

Minutes and Action Items: from Board Meeting April 15, 2023

Final minutes – sent out 4 July 2023 for final comments. Approved at 15 July 2023 mtg.

ATTENDING: Dixie Culver, Debbie Monroe, Rich Pepper, David Hamby, Robert Powell, Melissa Waldron, Chris Shepard, Martha Meyer, Dianne Pusch, Debbie Elston, Cindy Wright, Cam Matthews, Judy Hellen

NOT ATTENDING: Peter J. Boyd-Bowman, Claudia Hale, Sydney Cardone, Ted Edgar,

Debbie M. called the meeting to order at 10:45 am.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES

Minutes of January 28, 2023 Board Meeting were sent out for review by email at least 1 week before the meeting. Motion made to approve by Rich, seconded by Dixie. All approved by voice vote.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE (Dixie)- March 2023

As of March 31, 2023:

10 new members/ 8 reinstated

2 transfers in/4 transfers out

0 death

Total went from 752 to 737 (Many non payments)

From Jan. 28, 2023 Minutes:

Discussion: Board expressed concern about lagging numbers of new ACBL memberships, and decline in Unit members since 2020. The difference above is largely reflection of existing members not renewing their ACBL membership. Debbie M. noted that there were a large number of our current members who have zero masterpoints, meaning they are not playing. We have ongoing efforts in WS and GSO to gain new students, new players, and new ACBL memberships (see below). However, this is not currently being pursued in the other smaller cities in our Unit to the same extent.

The Board agreed: THIS MEETING (April 15) we will make this an important topic of discussion, for how to boost our membership.

MEMBERSHIP EFFORTS THUS FAR IN 2022 – 2023 (Rich, Cindy, Judy)

Including: LBIAD, Supervised Play, Bridge Lessons, Mentor-Mentee Season

- Rich input: We hosted 2 Learn Bridge in a Day (LBIAD) sessions (one GSO, one WS) on August 28-29, 2022. Had about 120 attendees. Many were from other parts of NC. We received 2 grants for LBIAD; still have some \$ remaining to continue supporting retention of new students, training of new teachers/directors.
- New Directors in Unit: Have been training, encouraging interested players to shadow Rich at games, and take the ACBL Director course / take test. So far: Martha Meyer (just passed test – hooray!), Chris Shepard (recently passed test), Dixie Culver (at GCC; has good experience); Andy Symmes has taken the online director training course, but has not yet taken the test.
- In addition, Peter C. Boyd-Bowman is working some with Brenda Garzia and Judy Hellen on directing skills, computer ACBLscore setup.
- Rich noted: an apprentice director does not need to become the sole director/manager of a local club. Instead, it will help a lot if they can just fill in when regular director is away. They can shadow Rich at Unit Games or other games he directs, to get experience.
- New Teachers in Unit / teacher training:
 - Judy Hellen, Cindy Wright – took Best Practices training course in Feb. 2023.
 - Andy Symmes, Martha Meyer – are interested in future teaching.
- Current Bridge Teachers in Unit:
- In GSO:
 - Rich – started July 2022 – Bridge Basics 1, then 2, then 3 for new players (Audrey Grant). Both within GCC, and at Leonard Rec Center.
 - Judy Hellen – small groups, at home (in addition to supervised play), plus lessons at Fellowship Church (Audrey Grant).
 - Peter J. BB – small groups, online mainly. Focus is more on intermediate to advanced players. Thursdays at 9:30 am: “BridgeLite” for 0-1000 players, with 30-min lesson before.
 - Mary – has not taught since before COVID. Is doing cruise directing. Has taught people in their homes recently. Might be interested in helping some now?

- Peter C. BB – does cruise bridge directing and lessons. Has many Powerpoint slides, of Audrey Grant material.
- In WS:
 - Cindy – started Oct. 2022 teaching in WS on Wednesdays – Patty Tucker courses. New players.
 - Martha A.: has not taught for several years
 - Jane Goins: not any more.
 - Nancy F.: may be doing small groups, at home?
- In Burlington: David shared that Jackie Lee used to do lessons 3 yrs ago (geared to a higher level player; not beginners). Jim Smith did lessons before this. No one teaching now. They are getting 2.5 to 4 tables in their regular club games.
- Online Lessons:
 - ACBL and AARP: offered a FREE, online course for new bridge players, taught by Larry Cohen and Michael Berkowitz, Jan.-Feb. 2023. Youtube videos of these lessons are available online, for free (see links below). Cindy has a new student who took it, and is now gung-ho on bridge.
 - Link: <https://www.acbl.org/an-ideal-partnership/>
 - AARP link: <https://states.aarp.org/north-carolina/learning-bridge-the-game-of-a-lifetime>
- Supervised Play – started in GSO and WS soon after Aug. 2022 LBIAD:
 - GSO – Mondays, in The Rock, led by Judy Hellen. Has grown now to 5-7 tables each week. Alternating weekly now w/ a 0-200 game instead.
 - Judy observed: players there are a wide range of skills levels. There are some who REALLY NEED the most basic bridge lessons. There are others who are more advanced beginners, and are ready for higher level lessons.
 - WS – Mondays: Martha Albertson teaches from some pre-selected boards that Cindy makes up from the day's duplicate game. Players

