

ACBL Unit 143 Board Meeting Minutes, Wednesday December 13, 2023

Location: The meeting was conducted on-line using ZOOM.

Attendees: Dennis Abeln, Sandy Bigg, Mark Boswell, Dian Brazier, Don Chase, Terry D'Amato, Ken Obrecht, Steve Russell, and John Welte

Absent: Alan Popkin, Jay Shah, and Mark Zellmer

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM and met quorum requirements.

President's Report

Mark B reported that there will be a change in the share of membership fees that the unit receives from the ACBL; they will not pay as much. This may start as early as January, 2024. The ACBL will provide incentives so that we can earn more; among them include filling out a spreadsheet and recontacting players who have lapsed or are not playing as much. It may be that our efforts to have free or low-fee tournaments for our novice players may qualify us for more money without doing much else. Our board does not favor becoming telemarketers.

Approval of the Minutes

The Board unanimously approved the meeting minutes from November 8, 2023.

Treasurer's Report

Steve reported a number of large expenditures including paying the St. Louis Bridge Center and District 8 fees. Our balance is approximately \$69,000.

The board passed a motion to approve the report with 8 voting for and one abstention.

Tournaments:

January Sectional/NLM Regional

Dennis reported that there will be no Entry Express available for us during this tournament due to problems in the system that the ACBL has been experiencing. Originally, we planned to charge \$5 for those who pre-registered using Entry Express and \$10 for those who paid at the door. Charging all the NLM entrants \$5 instead of \$10 will mean that we lose approximately \$1000 in revenue, but Dennis expressed concern that making the entry fee \$10 for everyone might upset participants. The Board unanimously approved a motion to make all entry fees for the NLM Regional \$5/person/session.

Mark B asked Terry to post a revised President's message on the website that will explain this fee change.

Dennis said a Pianola blast would be going out soon.

The hospitality budget is \$450 for the Sectional/NLM Regional, excluding coffee which is included in the St. Louis Bridge Center rental contract. The hospitality budget for the I/N tournament is \$200. Dennis referred Dian B to an email he sent to her on the hospitality budget and coordination details, as well as an email from Dianne Deutch describing how she ran the hospitality during her tenure.

There will not be a lunch offering on Sunday due to the financial loss for the restaurant owner we had worked with for October's event.

Lectures have been dropped for the time being.

Steve needs to get Mark B a list of the new life masters.

Jack Bryant will receive the 2023 Player of the Year Award.

August Regional

Dennis plans to work on the schedule for the Regional. If anyone has any suggestions, please email him. He proposed keeping entry fees at \$15. This will be followed up at the January board meeting.

Mark B shared that Phyllis had reported that there had been an article in the Daily Bulletin at the Atlanta National stating that the hotel staff there had experienced rude behavior coming from the bridge players who attended there. So, this is not just a problem in St. Louis. Mark B will pen a message about this to post in his President's Message after the May Sectional; Sandy will help with editing.

499'r Tournament

John shared the corrected flyer. Rather than having a session to teach I/N players about how Swiss team games work, we will tell new players about our resources on the web that describe this. Fees are \$10 per entry and stratifications are 0-100 and 0-500. To promote more participation, John will reach out to some I/N players to encourage them to help him with publicity for the tournament.

Photographing Winners at Tournaments

Terry raised the point that we need a photographer for all events to feature our winners. Dian is willing to take that on.

2026 National in St. Louis

Names of people whom we might approach to be the tournament chairperson were brought up. Mark B said that he would approach the individuals the board liked and report back. An idea to make a co-chairperson team was floated; another idea was to pay someone to take on the role. Don raised the issue of safety in downtown St. Louis for the event and wondered if

there are other venues where we might hold the event. Everyone is welcome to investigate other places, though we think that downtown may be the only place big enough.

Committees

Awards

Mark B said that we would wait to present the Meritorious Service Award to Debbie Romero until after we hear back from her with a list of her many accomplishments. The board voted unanimously to give Debbie Romero 12 free plays for her Meritorious Service Award gift.

Website

Mark B and Terry described a request that Terry had received from Linda Spencer of the ABA to post their club game schedule on our unit website. The ABA has a national website but not a local one. The board wants to support the ABA in its efforts and feels that posting their schedule could benefit both organizations. The board voted unanimously to allow the posting of the ABA's club game schedule on our unit's website.

New Business

Mark reported that Sandy had proposed moving board meetings to Monday or Thursday nights so that meetings don't conflict with club games that meet at night (Tuesdays and Wednesdays). The board unanimously passed a motion to move board meetings to the 2nd Monday evening of the month, starting in January. Terry will post this on the website.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55

Next Meeting: January 8, 2024