

Toronto July 23, 2017

D11 Attendees: Judy Auer, Cheryl Schneider, Joyce Penn, Steve Moese, AJ Stephani

Please see <http://www.acbl.org/bog-toronto-meeting/> for all meeting materials.

This meeting was audio and video taped (Thanks to Marcin Waslowicz who does the same for WBF World Championships)

<http://bridgewinners.com/article/view/board-of-governors-live-video-stream/>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ArBf6gDBiD4>

Audio: <https://soundcloud.com/jaomm/2017-summer-nabc-board-of-governors> and

<https://soundcloud.com/jaomm/2017-summer-nabc-board-of-governors-lower-quality>

Richard Popper convened the BoG meeting at 10 AM. The meeting handouts were shared electronically. Members were asked to bring pads or smart phones during the meeting. The change to electronic documents and member in-meeting access is permanent. The next Board of Governor’s meeting is in San Diego on **SATURDAY November 25, 2017**.

Motion to approve Kansas City BoG Minutes approved.

Bob Heller convened the Membership Meeting and immediately ceded the floor to Bahar Gidwani, the new ACBL CEO.

ACBL President’s Report (Bob Heller) – deferred

CEO Report (Bahar Gidwan)

<http://cdn.acbl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Toronto-CEO-Report-2017-07-22.pptx>

Toplines:

- Performance: Finances stable. Membership flat. Table count down.
 - 30% renewing members choose 3 year plan. Avg Age member 72.1.
 - Tables down 3%; Tournaments down 4%; KC 13% below forecast; Online up 6%;
 - Regionals down 8%
- What’s New: Outreach to Stakeholders, Collecting Data, Customer Relationship Management solution (membership recruiting solution) chosen.
- Longest Day raised \$700K, down from last year.
- Club Manager & Teacher Feedback (Parallels S. A. Moese Report later in this summary).
- District/Unit Financials – how does the money flow? What benchmark ratios make sense? Uncover and share best practice ideas and opportunities. Goal is to provide financial support tools for Districts & Units.
- Microsoft Dynamics is the Customer Relationship Management solution chosen by ACBL – best price, easy to use, compatible with existing infrastructure, approved by Finance Committee.
- Finance changes:
 - Shift to Canadian and Mexican Currency for tournaments in respective countries (simplifies impact of US\$ pricing).
 - Reduce cost to manage investments (fired advisor \$100K/yr fee)
 - \$2MM Line of Credit (no Cost)
- Expanded National Recorder Search
- Porter Strategic Analysis:

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunity	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ A challenging sport (“crack for your brain”) ♥ ~170,000 intelligent members who love bridge ♥ ~3,000 clubs, ~13,000 accredited teachers, >1,000 tournaments / year ♥ A relatively cheap sport that is probably good for you ♥ We have cash in the bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ People who try bridge don’t stick with it ♥ Stakeholders have different needs and interests ♥ Clubs and tournaments are competing for a shrinking base of players ♥ Bridge technology outside the ACBL has moved forward faster than inside it ♥ Some clubs, districts, and units are losing money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-line bridge seems to be attractive to many players • People are living longer and bridge is a sport they can play well at any age • The “lifetime value” of a bridge player is high, so we can invest a lot in recruiting new members • New technology is making bridge more accessible (and more “cool”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-line bridge seems to be attractive to many players • Our average member age keeps increasing • The ambiance and service we offer at clubs and tournaments has not kept up with societal expectations • Our stakeholders dislike and distrust one another

- Leads to these actions:

