

DISTRICT 11 BOARD MEETING
June 12, 2025 Cincinnati Regional
Unanimously Approved September 12, 2025

In attendance:

Officers – Billie Brown, President; Maribeth Ransel, Vice President; Potter Orr, Treasurer; Steve Moese, Secretary. Ryan Schultz, GNT/NAP Coordinator;

Voting Members - Unit 122 Tom Bishel, Daniel Loveland; **Unit 124** Jim Barrett, Bill Brewer; **Unit 130** Susan Spickelmier; **Unit 117** Bill Cook; **Unit 164** Ken Katen, Susan Bullard;

Alternates: Unit 193 Jack McCullagh. **Unit 136** Bob Stitt;

Guests: Unit 124 Arun Goyal; **Region 7 BoD Representative** Larry Sealy;

Absent: Unit 117 Dotty Losey; **Unit 136** Robert Zangri; Dallas Moore; **Unit 193** Bill Lea; Jeffrey Chapman; **Unit 130** Marsha Callahan;

CALL TO ORDER – by President Billie Brown at 6:02 PM EDT.

President Billie Brown welcomed alternates, visitors and new board members. Billie mentioned that all Board documents for the meeting are in the D11 Google Drive (these documents are for Board members only). As always members should have these key links bookmarked in their browser for future reference.

Secretary Steve Moese, confirmed a quorum was present.

President Billie Brown reminded everyone to address the chair to be recognized, 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 and second a motion. No additions were offered to the agenda.

MINUTES – The Board approved the March 1, 2025 Louisville Lexington meeting minutes by unanimous consent.

President Billie Brown reminded the Board that our objective is to finish business in a timely manner. All members were asked to view Unit updates on the Google Drive. To accommodate people's time Billie rearranged the order of business.

CINCINNATI FLYING PIG TOURNAMENT REPORT

Arun Goyal, Cincinnati Flying Pig Regional Tournament Chair – We are running 15% above last year's attendance. Hospitality, Welcome Desk, and many other attributes commented on by attendees. We have drawn players from across the country. **Steve Moese** pointed out Arun's decision to spend about \$450 to send two emails to over 45000 members in a 500-mile radius. Arun mentioned that Cincinnati members and the funds from the silent auction fund the hospitality. A discussion about the week offered in Hilton Head in the silent auction.

Bill Brewer complimented Arun and his skill and effort on our behalf. Arun noted there are 40 volunteers working on the Regional. **Billie Brown** mentioned that she talked four people from western KY to attend – they played 3 days and thoroughly enjoyed it. The Board thanked Arun and all who worked on the tournament.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Potter Orr posted the report through June 10, 2025 on the google drive. He reported a profit of about \$1500 this year compared to a loss last year. Potter has gone back to collect tournament charges from recent D11

Regionals. 2023/24 fees were recovered. Potter will issue an invoice to the tournaments/Unit Treasurers. The D11 bank account is +\$2400 from year ago. Grass Roots funds income was \$2,700. We use these funds to subsidize the GNT and NAP participants. Potter mentioned the payment of \$1,000 for 200,000 Pianola email credits. **Steve Moese** mentioned the Zoom account (\$170 per year). While its useful for town halls we haven't used it in two

MOTION: Tom Bishel Unit 122 **SECOND:** Bill Brewer Unit 124
Cancel the D11 Zoom Account. Passed Unanimously

years. Tom Bishel suggested we cancel.

Steve Moese asked how D11 fees compare to other similar Districts and whether they should be increased.

Potter mentioned he doesn't know how long ago the fees were set.

Steve mentioned the possible need for additional monies to support GNT and NAP participants.

Potter asked Larry Sealy for information regarding what Districts delegate their Regionals to Units so we could compare similar business models.

Larry Sealy mentioned that the delegation is somewhat split among the several Districts. District 10 NLM regionals takes no funds. For Open regionals, (3 per year among 14 Units), half of the profit stayed with the Unit. The district takes their half and splits it evenly between the district (25%) and distributes the remaining 25% among the remaining Units. Units are on their own for losses. Nashville lost \$60,000 recently (booked a high room rate site and couldn't cover the requirement). District 8 gets \$250 from the tournament, no table fee,

GNT/NAP COORDINATOR REPORT

Ryan Schultz, GNT/NAP Coordinator – NAP is coming October 18, 19 in Cincinnati. New this year is the addition of Flight A, so there will be Open, A, B, and C Flights. Open and B are on Day 1, and A and C are on day two. People can play in Open and A, A and B, B and C. This makes both days appealing for qualified players. We need Units to do a great job to publicize this tournament.