can bid, then play hands, put out dummy style and discuss with her. About 2 hr long. Has been mainly social players who played before COVID, and don't feel confident to enter the duplicate games as yet; few true newcomers so far.

- Cindy – is starting a 299er section on Fridays at her game.
- Our Clubs in smaller cities of the Unit: (Salisbury, Burlington, Asheboro, High Point, Reidsville, Danville/Martinsville, VA) – need to consider how to help these clubs grow as well.

MEMBERSHIP EFFORTS GOING FORWARD IN 2023 (Rich – brainstorming session)

Focus Question: How to boost membership of active players in our face-to-face games?

The following items were captured on white boards from this brainstorming:

- Lessons online: can use BBO plus Zoom calls. Can create a “teaching table”, where hands don't go away and are replaced after you finish them. BBO also has a feature: Bridge4 – “just play bridge”. Can use as a learning tool.
 - AARP-ACBL course with Larry Cohen
 - Something like this might be good for those who still are working.
 - Q: can we request a list from ACBL or Larry Cohen, of all local people in our Unit's area who took the Jan.-Feb. course?
- We have many Unit members who have not come back to playing after COVID. Can we create a list of them?
 - Might consider doing a calling tree, or emailing (personal) to them, asking them if they'd like to come back.
 - For Alzheimer's Longest Day game and fundraisers (June), had some ideas, that might translate to getting players back, too:
 - “I used to play duplicate reunion game”, or similar name.
 - Include a game that is just social bridge, at a fundraiser for this?
 - Include a high level “Celebrity Team Game” where a number of our top players team up to compete. People can bet on their favorite team(s); get some winnings if they pick winners.

- Could also have other games at this fundraiser (mah-jong, scrabble).
- Judy and Rich: both shared that there is a clear need for more teaching of lessons, for new players at Supervised Play of varying abilities. Hard for them (only 1 or 2 teachers) to do enough lessons of the right skill level (e.g. BB1 basics, BB2, BB3).
- Cindy: only she is really teaching in WS right now. as stated above, 1 person can only do so much / one level at a time. Players need different levels, topics.
- In both GSO and WS: Long waits between topics, or before next BB1 “basics” class.
- Idea: Hire a coordinator for area teachers. Teach from a standard syllabus?. Could offer more regular courses than of differing levels, so brand new players have place to start out, and advancing players do too.
 - Suggestion: don’t segregate this with GSO teaching separate from WS teaching. Can we get teachers willing to travel to the other city(s) to teach?
 - Also, need teachers to train and recruit new players in our smaller cities. Burlington, High Point, Asheboro, Salisbury, Reidsville, Danville.
 - How best to give lessons to people who work still? Maybe best via online classes.

MEMBERSHIP EFFORTS – CONCLUSION OF BRAINSTORMING

Proposal made: **that the Unit hire a Teaching Coordinator.** Someone who will get a group of willing teachers to collaborate on a program of classes that fits with varying skill levels of students. Offer more courses through the months (e.g. so new people don’t need to wait 9 months for next “newcomer” class), and so advancing players also stay interested. Decide what the best teaching platform(s), materials should be. Common syllabus? (TBD). Ideally, help this program expand beyond GSO and WS, to Burlington, other towns in Unit.

Rest of this program: to be devised, with inputs from the Board and teachers.

Motion was made by Debbie M. to hire a coordinator, 2nd by Dixie. Board voted by show of hands in favor of it. **Agreed:** we should post the job on our website and announce it being available via emails to our members.

