

DRAFT MINUTES OF ACBL DISTRICT 4 BOARD MEETING
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania
August 26, 2011

Voting Member Attendees:

- At-Large: Rick Rowland (Board President), Tom Weik (2nd VP),
Mike Giesler (Pres. Appt.) (3 of 6)
- Unit 112: Mary Poplawski, Dan Boye (for Laura Krauss) (2 of 6)
- Unit 120: Ray Depew (1 of 2)
- Unit 121: Louise Remley (for Sue Wessner) (1 of 2)
- Unit 133: John Schwartz, Frank Kuebler (2 of 2)
- Unit 141: Joan Brandeis (for Joann Glasson), Tom Purl, Jay Apfelbaum, April
Uhlenburg, Ala Hamilton-Day, Terry Coughlin, Marie Trethaway,
Tom Sakaguchi, John Marks, Ray Raskin (for Meyer Kotkin), Elaine
Landow, Everett Young (12 of 12)
- Unit 168: Kelly Zeller (for Bob Priest), Ella Zimmerman (for John Klinger), Mike
Zeller (for Bert Murray) (3 of 5)
- Unit 190: Pete Filandro (for Alan Horowitz), Barbara Rhoades, Marie Filandro (for
William Everitt) (3 of 4)
- Unit 217: Sue Pierce, Ed Bissell (2 of 2)

Non-Voting Invitees:

Allison Brandt, Chairperson, 2012 Youth NABC
Solly Weinstein, Valley Forge Regional DIC

Excused:

Joann Glasson, overseeing Bob's recovery from surgery
Bob Cole, death-in-family
Bert & Pamela Murray, illness and care-taking

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

A meeting of the ACBL District 4 Board of Directors was held at the Dolce Hotel, King of Prussia site of the Valley Forge Regional, August 26, 2011. Rick Rowland, President, called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM, a quorum being present (29 of 42 voting members representing 8 of 8 units).

CURTAILMENT OF TOURNAMENT DUE TO IMPENDING HURRICANE IRENE

DIC Solly Weinstein recommended curtailment of the tournament and President Rick Rowland enumerated the proposed changes to the Tournament schedule of events:

1. This (Friday) evening at 7:45pm, 1st session of a 2 session compact K/O would be canceled as the 2nd session would take place tomorrow (Saturday) evening at 7:45pm. Instead, a 1-session Swiss T/4 would be substituted this evening only.

2. Saturday's 2-session pair games would be played at 10:00am as scheduled, but the 2nd session would start TBA, probably about 2:00pm. Saturday's side series event at 7:45 would be canceled.
3. Sunday events would be canceled entirely.

Rick further informed the Board that the hotel will allow cancelations of the Saturday night stays without penalty. Further, the hotel needs to know of our plans by 10:00am Saturday morning, hence the need to decide the scheduling matter now. Jay Apfelbaum noted that an internet weather site placed us in the potentially catastrophic zone. It was also noted that the directing staff and some of the players live at a distance.

While the matter technically does not require Board approval, since the Board is meeting, Rick thought it would be a good idea for the Board to consider the DIC's recommendations and vote on the matter. A motion was made and seconded and unanimously approved to adopt the revised tournament event schedule.

SECRETARY'S REPORT & APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOV. 6, 2010

Bill Bauer introduced substitute Board members:

Dan Boye	Unit 112 (Dan is District Recorder)
Kelly Zeller	Unit 168
Mike Zeller	Unit 168
Marie Filandro	Unit 190
Pete Filandro	Unit 190

The minutes of the Lancaster Board meeting of November 6, 2010 were unanimously approved as submitted. Bill reminded the Board that the minutes appear on the District website.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Rick Rowland distributed the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Statements for the District as of the end of the fiscal year, May 31, 2011. Tournament attendance is down across the board, so Regionals are generally not profitable. All together the District lost \$27,000 in the last fiscal year compared to a loss of \$12,000 the previous year. A lot of this deficit will be made up this fiscal year by not printing and mailing the District 4Spot. The Lancaster Regional lost \$11,500, in part due to the World Bridge Series and associated Regional held just weeks prior in Philadelphia. The World Bridge Series compensated the Tournament (District) with a \$5,000 impact fee (the maximum agreed upon amount), thus reducing the deficit to \$6,500.