Ryan reported attendance for Flights B&C in the GNT in April 2025 were well attended. Players liked the change to a one-day event. Open and Flight A were poorly attended. We paid an ACBL Tournament Director to manage 4 teams on day one.

Several proposed changes are in the report on the Google drive:

- 1) Shift A and Open Flights to a one-day final. This means qualifying online. Ryan asked for a motion to run online qualifying only for Open and Flight A.

Tom Bishel mentioned that online only applies to more than 4 teams entering the first of two days. Four or fewer teams run one day face to face.

*Motion: Run qualifying day only online for Flights Open and A only, when more than 4 teams preregister.
Moved Tom Bishel. Seconded Jim Barrett.*

DISCUSSION:

Steve Moese asked that we require the use of a bridge service provider that provides video. No-video, no play.

Video is an essential deterrent to online cheating. If people do not use video they cannot play.

Larry Sealy mentioned that RealBridge is the right provider for this reason. They have video and audio capability. There will be a learning curve for directors and players.

Steve Moese mentioned that we will still need an ACBL Director to run the qualifying event. He also pointed out the need to ask Cincinnati for their interest in hosting a one-day tournament instead of the current two-day event.

Bob Stitt mentioned that because he was out of town he didn't play this year, but he would refuse to play online. He does not trust online bridge.

Steve Moese mentioned that Open Flight historically was rarely more than 2 teams. It's flight A that had dropped off this year. Flight A players are tournament players and are used to traveling to play in major events.

Susan Bullard asked if non-computer-savvy people can easily understand the RealBridge interface.

Tom Bishel mentioned RealBridge is like BBO, but adds video. If your computer has a camera, it will use your camera. Realbridge has online tutorials.

Steve Moese mentioned that there are a number of items that need further study to define how we do things. He suggested we delay the decision to September when Ryan can report on the items raised in this discussion.

Tom Bishel mentioned the need to know how to preregister. There is a need to quantify the savings (ACBL TD), a need to get Cincinnati's input on rental cost, how to use real bridge. The implementation is not defined well enough to say do it.

Ryan will report to the Board in September with a detailed implementation plan for the proposed change.

Ton Bishel withdrew the motion.

- 2) Every year the DIC asks for a more uniform number of boards for the finals. Ryan asked for a motion to simplify the Board counts to make things easier to manage.

Steve asked how many boards are used in the NABC Swiss Team elimination. Ryan will match those board counts. We are indeed playing more boards than the NABC Swiss qualifier requires. Ryan will bring a new Conditions of Contest for approval in September.

EDUCATION CHAIR REPORT

Bill Brewer mentioned that the D11 Town Hall meeting did not occur due to poor attendance. Bill will do a zoom meeting with D11 teachers over the summer to uncover best approaches and motivated increased participation.

Billie Brown asked about Mentor/Mentee Programs and Bill mentioned that these are part of the coming discussion.

Larry Sealy, Region 7 ACBL Board of Directors Representative –

- Net Change in Operations +\$1.5 MM, due to ACBL split on 18 board games with BBO. Bronia Jenkins figured out that the cost wasn't locked into on the contract. \$1.35 per table to \$4 per table.
- ACBL's Balance Sheet is strong. ~\$9MM in investments (mostly fixed income); ~\$6MM future membership revenue.
- Membership has fallen from 130,600 March 2024 to 124,000 March 2025. End of May 2025 is down to 122,000. While trends are positive, we are still losing more people than we are adding.
- Jump Start Bridge is bringing Middle and High School students into bridge. District 10 has 411 teachers registered and 18,000 students across 236 cities exposed. Patty Tucker leads the program. Focus in on meeting teachers at Gifted Student program. 98 students 3rd -5th grade from three schools participated in a Huntsville Tournament (7 Boards of mini-bridge). They were focused until the pizza arrived! Larry has donated for all three Districts in Region 7 to Patty Tucker to foster adoption in our Districts.
- Approved Orlando for the Summer NABC 2028. We need to go back to Florida – 12% of our members live there. We prefer the fall because of the weather. No other viable options for 2028 summer. Hyatt Regency on International Drive (used to be the Peabody Hotel). Can walk to various places to eat. A

trolly runs along the main street. Approved Atlanta Summer 2029 (Close vote: 7 for Atlanta and 6 for Cleveland). Larry voted for Atlanta because of \$100,000 lower cost. Hyatt better venue than the Marriott. Close to Peachtree shops.

