



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION
HELD AT THE KETTERING PARK HOTEL, KETTERING
ON TUESDAY 14 JANUARY 2003**

Present:	DA Robson	Chairman
	PG Mason	Vice Chairman
	TJ Bradley	Hon Treasurer
	RC Amey	
	Ms AMC Hamilton	
	DR Harris	
	DG Martin	
	JK Morris	
	JD Neville	
	MG Oliver	
	Terry Collier	General Manager
	Karen Etchells	Administration Manager

1 Apologies

There were no apologies.

2 Minutes of the Meeting of 31 October 2002

2.1 Accuracy

The Minutes were **approved** as an accurate record of the meeting.

2.2 Matters Arising

2.2.1 Statutory Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2002 (item 2.2.1) – The General Manager reported that the Auditor would not be issuing a letter in connection with the accounts.

2.2.2 Legal and Financial Needs (item 4.4) - The Chairman reported that a visit to Legal and Financial Needs had taken place and provided the opportunity to see the Company and discuss the provision of services to EBU members. Discussion took place regarding the merit of entering into an agreement with such an organisation. There would be no income to the EBU and all members could benefit from free legal advice. The benefit to Legal and Financial Needs would be access to the members database for mailings, the initial promotion being through *English Bridge*. They would wish to promote their services at events and through articles in *English Bridge*, newsletters and leaflets. It was confirmed that there would be no clause in the agreement relating to the amount of space which would be allocated in *English Bridge*, this would be negotiable.

It was **agreed** that the matter be taken forward, but that the Board should have the opportunity to consider any draft contract that is negotiated.

2.2.3 Bye Laws and Appointment of Legal Services (item 9)

The Chairman reported that he had exchanged correspondence and met with the Honorary Solicitor, who remained of the view that the two matters he has raised require further examination – the EBU as a single entity and the disciplinary process.

At the previous meeting Mr Harris had agreed to look into taking on the role of Honorary Solicitor. However, in the light of a potential conflict of interest by being on the Board, he thought it best not to proceed with this proposal.

Mr Amey suggested considering the use of Mr Aspinall (member and bridge player) who may be interested in providing Honorary Solicitor services. It was **agreed** Mr Aspinall be contacted prior to the next meeting.

It was **agreed** that separate quotes from individual solicitors should be obtained along with suggested ways of dealing with both matters and reported to the next meeting.

3 Financial Matters

3.1 Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that the Accounts Department had been extremely busy in the previous weeks providing urgent information relating to bank reconciliation and computer records. He confirmed that the Accounts Manager had succeeded in bringing information up-to-date and improving housekeeping and general accounting operations. The Treasurer and General Manager are aware of the difficulties, which have caused the usual financial information to be behind schedule.

The Treasurer provided an overview of his report and pointed out that attention should be paid to the overspend trend on overheads. The Treasurer's report on the key income and expenditure figures for the 7 months ended 31 October 2002 was **accepted**.

3.2 Budget 2003/04

The Treasurer provided some background information and reminded the Board that the Five Year Plan projected a surplus of £8K for 2003/04.

There was a large increase in the overheads budget, and it was generally accepted that this was due to the allocation of staff across the budget heads. Mr Neville suggested and it was **agreed**, that the salaries figure within overheads needed to be checked further.

Mr Neville commented that the Competitions budget was extremely conservative and recommended that the Tournament Manager be pressed again to look at the figures presented.

Mr Morris queried the provision of finance for promotional activities. It was confirmed that there is no specific provision for celebrity events and that these should, if organised, be self supporting. However, it was acknowledged that the organisation of such events would involve Aylesbury staff time, particularly the development officers.

Mr Martin commented that there was no provision for software development in the budget figures and the Treasurer confirmed that costs associated with MIAMI had been excluded. The Board may wish to look at this again in future, depending upon progress with further stages of MIAMI.

Following the Education Sub Committee held yesterday, Mr Oliver requested a budget relating to squad development, to provide a sports psychologist to train the trainer. It

was **agreed** to include the sum of £2.5K in the budget and that the General Manager would explore the most effective way of introducing this service.

4 General Manager's Report

The General Manager's report was noted.

It was **agreed** to bring Item 10 forward to enable Mr Neville to leave the meeting at 5pm.

10 Bridge Great Britain Matters

Mr Neville advised the Board that we need to think about the structure of BGB from April 2004. He went on to outline a suggested approach which would result in a new 3 year agreement being introduced. Following lengthy discussion it was **agreed** that Mr Neville's suggested approach should be placed before the next meeting of BGB.

Secretary's note: Details regarding this approach have been noted separately.

Mr Mason asked for the profit and loss accounts for BGB and Mr Neville **agreed** to have these available at the next meeting.