The Board approved the Treasurer's report.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Rick noted that he was the first President to be faced with an earthquake, hurricane and change of venue all relating to the Valley Forge Regional. Otherwise the year has gone well.

RATIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTIONS

Since there were 5 Executive Committee actions taken since the Lancaster Board meeting, the Secretary provide background information on each resolution with the meeting agenda (posted on the District website and e-mailed to Board members).

1. E-mailing, rather than printing/mailing, the District 4Spot (effective Sept. 2011)
The current cost of printing and mailing the 4Spot is \$3,700 per issue four times a year. Estimated savings are \$15,000 per year. Elaine Landow reported that there have been about 100 requests to receive a print copy of the 4Spot. Readers were notified of the change and the need to request a “hard”, mailed copy or to register one’s e-mail address to receive the electronic version in the prior two mailed issues. The motion to affirm the Executive Committee action passed with two members opposed.
2. Hosting Audrey Grant at the Lancaster Regional
Audrey Grant has offered to conduct her “Better Bridge Teacher Training Seminar (Nov. 4 & Nov. 5) and also a workshop for I/N’s, “Maxims on Defense” the morning of Nov. 5. The District will guarantee 40 attendees at \$25 for the workshop. The District will charge \$50 for the teacher training seminar and use the proceeds to pay Audrey Grant’s expenses while in Lancaster. The motion to affirm the Executive Committee action passed unanimously.
3. Approval of the 2011 NAP District finals Conditions of Contest and Sites
Note: The agenda erroneously indicated 2012, rather than 2011. The Conditions of contest are relatively unchanged. However, Flight “B” will only be held in Wilmington as the New York Unit requested that Rochester not participate this year. Flight “A” will continue in Allentown and Flight “C” at clubs (or units if they choose to host the event). The Board unanimously approved the Executive committee action.
4. Approval of Dolce Hotel for the Site of the Valley Forge Regional
Faced with the Convention Center breaching our contract so that the Center could begin construction of a casino at the Convention Center, John Marks and others went to work to secure an alternative site. The Dolce Hotel could host us the same week that the Convention Center had been booked. After initial reservations about playing space, ACBL Director Doug Grove approved the site. The Board affirmed the Executive Committee approval unanimously.
5. Approval of the \$12.50 Maximum Entry Fee
The District Board previously authorized (before 2003) Tournament Committees to set an entry fee between \$10.00 and \$12.00. Due to declining attendance and mounting losses, the Executive Committee increased the maximum to \$12.50 effective with the August Syracuse Regional. Rick Rowland noted that the increase is about 4% and the maximum entry fee had not changed in about 10 years. The Executive Committee action was approved with 5 opposed. Most of those opposed spoke in favor of a higher card fee. Prior to the vote, there was

discussion of how to proceed if a majority favored an even higher maximum. It was agreed that the board should ratify this action since we charged \$12.50 in Syracuse earlier this month and at Valley Forge up until now. The subject will be revisited under the Tournament Committee report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PUBLICITY

Joan Brandeis reported for Joann Glasson. Joann provided some website traffic statistics as follows:

1. In January 2011, the new District 4 website, with improved content and format, attracted 1,895 visits by 867 unique people.
2. In the first 21 days of August, the website received 3,482 visits from 1,757 different viewers.
3. The Syracuse Regional website received 1,157 visits and the Valley Forge 1,014.

One member commented that although the numbers are large, they still represent a small fraction of the District membership of around 6,600.

Mike Giesler reported that our mass mailer, Constant Contact, says that 35-40% of our e-mails (a good percentage per Constant Contact) are opened by the recipient. We have 3,700 e-mail addresses.

DISTRICT 4SPOT

Elaine Landow reported that the first electronic issue would be e-mailed September 1. Two advantages of the electronic format is that the 4Spot will be received earlier (no postal delays) and can have unlimited pages of content. So, tournament flyers will be attached for every Sectional tournament in the District.