- Management discussing a Ranking Rewards program. Keep members interested and incentivize people moving up in rankings. More to follow.
- Task Force by Margot Hennings on Pathways to Improving Tournaments. Will address challenges to organizers and collect feedback from a number of sources. Three objectives: optimizing schedules, refining schedules, and improving staffing models. Final report in San Francisco.
- ACBL Clubhouse – Management trying to take the business from the virtual clubs. Allowing glitter point (red, Gold, Silver) games only in the ACBL Clubhouse with one exception (NAP Qualifiers in Virtual clubs still half red)). Limited games are successful. Open games not doing well. Silver Linings week moved from Virtual Clubs to the Clubhouse. Glitter points reduced to 25%. Will not impact ability of F2F clubs to award 25% glitter in specific weeks. Virtual clubs now being called e-clubs.
- See the report for details about online cheating detection. Nov 7, 2024 submission included all player memos and referrals along with background checks for prestigious ACBL positions. 18% of player member individuals came up red (cheating). This is 9 times average. Take player memos seriously. Roughly 30 people eligible for warnings were upgraded to level 1 Fast Track Discipline (FTD) – 6-month suspension. 7 refused to complete the online pledge, and the rest failed to respond. Management has suspended submissions for a 2-month period while people are working on CDR changes. EDGAR has run about 35,000 of the 80,000 candidates. Rate of cases to the IBA has slowed. FTD and the settlement offer is working.
- ACBL has signed new contracts with existing bridge service vendors. BBO OKBridge, Funbridge. Issue with OKBridge – can't get EDGAR info. IntoBridge and Shark Bridge are apps people use. RealBridge is a new service to host club games with audio and video.
- Bronia launched Bridge War (a new version of mini-bridge). See www.bridgewar.com
- Rob Maier is the new Online Bridge Manager. Works closely with Lynn Chapeman.
- Management issued a survey to club managers in May 2025. Should they be allowed suspended members to play in F2F clubs for some games (Not Unit wide or tournament games? Larry asked for input.

DISCUSSION ON ONLINE CHEATERS PLAYING FACE-TO-FACE (F2F) CLUBS:

Jim Barrett mentioned the impact with three members accused and how that affects the owner of the largest club in Cincinnati. Half people are upset because of the accusation; half are upset because games have gone unsanctioned. Not having these players at the club will hurt the table count.

Larry Sealy asked if people would stop playing if online accused were allowed to play.

Jim mentioned that few in Cincinnati would refuse to play against them.

Larry mentioned that if this were to be done, the individual would not be eligible to earn masterpoints.

Bill Brewer mentioned that the ACBL and not club managers should make this decision because the feedback to club managers is overwhelming.

Bob Stitt mentioned that people are OK with those players playing F2F in clubs, but they believe they should be banned for life from online ACBL play.

Steve Moese clarified that Unit 124 doesn't own a club, but leases a bridge facility and depends on the table count to collect rent from the participating clubs. Three of the club managers chose to run unsanctioned games. The majority of the games at this facility are unsanctioned. Also 8 Unit 124 members are on the MUD list. The trigger for the Unit Board was when the owner of the largest game in Cincinnati got accused and suspended, threatening the lease that the Unit holds.

Bill Brewer mentioned that the unsanctioned games pay the same rent as the sanctioned games.

Bill Cook Unit 117 people should be able to play at the club and not get points. Hasn't impacted us yet. Aware of neighboring units where people have been impacted.

Jack McCullagh Unit 193 asked if the partner would be eligible. Yes, they will. The ACBL will adjust the awards prior to posting in ACBL LIVE4CLUBS. The director need not manage that.

Steve mentioned that the ACBL should not allow a pair of cheaters to play together.

Bill Brewer observed that BBO doesn't stop suspended people from playing online in other games.

Steve liked the idea that MUD players will not play in glitter point games or tournaments.

Susan Spicklemier Unit 130 - What happens to repeat offenders?

Larry Sealy confirmed that they are subject to expulsion. If they admit to the second offense, they can reapply after 5 years. If not, they must wait at least 10 years. The ACBL needs to teach members about how EDGAR, the accusation process and arbitration works.

