

**MINUTES OF THE DISTRICT 5 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ZOOM MEETING
July 12, 2021 at 7:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE:

Officers Present: Mary Paulone Carns, Jim Overcashier, Brian Ellis, Marc Sylvester

Representatives Present: Barb Bacon, Ron Franck, Chris Urbanek, Jan Assini, Sharon Fairchild

Announcement: Marc Sylvester announced that the meeting would be recorded for minutes taking purposes.

WELCOME/PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Carns called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. She welcomed everyone.

MINUTES

The minutes from the November 2020 meeting had previously been emailed to the members. Sharon Fairchild asked for any additions or corrections to the minutes. There were none. Marc Sylvester made a motion to approve the minutes as written and Barb Bacon seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Brian Ellis reported that there has been little activity in the past year and a half. We still have about \$175,000 or so. There have been few expenses and little income.

DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Brian announced that the ACBL Board of Directors will be meeting next week. He hopes for more guidance on dealing with the Covid situation and the re-opening of face-to-face bridge games.

Dian Petrov is running against Margot Hennings to be the Region 4 Director representing Districts 5 and 6 on the ACBL Board of Directors. It is a four-year term starting next January. In Region 4, District 5 has about 30 % of the population while District 6 has about 70%.

ROCK AND ROLL REGIONAL

Jim Overcashier will be the chairperson for the January 2022 tournament. He asked if we have a contract with the hotel. We have one in place and Sharon has been in contact with the new Sales Manager for the hotel and will be discussing conditions with her in August.

Mary hopes we will get some information from the earlier tournaments as to attendance and restrictions followed to help our planning.

Jim reported that in Ohio all restrictions have been lifted and he found no evidence that we could not require proof of vaccinations or use of masks, if we so desire.

ALL AMERICAN REGIONAL

Sharon reported that we have a contract for May.

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL

Mary reported that the Pittsburgh Regional for 2021 has been cancelled. We are waiting to see if there will be any penalties associated with the cancellation. The hotel will try to rent the space that we had reserved.

BUFFALO REGIONAL

Chris reported that the issue of drawing Canadian players will influence the willingness to hold this regional. There has been a lot of pressure from both sides of the border to open it up. She expects that a decision will come soon.

The flyer is ready and will be distributed next week. The hotel has reduced the cost of the sleeping rooms to \$79 a night if reserved by September 18th. The Buffalo players seem eager to get back to the tables. Mary suggested that specific Covid restrictions be placed on the flyer along with instructions for players to check the website for updates.

GNT/NAP

Ron Franck reported that attendance was down for the online GNT, but Alex Bealles did a great job with the event and the whole operation was very smooth.

We are planning for the NAP to be face-to-face in Erie the first weekend of October. If the Covid situation changes, we would be able to hold it online. The hotel rate will be \$99 at what used to be the Comfort Inn.

Due to table-spacing issues, there will be 3 sessions on Saturday October 2nd. Each flight will be assigned to 2 sessions. Pairs not playing the first session will be notified by Ron to let them know they can arrive later. Ron will have the pair's information since players need to pre-register for the event.

Players need to qualify in advance for this event. Qualifiers can be run in clubs that are open or online. Players can qualify in any online qualifier, no matter where they live. Ron will work to get the dates and times of online qualifiers and will have them posted on the website.

STAC

If the ACBL is willing to run STaCs by December, Mary is willing to run it the way we always did.

WEBSITE

No report

SOCIAL MEDIA

Marc reported that we have social media, but we don't use it.

MEMBERSHIP

Marc reported that as of the June 30, 2021 QUIP report:

We are currently as 23rd / 25th in district size, with a current membership of 2,807.

This is down 9.31% from last year, meaning we are somewhere in the middle of the pack for members lost over the last year (12th / 25).

We are 4th / 25 in new member retention into a second year – about 52.4% of our members continue into their second year, based on a three-year weighted average. As we have pre-pandemic years in here, I suspect this will get a little worse in the next year or two.

We recruited 80 new members to D5 in the past 12 months: Not surprisingly it is the larger units that have the most new members over the last year. Cleveland (21), Pittsburgh (18), and Western New York (16).

We are staying the course on average age, 23rd / 25. Average age of D5 members is 74.62, compared to an average age ACBL-wide of 73.59.

D5 members have an average length of membership of 21.67 years, the *fourth* highest in the ACBL. The ACBL-wide average is 19.98.

EDUCATION

Chris reported that there have been two things in Education this year. Barbara Grzegorzewski nominated a student for the Howard Lebow award. This was sent to the executive committee and the award has been made. Barbara also runs a High School bridge club in Meadville. She was reimbursed \$100.00 for expenses.

OLD BUSINESS

Second Harvest, SPCA and Providence House sent thanks to District 5 for the charitable donations they received from us.

NEW BUSINESS

Regionals going forward:

Regionals should be consistent from tournament to tournament within District 5. We need to communicate our plan to the chairpersons and make sure that people are not surprised by our Covid restrictions.

ACBL currently requires vaccinations and masks for everyone. District presidents around the League agree that we should follow CDC guidelines while maximizing the comfort of the players. We believe we should require vaccinations but not masks. The Board of Directors will likely give us more guidance after next week's meeting.

Motion: Moved by Jan Assini, seconded by Barb Bacon, that we require vaccinations for everyone to play in the next 3 District regionals. There was a unanimous affirmative vote. We need to advertise this in advance of tournaments.

For masks, table distance and hand sanitizers, we should follow ACBL policy.

How do we assure vaccinations have been received? ACBL says the sponsor needs to provide someone to assure that the Covid policy is followed. We should develop a plan to check immunization cards the first time a player plays and have a system to show they have been vaccinated and don't need to be checked each time. This could be a badge, a button or a list that could be displayed on the website or elsewhere.

Barb asked what we were allowed to do in the hospitality department. Mary suggested we check with the venues who should know the regulations for their state.

Awards:

Nominations for the Ann McGilvrey and Distinguished Service Awards are to be submitted to Jim Overcashier by September 1st. He will provide the names and nomination letters to the chair of each of the committees and the results should be determined by the middle of September. We can make the announcements at the Buffalo Regional.

Board Composition:

The District Executive Committee has 9 voting members. Five serve because of the offices they hold: President, Vice President, Treasurer, District Director and Past President. In addition, there are 4 appointed positions. As of the end of this year, we may not have a District Director. We discussed how to handle this. One suggestion was that if the Regional Director is from District 5, they will hold that seat as they do now. If the Regional Director is

from District 6, a liaison to the Regional Director will be named and will hold that seat. Jan suggested we could select a member of the Board of Governors. Mary will suggest the necessary modification to the bylaws.

District Elections:

The election of officers is done by the Unit representatives. We will do that electronically as we did last fall. Mary will run the election between now and September 15th. The candidates will provide a bio to be sent to the electors with the ballots. Nominations are:

President, Jim Overcashier

Vice President, Marc Sylvester

Treasurer, Brian Ellis

Other business:

If attendance is expected to be way down, do we want to run the January Regional? Sharon reported that the contract states that we would owe the hotel between \$15,631 and \$20,841 depending on when we cancelled. We will run it. We could run online evening sessions to pick up the slack. Jan stated that online tournaments are very popular especially for novice and gold rush events.

Jim Overcashier will likely be president when our next meeting is due. He will make the decision on the date and time.

ADJOURNMENT

Barb moved that the meeting be adjourned, Brian seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 PM