

July 15, 2024

WBL Board Meeting Minutes

Board members present: Clyde Kruskal, Kim Gandy, Linda Marshall, Bob Bell, Alex Gretsinger, Daniel Aldrich, Ron Zucker, Carole Banks. Brad Theurer (Tournament Committee) and Lloyd Rawley (Unit Game Manager) also attended. Board members absent: Alex Stille.

President's report (Ron): The next Board meeting will be in September. In the interim, the Board will communicate via email as needed. Lloyd has COVID, and therefore for health and safety reasons should not direct the unit game this Thursday, especially given the age of the player base. Ron moved that he handle the computer set up, and that Mark Lavine, Don or Rose Berman, or Clyde Kruskal serve as director. The motion passed with no objections.

Sectionals (Carole and Brad): For the upcoming Fall Sectional, the Thursday night game (October 17) will be held at the Promenade.

The Board discussed plans for upcoming WBL Sectionals. Currently, the Margaret Schweinhaut Center has been reserved for the WBL September 2024 and January 2025 Sectionals, and the Silver Spring Civic Center has been reserved for the April and October 2025 Sectionals. In July, the Civic Center, without advance notice, pre-charged the WBL for the full \$4300 cost of reserving three rooms at the Civic Center for Friday through Sunday for both the April and October 2025 Sectionals. However, the third room is likely only needed for Saturday morning and afternoon to accommodate overflow or for training or lessons. Carole therefore asked the Civic Center to reverse the charge and to reduce the rent, given that the third room is only needed for part of Saturday. The reduced rent would be about \$3200. According to the Civic Center, reversing the charge required reapplying for the reservation, though they said that would not jeopardize the reservation.

The Board discussed whether to move the January 2025 WBL Sectional from the Schweinhaut Center to the Civic Center because at the Schweinhaut Center entry fees would need to be collected outside in cold and potentially snowy conditions. However, the Civic Center costs more (\$2400 vs. \$3200) to rent and has less space. The cost of the Civic Center could be offset by the subsidy we are applying for, but the amount we will receive will remain uncertain until Fall 2024 and it would need to be split across the costs for three tournaments instead of just the April and October 2025 Sectionals if we moved the January Sectional to the Civic Center. Additionally, moving the Sectional would require negotiating the termination of the contract with the Schweinhaut Center. For these reasons, the Board decided not to move the Sectional, and the Tournament Committee will investigate solutions to the entry selling problem, including selling advance entries, selling scrip, and persuading Montgomery County to allow the sale of entries on the premises.

Brad noted that we need to prepare flyers and schedules for the WBL October Sectional and also plan the inaugural Steve Robinson trophy pairs event. Ted Ying recommends running the event as a two-session play-through rather than having a qualifying and final session because the short time between sessions would make the latter administratively difficult. No objections were raised to this proposal.

Minutes: The minutes for the June Board Meeting were provisionally accepted, subject to several corrections. Dan will revise and recirculate the minutes to the Board for approval.

Treasurer's Report: Bob Ives could not attend the meeting, and provided a written report to the Board via email. The report stated that in June the WBL received an \$8,000 anonymous donation, and that the operating loss during June was \$1,071, which is in line with prior months and with our current expectations of losing about \$1,000 per month running the Unit game. The total cash at the bank is \$56,500, reflecting both the \$8,000 donation and a \$4,300 prepayment of rent, discussed further by Kim and Carole (see above).

Growing the Game (Kim, supplementing her email report): Kim provided a written report to the Board that she supplemented with additional comments during the meeting. 33 students are participating in the ACBL Educational Fund lessons led by Bob and Ann Schwab, which are going very well. Bob and Ann have offered to run another course in the spring. However, the Board agreed that we should try to capitalize on the new students' excitement about and interest in bridge by offering follow-up lessons sooner than the spring, and/or by providing an opportunity for supervised play sessions, with the goal of eventually drawing some of them to the Unit Game. Kim believes that supervised play at the Rockville DBC, preceded by a 30-minute lesson on a basic topic, would be workable, but there would need to be volunteers to teach the lessons and run the supervised play.

New Business: The Board agreed to cancel the Unit Game on August 22 during the Baltimore sectional due to likely low attendance. Ron will visit Ohr Kodesh, introduce himself as the new president of the WBL, and inquire whether the reservation on August 22 can be canceled for no charge. Clyde agreed to serve as backup director for the Unit Game, and will shadow Lloyd during an upcoming Unit Game to learn the process. The Eynon trophy remains at Ohr Kodesh. Ron is handling the process of having it engraved.

District Six Regionals: Carole stated that at the Reston Regional, many players were discussing the future of District Six regionals after 2024. No regionals are currently scheduled. Various people, including Annie Schwartz and Nancy Ross, are interested in helping to find a site and coordinate a regional in 2025. Ron volunteered to serve in some capacity in such a group. Carole suggested that the best people to reach out to about that effort are David Rodney (former District Six President) and Shawn Stringer (former District Six Regional Manager). The biggest issue is finding a playing site. Linda

renewed the suggestion made at the last Board meeting of Maryland Live Casino, where the ABA held a recent tournament.

Future board meetings: The Board agreed to meet on the third Monday of the month at 7 pm ET, except that the September meeting will be 7 pm ET on September 17, the third Tuesday of the month. There will be no meeting in August.

Unit game celebration: The Board discussed a celebration of the 90th anniversary of the WBL's founding as a method for drawing a large crowd to the unit game. An ice cream social or a full dinner were proposed, with most favoring the latter. Dan will follow up with suggestions on how to draw a large crowd to the game.