5 Development Consultation (Update)

The General Manager reported that the paper presented to Council last week had been agreed. The mechanics of how to carry out the review was a matter for the Board to consider. The General Manager suggested setting up project groups to discuss each of the development topics agreed at Council. These were **agreed** as follows:

Youth Development and Teaching:

Malcolm Oliver and Roger Amey - supported by Bridge for All Manager and Education Manager

Master Points, Licensing and Events:

Philip Mason and John Neville and David Martin - supported by Tournament Manager and John Pain

Membership Advantages, Communication and Partnerships:

Alaine Hamilton and Jeff Morris - supported by General Manager

Organisation, Bye Laws and Structure

Denis Robson, Tom Bradley and David Harris - supported by Tournaments Secretary

The General Manager suggested a two day planning session and it was **agreed** that this should be on the 19/20 March, coinciding with the Board meeting. It was subsequently **agreed** that the Board meeting should be moved to the 20 March and that the General Manager would organise a suitable location.

A quality Development Plan position statement will be inserted in the April issue of *English Bridge*, stating where we have gone and what we are now doing – the results from the roadshows.

6 National Bridge Centre

The General Manager introduced his paper for consideration. Discussion took place regarding the strategy and objectives, location and benefits of having a national bridge centre. It was generally agreed that a national bridge centre should be pursued, and

that further in depth research needed to be carried out. The General Manager **agreed** to make enquiries regarding the availability of grants.

It was also **agreed** to meet with the West Midlands BC at an appropriate time to investigate how we might work together.

7 **Congress Security**

Correspondence had been received from a tournament player expressing concern relating to terrorist attacks on concentrated groups of people. The Tournament Manager prepared a paper for the Board's consideration. The General Manager advised that this was a matter to be taken seriously, as the EBU events were a 'soft' target. Mr Neville suggested that competitors should wear name badges at all times at an event.

The Metropolitan Police Team at the Commonwealth Nations Bridge Tournament have offered to assist with possible security measures and it was **agreed** that the General Manager would contact them and the hotel chains used by the EBU, for further advice.

8 **Selection Committee – Discussion regarding professionalism and squad development**

The general view of the Board in regard to professionalism was that conditions of contest were needed to address some of the matters raised.

Mr Bradley was of the opinion that no paid professional should be in the position of a selector. Mr Neville commented that if no sponsored players were elected the Committee would be difficult to populate. Mr Martin felt that there were two issues, the selector situation and playing in trials. Conditions of contest would obviously provide some solutions.

Regarding the introduction of squad development it was **agreed** that this should be investigated but that there was no budget allocation at present.

Mr Neville and Ms Hamilton left the meeting.

9 **Committee Reports**

9.1 **Computer Working Party – 6 December 2002 and 8 January 2003**

Mr Martin provided an in depth overview of the minutes of 6 December 2002 and a verbal report from the meeting held on 8 January 2003.

MIAMI - It was acknowledged that much work had been achieved during December and January to resolve the issues raised regarding reconciliation of the MIAMI Phase 1 and Sage accounting systems including full documentation. It was **agreed** that further development of MIAMI should be deferred to mid-2003 when a clearer picture of what was needed would be available.

Computer Administration and Scoring System (CASS) – The General Manager reported that there was a major marketing opportunity to be captured from the distribution of CASS. The General Manager would work with Mr Morris and Ms Hamilton to compose the promotion letter, which would be sent to all affiliated clubs, together with the program CD. The system will also be available to download from the website. In addition CASS will also be promoted in *English Bridge*, newsletters and on the website.

9.2 Editorial Board – 4 December 2002

The General Manager presented the minutes in the absence of Ms Hamilton. Mr Morris queried the 48 page rather than 56 page size of *English Bridge* and it was **agreed** that the General Manager would assist Blue 2 in increasing advertising and through this approach increase the size of the magazine.

9.3 Education Sub-Committee – 13 January 2003

Mr Oliver reported from the Education Sub-Committee meeting of 13 January 2003 that it had been agreed that junior team selection should remain with the Youth Working Party with a member of the Selection Committee invited to attend and be part of that process. It was **agreed** that Council be invited to elect the Chairman of the Youth Working Party, who would be authorised to select its members. The Selection Committee would lose responsibility for youth selection.

10 BGB Matters – covered earlier in meeting.

11 EBL and WBF Matters

The Chairman reported that the President of the WBF had visited Aylesbury in December, he had met staff and listened to a number of presentations. He was interested in and supported our development work, particularly in the youth area.

12 Constitutional Changes

In the light of the forthcoming Bye Laws review it was suggested that all County Bridge Association constitutions be reviewed to agree with any changes.

13 Any Other Business

13.1 Mr Morris queried how the EBU can increase the number of members paying by Direct Debit and that we should be looking at incentives. The General Manager confirmed that this would be investigated as part of the Development Plan process.

13.2 Mr Martin brought a confidentiality matter to the Board's attention in that following a recent disciplinary appeal the accused queried that it was common knowledge at Aylesbury that staff knew what sentence had been passed before he did. It was **agreed** that this situation should not arise and the matter should be considered at the next Laws and Ethics Committee meeting and the General Manager should take this up with staff at Aylesbury.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 20 March 2003 at 12.30pm
Venue to be advised