Mike Giesler noted that we can include color photos. Ala Hamilton-Day noted that people love their pictures included. John Schwartz noted that over 2,000 district members have not signed up to receive the 4Spot via e-mail or US mail. Tom Purl agreed that the lack of e-mail addresses for members is a problem and that aggressive action is needed, like collecting them at Sectionals. Marie Filandro suggested putting a space to enter e-mail address on the entry form. Elaine noted that a lot of the missing addresses are those of new members who have decided not to renew their membership.

TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR

The Tournament schedule for the rest of 2011 and the entire year 2012 is set and posted on the website. John Marks requested Unit TC's to start working on 2013.

John Schwartz called attention to the scheduling of the Philadelphia STaC last April in conflict with the Allentown Sectional. John Marks apologized and explained that the conflict was created due to a scheduling problem for the Philadelphia Unit annual dinner meeting traditionally followed by a silver point game. The ACBL requires STaC's to

start on a Monday, hence the overlap on the prior Friday and Saturday with the Allentown Sectional.

Mary Poplawski noted that a recent Binghamton Sectional got “lost” (did not appear) on the District listing of Unit Sectionals.

CHARITY

April Uhlenburg informed the Board that she tried to form a Youth Committee by publicizing the Committee in an article in the 4Spot. No one volunteered to join the committee. Therefore, April does not feel that we should proceed with the formation of a District Youth Fund at this time.

FINANCE

Dave Kresge was not present.

DISTRICT RECORDER

Dan Boye had no report.

Jay Apflebaum questioned the appearance of this agenda item. Jay’s recollection was that this Committee had been removed from the agenda along with the Disciplinary and Appellate committees at last year’s Lancaster Board meeting. The approved minutes indicate only the two committees were removed from future agendas. So Jay moved that the District Recorder report be eliminated from the agenda and the Board approved. Of course, any committee chair can request that an item be added to the agenda if there is something to report to the Board.

NAP

Mike Giesler announced the dates and locations of the District NAP Finals as follows:

Flight “A” will be played in Allentown in conjunction with the Lehigh Valley Sectional on the weekend of October 22-23. Saturday start times will be 10:30 & 3:30.

Flight “B” will be played Saturday, October 29 as a standalone event at the Wilmington Bridge Studio. The New York Unit (Rochester) did not choose to host the event this year. The 2-session event game times are 1:00 and 7:00.

Flight “C” will be played October 22 and again be conducted like a STaC with any club or Unit in the District eligible to conduct the game by registering with Mike. Mike will send out information to club managers around October 1. Clubs and units must have 5 tables of club-qualified NLM’s with less than 500 points as of June 1, 2011.

Mary Poplawski is interested in hosting Flight “B” in 2012 at her club if the split site format is reinstated in 2012. Bob Priest (not in attendance) previously indicated interest in hosting Flight “B” at the Harrisburg Bridge Club if a 2nd site is needed.

Mike Giesler requested input as to whether there was any Board interest in a single weekend/single site format in 2012 in the W-B/Scranton. Ray will check into possible sites so that this subject can be revisited in Lancaster. Pete Filandro pointed out that simultaneous Flight "A" & "B" events will preclude players from playing in both.

GNT

Ray Depew informed the Board that the hotel where the 2011 GNT was played was unsatisfactory and as a result refunded ½ of the rental fee. Ray has now moved to a fire hall at a 50% increase in rental fee.

There were questions about ACBL conditions of contest that will need to be researched. For example, how many players from a team must be available to go forward for a team to be considered eligible for the National event? What players are eligible to be added to augment the team? Ray Depew is to obtain clarification from the ACBL in writing as several Board members have received conflicting answers verbally from ACBL contacts.

Jay Apfelbaum moved that a 3-4 playoff take place to replace a withdrawing team. If one team wants to play off and the other team doesn't, then a forfeit results. If none of the first four teams wants to go, then the District Director would appoint a team from among the participants willing to go on to the national event. Since the ACBL CofC needs to be consulted to determine whether this format is compatible with ACBL CofC, the motion was tabled to Lancaster (with 2 opposed to tabling).

EDUCATION

Mary Poplawski noted that Audrey Grant is coming to the Lancaster Regional. She will conduct a seminar for teachers on Friday-Saturday and a workshop, Maxims on Defense for I/N's. The teacher trainees will observe the workshop. Registration to date is 10 for teacher training and 16 for the I/N workshop. The registration forms are on the District website, but Board members are urged to get the flyers into the hands of prospective attendees.

