

## WBL Board Minutes

November 15, 2022

Board members attending: Hadi Abushakra, Lloyd Rawley, Bob Bell, Herb Schulken, Kim Gandy, Kathy Kopnisky, Alex Gretsinger, Carole Banks, and Clyde Kruskal. Board member absent: Alex Stille. Brad Theurer (Tournament Chair), Linda Marshall (Communications, Tournament Committee), and Bob Ives also attended.

**Treasurer's Report:** Online Thursday night attendance has recently been below 20 tables; it is not clear why it has declined. For the year, the WBL is up about \$775, despite losses of over \$6000 from the face-to-face (f2f) unit game and about \$2500 on the sectional; the relatively well attended f2f unit game in early November (15 tables total), for example, sustained a \$250 loss. Rebates from member participation in District 6 and ACBL games have enabled us to keep the overall balance sheet at a manageable level. We still have about \$76,000 in our bank account. Although we continue to have ample money in the bank, we will probably lose about \$4,000 this year. The Board discussed changes that might raise additional income (e.g., increased entry fees, renting less space at Ohr Kodesh, negotiating a rental fee that is partially dependent on attendance at the f2f game), but noted that many costs (e.g., personnel) are fixed. It was also noted that our arrangement with Ohr Kodesh is not a fixed fee or term contract.

The board considered comparisons between attendance patterns at recent WBL and Northern Virginia Bridge Association (NVBA) f2f unit games (NVBA worse than WBL) and sectionals (similar percentage decline) and discussed obstacles to maintaining and increasing f2f attendance (e.g., continued Covid fears, traffic, aging membership, lower cost of online play). Board members observed that declining f2f attendance suggested that we might want to consider smaller and less expensive venues for sectionals and club games. It was noted that a unit sponsored f2f game, although a long-term practice in the Washington area, is not very common in the ACBL as a whole and is not a necessity for local club bridge. Bob suggested that we should try to identify conditions (e.g., failure to meet targeted attendance patterns or financial results) that would cause us to decide to stop supporting a weekly unit game. Although the Board has discussed scheduling arrangements that would avoid competition between the f2f unit game and an online local unit game, it is not clear that this would substantially boost f2f attendance. Carole said that the experience of the last WBL sectional suggested some avenues for cost saving in the future.

**WBL Sectionals:** The WBL will hold two sectional tournaments in 2023: June 8-11 and August 3-6 at the Schweinhaut Center. Although the Board would have preferred to schedule only one of the sectionals during the summer months, various issues (e.g., availability of sites and personnel and timing of national, regional, and other nearby tournaments) led the Board to choose these dates. The Board explored the possibility of holding a sectional at the Elks Club in Rockville but concluded that this site would be too costly.

**Storage Unit:** The WBL is no longer renting a storage unit to keep supplies for sectionals and unit games. David Solomon distributed an inventory of supplies that he is currently storing at his home and promised

that he will keep all items that appear potentially useful for the WBL unless he is told they are no longer needed.

**Caddie Payments:** At the beginning of the pandemic, the Board decided to continue paying David Solomon and Alan Crank the amount they received before the pandemic, i.e., when the WBL held a weekly f2f unit game. The Board has decided that beginning January 1, 2023, it will pay them for their actual work time under current conditions. In addition, the Board awarded them their traditional annual holiday bonus (\$100) for 2022.

**Next Meeting:** January 11, 2023, 7:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Bell