Build	Correct	Exploit	Reduce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♣ Get more benefit from the recruitment activities of clubs and teachers ♣ Promote (and prove) the value and benefits of bridge ♣ Improve the feedback loop between players, clubs, and headquarters ♣ Improve learning and sharing between clubs, teachers, and tournament committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♣ Track new members and make them feel wanted ♣ Simplify lower-level bridge ♣ Find ways to better share the value of a player between clubs, tournaments, and other partners ♣ Upgrade ACBL technology and open it to future advances as they occur ♣ Increase transparency and trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♣ Collaborate with on-line bridge and develop new players for everyone ♣ Express our benefits differently to the different available market segments ♣ Spend money to fix our problems now, rather than waiting until later (when fixes may cost much more) ♣ Better use both print and electronic media to tell our story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♣ Stop fighting on-line bridge and find ways to partner and collaborate ♣ Raise our “conversion rate” so that potential new players become solid longer-term members ♣ Upgrade our quality of service ♣ Make sure that all of our stakeholders benefit from our success

ACBL assessing 350 Proposals. Do what we can do, prioritize the rest, engage stakeholders, execute.

Bahar is revising the Board consulting process to better engage BoD and BoG. Committees will be developed on big ideas needing stakeholder input.

How to simplify special game structure and fees. How to raise funds from activity (clubs, teachers) and redirect the funding to the activity itself so it can grow.

ACBL League Counsel’s Report: http://cdn.acbl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Litigation-Report_2017_Jul_Final.pdf
3 pending cases reviewed (2 continuing, 1 new).

Treasurer Report: <http://cdn.acbl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/BOG-Financial-Reports.pdf>
2017 to date is ahead of budget and last year’s performance.

No Membership motions were made and the Membership meeting was closed. Richard Popper gave his Chairman’s report summarizing actions by the Board of Directors in Toronto:

<http://cdn.acbl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/BoG-Excerpts-Toronto.pdf>

- BoD cancelled the contract for the Fall NABC in Orlando for 2022 (\$80K) and moved the tournament to Phoenix. The original contract buyout was \$490K, a savings of \$410K. The dissatisfaction with Orlando was at many levels, poor facilities, high costs, poor local participation, negative impact on 2 Florida Regional tournaments before and after the NABC in Dec 2016. Florida runs 9 Regionals per year. BoD approved Summer 2023 NABC Chicago Sheraton Grand Hotel. Both motions unanimous.
- Item 172-02: Anti-Cheating Commission Passed 25-0-0
- Item 172-03: CDR Section 5.1.12 Workplace Harassment – Extended to Unit and District Tournament Volunteers – Unanimous 25-0-0
- Item 172-04: Code of Disciplinary Regulations – New rewrite effective August 1, 2017. Allows plea bargaining.
- Item 172-12: Structural Changes - When significant structural changes are proposed to the Board of Directors, the Finance Committee will analyze and present alternatives for discussion along with their recommendation. Effective immediately. Motion failed: Aye 1, 2, 13, 16, 24
- Three Units were dissolved.
- Item 172-18: Relocation and Rescheduling of BOD Meetings - Chapter IV – Board Procedures, C. Meetings be amended as follows:
 - The Board of Directors will meet prior to each NABC at the site of the NABC. The goal of the members of the Board of Directors is to have shorter meetings with more work being done in advance electronically

and otherwise. The length of each meeting will be determined by the ACBL President in consultation with management.

- Starting in 2020, the Board of Directors will meet prior to the Summer NABCs at the site of the NABC. The Board will also meet in January at a location near to the site of ACBL HQ.