Action items:

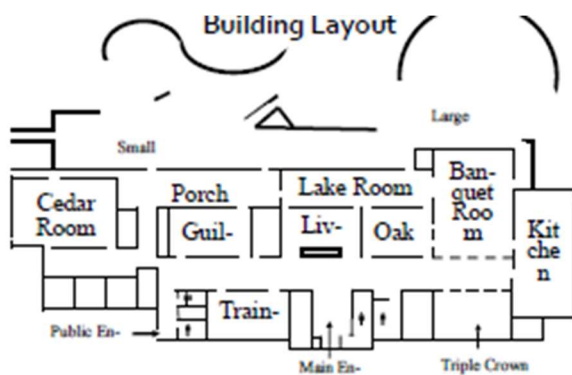
1. Judy – to help devise the position description, with input from others.
2. Rich – to send a Pianola email to Unit, that this position will be available
3. Judy – to place the position announcement on our Website.

Other brainstorming items (captured above): Board to review these, and consider if any other items should be brought forward into actions, or further investigated.

TOURNAMENTS, 2023 (Ted, Debbie)

NLM Regional/Open Sectional – February 16 -19, 2023. Bur-Mil Clubhouse

- Tournament Chairs: Debbie M. (NLM Regional), Ted (Sectional)
- We rented the 1) Banquet-Triple Crown Room, 2) Oak Room; 3) Lake Room
- Also, used the Guilford Room for Jerry Helms’ talks
- Used Living Room/Guilford Room for Members Club wine & cheese reception on Friday evening.
- Installed supplemental LED lighting in ceiling of the Lake Room, for additional lighting of the Open Sectional tables.



QUICK REVIEW OF THIS TOURNAMENT: What went well, what could be done differently/better
Not conducted; too little time remained.

Greensboro Sectional – May 11 -13, 2023, Thurs. – Sat. at Bur-Mill Clubhouse

- Tournament Chairs: Dixie & Debbie M. Budget is prepared. We will need about 39 tables per session each day to break even. Expect that we might be a bit lower than this, so could have a small loss.
- Partnership Chair: Rich
- Note: Sunday is Mother's Day, so our tournament runs Thursday – Saturday.
- Bur-mill clubhouse is reserved.
- Comfort Inn – have contract with them (\$99 per night)
- Sanction obtained.
- Flyer – is prepared.

Board Discussion and Inputs: What needs to be done for tournament? By whom/when?

- Pianola email announcing: ASAP – by Rich, to wide radius in District
- Meals:
 - Thurs. – Hotdogs – Melissa will order
 - Fri. – Pizza
 - Sat. – grilled chicken, salad and ice cream bar
- Wine & Cheese reception – Fri. evening. Players Club Members free + non-members can pay for their drinks.
- COVID vaccine checkin: Chris and Robert. Agreed we can do marker on wrist, rather than wrist bands for proof. Note: after May 15, ACBL will not be requiring vaccine proof at its tournaments.
- We will rent the Banquet room and Oak room; NOT the Lake Room. Agreed that the extra overhead LED lights are NOT needed for the Oak room. May need a few extension cords for pole lights and coffee pots.
- Drinks: Dianne is arranging. Note: there are a lot of 2 liter bottles available already, in Lewis Center closet.
- Tables: about 40 needed. Rich/Peter to transport from GSO churches.
- Setup: on Wed., May 10 starting around 1:00 pm.
- Teardown: after final event Sat., May 13. All who can stay and help do this + transport items, please do so (Let Debbie/Dixie know).
- Flyers: Rich – will print some and take to games in GSO week of April 17-21. Will email the flyer to the Directors in our Unit, and ask that they start announcing and encouraging players to attend!
- Dixie: to print additional flyers, for Fran to distribute at larger tournaments upcoming, and to give to Directors in future weeks.

- Personal Emails: in next 2 weeks, to your players:
 - Peter: to GSO players
 - Cindy: to WS players
 - Rich: to GCC players
 - Rick Morgan/Paul F.: to Asheboro / HP players
 - Myrnie McLaughlin: to Salisbury players
 - Skip: to Danville players
 - Joanne M.: to Burlington players
 - Martha: knows various contacts in other cities (work w/ Rich) – Roanoke, Charlotte, Granite Falls, NC
- Call-a-thon: Debbie M. to have at her home, Thurs. April 27 starting at 4:30 pm.
 - Debbie M. to produce lists with names, phones, emails
 - Also: can distribute some lists to people willing to call, but from their own place / other times.
 - Debbie M./ Rich: prepare a script for people to use when calling. Benefits of GSO tournament, Partnership Chair info, etc.

-WS Sectional – August 11-13, 2023. WS Fairgrounds [to be updated]

- Tournament chair: Cam Matthews. Cindy agreed to mentor her in this role.
- Partnership chair: Susan Wesley.
- WS Fairgrounds is reserved, and contract obtained.
- Best Western Hotel: **Cindy** obtained block of rooms + a rate.
- Sanction obtained 2308333.
- Flyer – is prepared. **Action:** Rich to send draft flyer to Cam/Cindy, ask if any edits needed.