Steve added that the ACBL should provide a primer about how to read the EDGAR reports provided to the accused.

Larry Sealy recused himself from the current Cincinnati cases. EDGAR was designed to set the threshold so high to make accusation certain and allow many false negatives (people who cheated but remained undetected. The threshold is so high that it is very unlikely there are false positives.

Bill Brewer mentioned the web page and synopsis on EDGAR, the CBCD Discipline Process and the IBA on our District 11 website. Unit 124 had Jeff Edelstein spend ½ hour to discuss the process.

Larry Sealy mentioned that he has talked with Brian Platnick and Brian is willing to talk to any accused party or their advocate to help them understand the information.

Maribeth Ransel, Vice President – Our club managers need talking points. No one is talking about this at our club. We need this for the newer players.

Steve mentioned an upcoming proposal for the Advisory Council to provide communication assets (FAQ's, talking points, charts, videos, etc.).

Jim Barrett asked when any decision would be rendered by the Board on changes to online cheating.

Larry Sealy responded: Philadelphia in July 2025.

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH –

Steve Moese –

- 1) We have lost 5% YoY May to May. Since July 2021 we have been using BOOST. BOOST has some shackles on it. How can we deploy BOOST more broadly to get more teachers and more clubs engaged and successful?
- 2) How can we create a process to support new F2F club formation in population areas currently underserved? The ACBL has no mechanism to start new clubs.

Larry Sealy – There were some requirements when deployed originally, but many of them have been removed.

Bob Stitt – They require a certified teacher to allow BOOST.

Steve Moese – we have people who have been denied the use of BOOST.

Bill Brewer mentioned he was denied because he hadn't recruited enough members.

Steve Moese mentioned we need a full court press, not a throttled process.

Bob Stitt gave an overview of the BOOST process. A teacher with a club submits a lecture plan for new bridge players that includes at least 6 classes and a fixed up-front payment. The teacher submits the one-page ad to the ACBL who then works with an internet marketing firm to collect prospect contact information. The ACBL provides the contact information to the teacher, who then follows up to confirm attendance with everyone. The contact list remains the property of the ACBL and the teachers.

Susan Bullard mentioned that Lexington uses Osher Lifelong Learning (OLLI).

Steve mentioned that BOOST and OLLI should be in the pocket of every teacher and club manager throughout the ACBL, not just District 11. Develop a simple model people can manage themselves.

Bob Stitt mentioned the requirement to be a certified teacher as a barrier to implementation. Everyone in our class played in our sectional this spring.

Bill Brewer mentioned his successful Tuesday beginner's game/lecture. Encourage new players to play in club games and tournaments.

Steve mentioned that the system as designed hasn't reversed the membership trend. We need to get this in everyone's hands.

Larry Sealy offered his personal support to help us resolve problems with BOOST or any member growth effort. If people don't know enough about BOOST, they can Google "ACBL BOOST" or "BOOST, site=www.acbl.org"

Billie Brown thanked Marybeth Ransel for her work on the Medallion Certificates. The board concurred enthusiastically.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Steve Moese mentioned Pianola – every regional get two emails. You create the text and I send it out. This guarantees lowest cost per email. Usage report is on the Google Drive. We did renew our email credits. Every user gets charged back at cost.

WEBMASTER REPORT –

Steve Moese mentioned there is a large web page on Computer Based Cheating Detection on the District 11 Website. This collates information from the ACBL, BridgeWinners (Franco Bassegio and Brian Platnick), and the Institute for Bridge Arbitration (IBA). See [ACBL Computer Based Cheating Detection](#).

What's missing are a cogent set of FAQs or talking points, a picture of the steps in the process, and guidelines how to understand the evidence provided to the accused. People often get confused – they believe they are accused without a trial. People think the arbitration is an appeal process – it isn't. Arbitration is the adjudication process. Arbitration is a two-step process – the first is discovery, followed by the actual hearing. In discovery, the ACBL presents the actual case with the specific hands they are using to establish guilt by comfortable satisfaction. The Accused gets to see all that evidence and has time (usually 30 days, more if needed) to prepare their own rebuttal with counter examples or contesting the analysis made by the ACBL. Accused parties may have a learned advocate represent them in this process. The ACBL does not provide this advocate. Currently accused parties are on their own to find a credible advocate.