Effective January 1, 2020. Motion failed: 3-22-0 Aye: 10, 11, 25

- Motion to modify the Regional Events at NABCs failed 2-23-0 Aye 1, 16
- Motion to modify NABC Finances carried 24-0-1 Abstain 25
- The Stop Card (and the skip bid warning) shall no longer be used effective January 1, 2018. Passed 21-4-0 Nay:1,2,13,25
- Item 172-07: Zone 2 National Bridge Organizations – Proposal to transition WBF Dues to USBF, MBF, and CBF from 2017 to 2021. Carried 12-11-2 Motion to Redirect passed. Did not address who selects the 5 Zonal delegates from Zone 1 (ACBL).
- Item 172-08: Entry Fees is reconsidered. For team events held at an NABC in which all team entrants receive full overall masterpoint awards, entry shall be charged on a per person basis. Failed 4-21-0 Aye 1, 18, 23, 25
- Item 172-09: Club Game Lesson Hands for Teaching - Regular Club games with a masterpoint limit of 20 or less (0-5, 0-10, 0-20) are allowed to use prepared lesson hands for teaching purposes.
- Item 172-10: The Laws of Duplicate Bridge - The Laws of Duplicate Bridge as reviewed and promulgated by the ACBL Laws Commission and published and copyrighted by ACBL are accepted with the following elections:
 1. Law 1B: The back of each card must be symmetric (Law 1C) and the ACBL encourages the use of packs where the face of each card is also symmetric.
 2. Law 18F: The ACBL Board of Directors authorizes tournament organizers in ACBL sanctioned events to use bidding boxes. Any alternative method which is necessary to enable a person with a disability to compete is authorized subject to the approval of the Director.
 3. Law 40B1 and Law 40B2(a): An opening bid of 1NT and an opening bid of one in a suit, which by partnership agreement could show fewer than 8 high-card points, is designated a special partnership agreement. These two special partnership agreements are disallowed in all ACBL sanctioned events.
 4. Law 40B2(a): Both members of a partnership must employ the same system that appears on the convention card.
 - a) During a session of play, a system may not be varied, except with permission of the tournament Director. (A Director might allow a pair to change a convention but would not allow a pair to change its basic system.)
 - b) At the outset of a round or session, a pair may review its opponents' convention card and alter its defenses against the opponents' special understandings and preemptive bids. This must be announced to its opponents. The opponents may not vary their system after being informed of these defensive alterations.
 - c) A partnership, by prior agreement, may not vary its understanding during the auction or play following a question asked, a response to a question or any irregularity.
 5. Law 40B2(b): Whenever written defenses are required or permitted, they Defenses to methods permitted by the ACBL Mid-Chart and/or SuperChart may be referred to by any player whenever it would be appropriate to refer to an opponent's convention card.
 6. Law 40B2(c): In addition, a player is permitted to consult an opponent's convention card at his RHO's turn to call.
 7. Law 93C1: A further appeal to the Regulating Authority (ACBL) may be allowed only as follows:
 - a) On a point of law to and at the discretion of the ACBL Laws Commission.
 - b) On an allegation of bias of a committee member or members to and at the discretion of the ACBL Appeals and Charges Committee. The appellant is required to present evidence that the bias was not known at the time of the hearing.
 - c) The appeal must be filed within thirty (30) days of the decision of the Bridge Appeals Committee that heard the issue.
 8. Law 93C3(a): Except as noted in 7 above, the responsibility of dealing finally with any appeal of a Director's decision is that of the tournament's specified tournament body.

Effective September 26, 2017 - Carried unanimously 25-0-0

BoG Motions for Reconsideration

Reconsider Item 172-07 Redistribution of Contributions to WBF to USBF, CBF, MBF
Passed 29-26

New Business

Report from the **Education Foundation** – Jay Whipple D9

- Partnership and commitment to ACBL
- The EF is defining new player recruiting approaches.
- The EF is developing a Collegiate Bridge program and is looking for recommendations from members about known successful University clubs. How can we reply what already succeeds?
- EF looking to fund teachers who recruit new players. Long term markets that can bring new players into bridge. Richard Popper will create a BoG Committee to assist.

Create **Tournament Working Group** - David Lodge D22 – Create a Tournament Working group to provide means by which tournament managers and chairs can be more informed and meet with DICs prior to finalizing scheduling. Improve sharing best approaches and tournament planning. See:

<http://cdn.acbl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Better-Process-for-HQ-Field-and-Sponsor-Coord.pdf>

Motion carries – 1 vote against.

Fall NABC Schedule (Soloway KO) to be considered for Honolulu in San Diego.

Teacher & Club Owner Committee Report – Steve Moese D11

See written summary:

<http://cdn.acbl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/20170630-Draft-Summary-Teachers-Club-Owners-Survey.pdf>

See Slide Presentation:

<http://cdn.acbl.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/20170723-BoG-Teacher-and-Club-Owner-Survey-Presentation-Toronto1.pdf>

Toplines:

1. The Teacher and Club Owner “Overall Experience” is sound and has upside within reach of sound policies and business practice.
2. ACBL Management daily operations serves teachers and Club owners well. There are several areas to improve.
3. The Board of Directors appears out of touch, aloof, lacking meaningful communication and opportunities for input.
4. The Board of Governors is even less well understood, and is not seen as representing the needs of teachers and club owners.
5. Units and Districts vary greatly in their engagement and support of teaching, recruiting and supporting clubs. Areas of antagonism exist due to lack of communication, support, engagement and relationship. This is consistent with the least common denominator interpretation of the relationship/structure in place among these stakeholders.
6. The current ACBL “ecosystem” is disjointed and uncoordinated on key areas touching prospect development, recruiting, teaching and progression from limited to open games.
7. Nasty behavior of any kind is a deterrent to fun, growth, and fuller member participation at all levels.
8. The aging teachers and club managers demographic influences efforts to grow, and to recruit younger players.
9. The focus on recruiting members (and playing duplicate/tournaments) trumps efforts to grow social/at-home bridge.
10. Efforts to teach bridge in a school setting are missing in action or lacking traction. We are poorly positioned for peer to peer recruiting for ages below 65.

Steve Moese D11

Motion to

1. Require BoD to provide impact statement for any BoD motion that has a material impact. **Motion Failed.**
2. Update info on bridge teachers to be more inclusive. **ACBL Management will facilitate this.** Motion **withdrawn**
3. BoG motions should include an impact assessment for the BoG vote. Bahar agreed to help define impact. Motion **Motion Failed.**

4. Use an issue sheet for complex BoG motions to better document the question for BoG vote. **Carried.** Richard Popper will develop a template for the BoG
5. Richard Popper to identify 2-3 priorities that need BoG support/Committees. **Carried.**
6. Actively engage Teachers and Club Owners at District and Unit level. **ACBL Management will facilitate this. Motion Failed 30-25**
7. Move Hawaii meeting from Hawaii to a less expensive place. **Motion Failed**

Joanne Sprung – D17 – Reps to the WBF shall be assigned proportionally to those paying the dues (ACBL, USBF, CBF, MBF) **Motion Carried 22-18.**

Walter Mitchell D4 – Add 2 rooms at the San Diego NABC to be assigned at large by the Tournament Chair (Changes from 10 to 12). Committee of the Board studies NABC issues. Deferred to the NABC Committee. **Motion withdrawn.**

Peggy Kaplan D14 – Review masterplan Schedule to correct current disparity between pair and team payouts. Few teams show up and team games are dying. Russ Jones: Two years away from codified review. (Linda Trent has 4 issue to raise with C&C Committee Monday 7/24. Will report in the BW Forum). **Motion Carried**

Mike Cassel D14 – How did the Robot NABC Tournament get chartered? Need for a more transparent process. Input from more constituencies. Robert Heller: Set up after Kansas City March 2017 between CEOs under the CEO authority form the BoD to run experimental events. In the future there will be more transparency. 2600 entries at \$40 per person. Need for stratification. No motion presented.

Danny Sprung D17 – C&C Subcommittee on convention charts. Presentation of new CC to Board then present to all ACBL members for comment. Seeking feedback from District & Unit Levels.

Bob Heller – Closing remarks – Thanks Robert Hartman for his 6 years of service and groundwork for Bahar.

Motion to recognize new life masters and to thank D2 and Toronto volunteers for all their work at the NABC. Meeting adjourned.