There will be an ACBL TAP at the 2012 Summer NABC in Philadelphia. Mary does not recommend holding any other TAP in 2012.

Mary would like to see teaching programs in colleges and high schools and a District Youth Coordinator designated to develop a program.

INTERMEDIATE/NEWCOMER

Ala Hamilton-Day again reminded the Board that 300-750 players are not well served.

TOURNAMENT

John Marks reported that the five Regional Tournament Chairpersons have reviewed the Regional Tournament policies & procedures manual that originated with the Mid-Atlantic Bridge Consortium. The committee met Wednesday evening to review all comments. He expects to have the final version ready to adopt at the Lancaster Board meeting.

TOURNAMENT REPORTS:

2012 Summer NABC – John Marks reported that he has mailed Unit Presidents with information on their units' assigned days. He has also met with committee chairs. The committee met again last evening. When the schedule becomes final the Committee will sell naming rights for \$100 per session. See April Uhlenburg, Publicity Chairperson, for details.

Valley Forge
(8/22/11 – 8/28/11) - John Marks reported that the 2011 Valley Forge Regional attendance is down from last year. This is not our preferred week. The next two Valley Forge Regionals will again be at the Dolce. Next year the regional will be held from Feb. 27 to March 4 to avoid a conflict with the July 2012 Philadelphia Summer NABC. In 2013, the Regional returns to its customary week after Father's Day. So far, the hotel has reacted favorably to hosting the Regional.

Pete Filandro observed that the complementary morning refreshments and the lunch lines were taken 5 to 10 minutes before game time. John Marks will take care of the concern.

Lancaster
(10/31 – 11/6/10) - John Klinger was not present.

Harrisburg - John Marks reminded The Board that there will be no Harrisburg split Regional in 2012. There will be a split Regional (with Syracuse) in 2013.

Syracuse
(8/1-8/7/11) . - No report.

Delaware
(6/18 – 6/24/12) - No report.

Scranton
(2013) - Ray reminded the Board that the 2011 Regional realized a profit of \$6K. People liked the site and the proximity to a casino. Ray would like to see the Regional become an annual event. Terry Coughlin commented that the site was not handicapped-person friendly.

DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S/ACBL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Craig Robinson was out-of-town visiting 50 clubs "West of the Mississippi".

OLD BUSINESS

There were no items of old business.

NEW BUSINESS

1. New York Letter

Some of the issues raised in the recent letter from New York Unit President Walt Gable was discussed. Rick Rowland suggested that we consider holding a Board meeting in conjunction with the GNT in May 2012 and/or the 2013 Scranton Regional. That location would be better for NY Unit Board members and provide good separation from the Lancaster Board meeting in November. Ray Depew was requested to see if suitable space is available as the GNT playing site is not suitable. Ray should report back to Rick so that the matter can be resolved in Lancaster.

Rick noted that the mileage reimbursement even considering the deductible would provide approximately \$160.00 reimbursement for NY Unit Board members who attended the Valley Forge Board meeting.

2. Card Fees

Revisiting the matter of card fees, Jay Apfelbaum moved that the card fee be raised from \$12.50 (as the result of the Executive Committee/Board ratification) to \$14.00 at the discretion of the Regional TC effective with the Lancaster Regional. After discussion, Jay modified his motion to charge \$13.00 uniformly across-the-district. The revised motion passed, 14 yes, 7 no and 2 abstentions. Some of the no voters did not want any further increase and some favored the greater increase. Mary Poplawski observed that some people are noticing that we charge more than MABC regionals.

Note: After the meeting the Secretary informed John Klinger of the new \$13.00 card fee. John said no card fee had yet been advertised.

NEXT MEETING

After the meeting adjourned, the next Board meeting will take place during the Lancaster Regional on Friday, November 4, 2011 at 5:00pm between sessions. This timing will accommodate those attending Audrey Grant's Teacher Training Seminar on Friday morning and afternoon and Saturday morning.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Bauer
District 4 Secretary
william.baueriii@verizon.net