-Piedmont Fall Sectional – October 20-22, 2023 Bur-Mill [to be updated]

- Tournament Chair: Rich
- Partnership chair: Debbie M.
- Bur-Mill clubhouse reserved; contract signed
- Comfort Inn – have contract with them (\$139 per night. More than earlier tournaments, because of Furniture Market)
- Sanction obtained 2310340.

2024 TOURNAMENTS (Claudia)

Claudia – has put together a 2024 calendar, with some suggested dates for our tournaments + possible conflicts with Holidays / Regionals / Nationals.

Suggestion: investigate whether Salisbury would like to host a tournament in 2024? Maybe in place of our GSO Fall Sectional? Or the May Sectional? **Action: Rich/Ted** to contact Myrnie M., possibly Bill Wisdom, about this.

Action: Ted/Claudia: by May: check over this list. Are dates reasonable; do they conflict with anything in our calendars? Once OK – agreed we should obtain ACBL sanctions to lock in these dates for 2024.

FINANCIAL UPDATE (Dixie) –

		Profit & Loss	
		7/1-4/12/23	
Income:			
Non-Programs	\$ 3,221		
Program Service	<u>42,879</u>	\$46,100	
Expenses:			
Non-Programs	\$ 3,431		
Program Service	<u>32,887</u>	<u>36,318</u>	
Net Profit		9,782	

BALANCE SHEET
December 8, 2022

Current Assets:			
BB&T Checking	\$ 37,427		
A/R	2,622		
Cash \$2 bills	18		
Towne Bank CD	<u>10,201</u>	<u>50,167</u>	
TOTAL ASSETS		\$50,167	

Equity:			
Opening	\$ 40,386		
Net Profit	<u>9,782</u>	<u>\$ 50,167</u>	
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY		\$ 50,167	

UNIT GAME UPDATE (Rich)

- 2023 Schedule is recently updated (April 2023).
- The Dec. 2, 2023 game is tentatively in GSO. Still looking for a venue (Rich).
- We are having **0-500 Section** and an **Open Section** starting Jan. 7, 2023 and continuing each Unit Game. Please encourage our 0-500 MP players to come out and support this separate game, including our newer Supervised Play attendees.
- Special Games in 2023:
 - April 15: Mentor-Mentee Game (GSO)
 - June 24: The Longest Day Charity Game (WS) – Unit is Registered
 - Aug. 26: STaC Game (Silver points) – Unit is Registered
 - Oct. 14: Team Game: Jane Johnson Teams /8 is Enough Team Game (GSO)

- Nov. 4: Team Game: GNT Qualifying Game (GSO)
- Dec. 16: STaC Game and Holiday Party (WS) – Unit is Registered

Board previously agreed: to hire a custodian (if needed) to help with cleanup after the Holiday Party (once per year). About 1 hr. of their time.

WEBSITE MODIFICATIONS AND PIANOLA EMAILS (Judy, Rich)

- Claudia is now away January 4– April 27, 2023
- Judy Hellen (website): upgrades, new format for the website’s home page
- Rich – has been sending out Pianola emails. We likely will need to buy new “credits” in about April.

MENTOR-MENTEE SEASON (Rich)

- The Mentor-Mentee Game / Unit Game was on April 15, 2023 in GSO. Had 17.5 tables! Gave out a range of awards, prizes and free plays. Nice selection of food. A good conclusion to a successful season!
- M-M Coordinator for WS: Martha Meyer, assisted by Cindy Wright
- M-M Coordinator for GSO: Cecelia Ray, assisted by Rich Pepper
- One future idea: maybe have a Mentor program in the Fall, only for intermediate-level players?

LEARN BRIDGE IN A DAY (LBIAD) – AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES (Rich)

- District 7 and ACBL Education Foundation grant money: As OK’d by the Board, we are using grant money that remains (\$600 for WS, \$600 for GSO) for ongoing expenses related to growth & retention of the new players (Supervised Play rent, Free plays given)
- In addition, supporting the training of new Directors and new Teachers, by reimbursing them after they take ACBL Best Practices teacher training (\$125) or Director’s course (\$50).
- Receipts for all of these items: Submit to Rich. He tracks them in LBIAD budget, and sends to Dixie for payment. Still have some \$ remaining.

NEW BUSINESS?

Tim Stecker Award: for player with most Masterpoints in our Unit Games and tournaments.

Action: Dixie to check who won, and we will award this for 2022, in May.

MEETING ADJORNMENT Melissa moved the meeting be adjourned; Debbie E. seconded. Meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm.