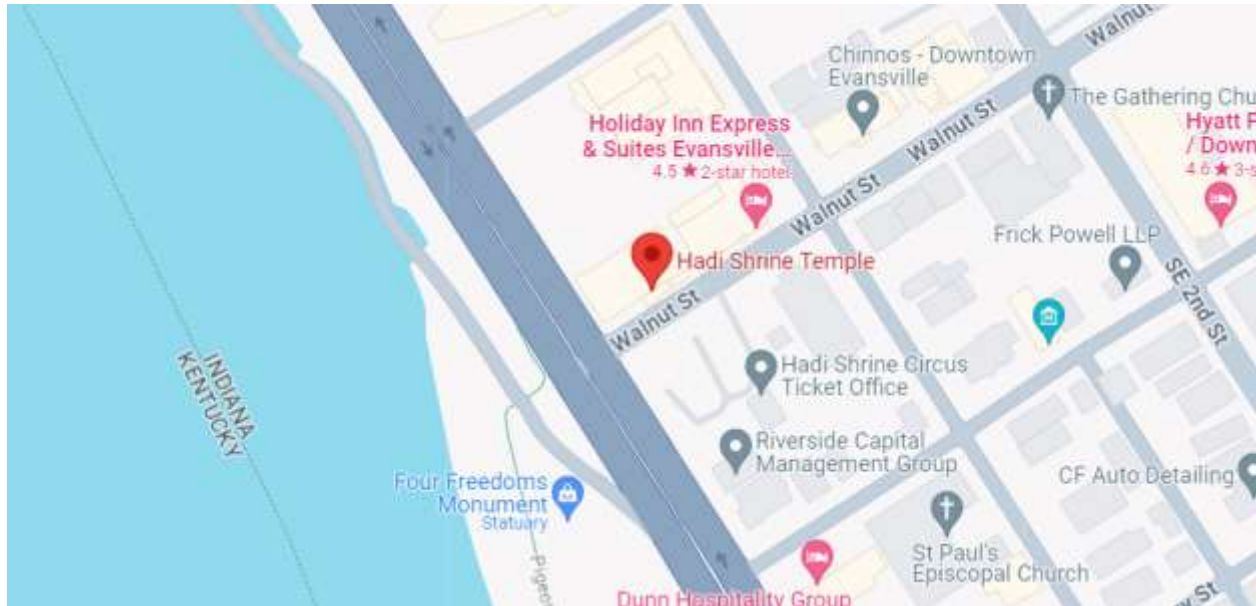
Joanne asked for input on what hospitality ideas might be appealing to tournament attendees. Coupon for lunch discount. We discussed ways to carpool. We discussed several ideas about special events and fund raising from Chicago and Atlanta 2023. The NABC will have Irish dancers on St. Patrick's day.

Indianapolis Update – I/N Regiona had 150 tables and 150 individual players, and happened just after a seminar about **Getting Ready for Tournament Play**. The Indianapolis Unit had classes for 74 new players.

Interest among beginning players growing. The Regional in January 2024 is set at the Drury Hotel on Meridian Street. There is no bridge room rate.

Cincinnati Update – Jim Barrett mentioned that 2 new directors (Rob Lail on Thursday and Bill Brewer on Monday and Tuesday) have revived the in-person bridge games. In-person play has increased to the point where the bridge center is close to breakeven. The Tuesday Teaching Game is successful. They used local sectional directors for the Sectional.

Evansville Split Regional – Billie Brown mentioned that the regional will be held at the Hadi Shrine on the Ohio River.



Dayton Update – Tom Griswald U136 & Mike Thill U136. We are actively teaching many new players at the Dayton Bridge Club. \$50 for 6 lessons with all friends free. Bob Stitt charges \$50 per person for lessons. Unit is buying books to give to new players. We've reintroduced Mentor games with good success. 28 mentor pairs underway. Mentor pairs play for half price. Table fees are increasing to \$10 in January 2024. We will return to the Sinclair Community College for September 2024's Regional.

Columbus Update – Tom Bishel mentioned that the October Sectional had good turnout (120% vs year ago) with good attendance at Swiss Teams.

Lexington Update – Terrill Holt reported that in-person bridge is up about 13% from one year ago. The Bridge Club just completed 3 beginner classes. OLLI classes on Doubles had 36 attendees. New player games started in 2023. We plan Learn Bridge in a Day (LBIAD) in January with a new beginner class immediately afterward. Monthly 8 is Enough Swiss is our biggest game. Newbies play with an experienced player. Lexington Silver Swiss was up to 76% of 2019. Silver Swiss and Silver Rush teams planned.

Evansville Update – Billie mentioned Nancy Irwin did LBIAD spread over 6 weeks on Wednesdays. Last Saturday did LBIAD at her Church. 18 people attended who are still working. 5 Novices were helping Nancy! A chat game is planned for next week. After Christmas will offer a structured class.

Secretary's Report – **Steve Moese** discussed the **Pianola Usage**. Bills due to the D11 Treasury. Potter Orr will send invoices.

Steve identified 3 Board members who have missed three Board meetings in a year.

Hanna Davis

Stephen Brouillette

Robert Korten has valid extenuating circumstances and will not be resigning his seat.

The Board accepts the resignation of Hanna and Stephen. Steve Moese will send an email to each thanking them for their service. Hanna and Stephen are not eligible to serve the District Board until the Board approves their return.

Steve Moese will send Potter a copy of the Pianola usage and charges.

Treasurer's Report – Potter Orr reviewed the financial status. Last year the District was in the red by -**\$1300**, this year we are in the red by **-\$554**. The NABC Committee has not requested the \$17000 for the startup of the NABC Committee. That seed money is expected to be returned if used. Joanne Travers suggested that the Committee does not need it. The District has received \$3106.17 for this year's Grass Roots fund from the ACBL. The NAP District 11 Finals made \$3300 minus \$1577 for Tournament Directors minus \$1000 CBC rental netting \$722.40 to the District.

District Recorder – Potter Orr mentioned that the District Recorder job has changed substantially. Not had a District Recorder event in years. The ACBL is managing much of the ethics decisions.

GNT/NAP – (Ryan Schultz Report) - 2024 GNT will occur on April 5th and 6th in Cincinnati. 32.5 table attended this year's NAP. Only 1.5 tables down from last year. Attendance from Lexington, Louisville, and Indianapolis members was lower than expected. We recommend that all Units appoint a coordinator to promote our District Grass Root events.

Tournament Chair – Tom Bishel reports that AJ Stephani is still running things. Tom is working the transition in to the role. Please promote the Royal STaC at your clubs. **Billie Brown** mentioned that D11 can do another Virtual Week to support the Louisville NABC. **Tom Bishel** will coordinate the timing.

Billie Brown mentioned that Indianapolis and Evansville made the top ten in the Longest Day in 2023. Steve Moese asked for information to post to the D11 Website on the results.

Education Report – Siraj Haji mentioned the Teachers meeting tomorrow. Indianapolis has the best program in D11 so far. We want to include sanction holders going forward. Billie mentioned that we should have a Stakeholders Roundtable at every Regional. Regional Chairs should plan space and time for this important meeting.

Dotty Losey mentioned the Barbara Seagram program "Tricks Out of Nowhere" on December 2, 2023. \$20 per person at the Louisville Bridge Club.

Next Board Meeting is Saturday January 20, 2024 at the Indianapolis Regional.

There being no more business before the Board, Bill Lea motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Moese, Secretary