Larry Sealy mentioned the concept of a consent award as a possible outcome. He also mentioned some people appeal their sentence not their guilt. Some have succeeded.

TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR REPORT

Tom Bishel mentioned the new event for Regionals called Bracketed Pairs. Most of our regionals don't get enough pair tables to run the event. Bracketed Pairs is run once during the week, not every day. You need an experienced director familiar with running this event.

Bob Stitt raised the question about their sectional that ran the same week as Lexington. We normally do not schedule this way. Dayton was having a problem finding a location for their sectional. We do not expect this to be repeated. Tom mentioned his analysis showed that perhaps only 8 people played in both tournaments, so the impact would be under 10 tables per site.

Jack McCullagh Unit 193 brought up the conflict of the Royal STaC with a nearby regional in another district. If we didn't schedule that STaC that week, we would have lost that sanction. There are too many competing events to avoid duplication in some way.

Bob Stitt mentioned that there are too many local offerings for glitter points so newer players are not encouraged to travel to other tournament.

Tom Bishel – it's up to the Board to restrict the number of sectionals. Each Unit can run 4 sectionals and one NLM Sectional. We run 3 STaCs. We have 4 Regionals (with one split every other year).

Bob Stitt – Unit 136 sees NABCs as so cost prohibitive that no one wants to attend.

Bill Brewer – Can we review the policy in September about number of Units?

Steve Moese mentioned the decline in District membership from about 5000 to about 2900 currently.

Tom mentioned that sectionals draw from within their unit. Columbus gets 8-10 people from out of town. People have a traveling radius that limits where they attend.

Larry Sealy – Sectionals are 95% local players.

Broad ranging discussion ensued sharing personal experiences.

Ken Katen Unit 164 mentioned that their spring sectional was down 33%. We expect about 1/3 of our attendees come from outside our Unit. Tom offered to study the attendance for possible losses due to the time conflict.

Steve emphasized that the schedule overlap was a one-time event and not expected to be repeated.

Bill Brewer mentioned that newer players are not accustomed to play in Swiss teams.

Susan Bullard mentioned Lexington has one Sessions Swiss games for people to play.

Steve mentioned the David Rodney analysis from 2018 that showed there are two cliffs – people older than 72 do not want to travel as much, and people don't travel much past 200 miles.

Billie mentioned that very Partnership Chair should be thanked because they are key to a successful tournament.

Ken Katen – we incur a significant cost using ACBL TDs.

Bill Brewer mentioned local certified local sectional directors. These can run non-championship sectionals that award 80% of the silver MPs.

Tom Bishel - Three zoom Q&A sessions then a test to become a local director.

Ken Katen – Why penalize the players by reducing the silver point awards? Because you are not paying for an ACBL TD. We'd like to reduce the tournament fees?

Larry Sealy – What do you charge for your open games and your newcomer games? You might consider a lower charge for newcomer games. District 8 charges \$15 for open and \$10 for newcomers.

Susan Bullard mentioned the success of 18 Board games. **Bill Brewer** does 21 Boards. **Bob Stitt** does 15 Boards for \$5.

ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT –

Steve Moese reviewed the Task force chartered by Margaret Heller to Incentivize Ranks. How can the ACBL better leverage the marketing equity in the Ranking system for masterpoints. Two ideas are actively considered so far: 1) A new masterpoint color called "titanium" for the time being for the U10K events at NABCs. Making titanium a way to leverage higher ranks might increase participation. 2) Bronia wants to create awards that come from bridge firsts for very new players. She's thinking sapphire points (with a possible co-marketing effort with Chase bank and their Sapphire Card). Steve asked for any ideas they would like to add.

NEW BUSINESS

Maribeth Ransel, Vice President, asked about how a Unit might restrict a player from their Regional Tournament. The TD instructed them to file a report with the ACBL.

Larry Sealy – You can ban a player from your clubs, but not from the Regional. The Recorder needs to do a better job reporting the incident. Larry asked Maribeth to write up the full case and send it to him so he can help work the best resolution. The TD should have taken decisive action at the tournament when the incident(s) occurred. Peter Wilke is the regional supervisor.

Next Board Meeting is Saturday September 13, 2025 ~8:00 AM at the Dayton Columbus Regional.

There being no more business before the Board, on motion and second, Billie Brown adjourned the meeting at 7:47 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Moese, Secretary