



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
HELD IN THE FOUNTAIN ROOM, THE IMPERIAL HOTEL,
RUSSELL SQUARE, LONDON, ON THURSDAY 20th JANUARY 2010.**

Present:	Sally Bugden	(Chairman)
	Andrew Petrie	(Vice-Chairman)
	Michael Hill	(Treasurer)
	Jeremy Dhondy	
	Graham Jepson	
	Jeff Morris	
	Alan Nelson	
	Malcolm Oliver	
	Martin Pool	
	Barry Capal	(General Manager)
	Karen Durrell	(Minute taker)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were noted for John Carter.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 22nd OCTOBER 2009

2.1 Accuracy

2.21 First sentence was amended with “Jeremy Dhondy asked for clarification on the procedure for a university team to apply to the championships to ensure the problem is resolved for the future.”

Subject to these changes the minutes were signed as a true record of this meeting.

2.2 Matters Arising

2.2.1 1st European University Championship

Jeff Morris informed the Board that BUCS is currently performing a review of its sporting structure. When review is complete they will be ready to meet with the EBU to discuss bridge at universities.

2.2.2 Universal Membership

Jeff Morris raised a concern that universities might not be able to play once a week during term time when examinations are taking place. The Board agreed that if a university felt that they could not meet the requirements that they should write to the EBU for guidance.

2.2.3 *Malta Bridge Association*

Jeremy Dhondy reported that he had spoken with Mario Dix. The Malta Bridge Association was not requesting financial support but would ask for advice in areas such as Laws & Ethics matters, recommendations for TD's and assistance with training.

2.2.4 *Letter to Hillary Benn, Environment Secretary*

A letter has been sent to Hilary Benn, regarding the Water Rate Bill, a summary for the EBU website & Club Focus was completed on the 1st October.

2.3 **Update on NGS**

Apologies had been received from John Carter. The project is still progressing but, understandably, at a reduced pace due to John's illness.

2.4 **Review of action list**

All the items on the action list have been reviewed and are reported in these minutes.

2.4.1 *Full Tilt Poker Advertisement*

The General Manager reported that this was progressing, the contract was being reviewed.

2.4.2 *Disciplinary Panel*

On hold until such time as the panel member stands down.

2.4.3 *Policy for selling merchandise at our tournaments*

The General Manager is to draft a policy for stall holders at EBU events.

3 **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

3.1 **Five Year Plan and Cash Flow mailing responses**

The Treasurer reported that the Five Year Plan was sent out to the shareholders on the 4th January; we have had only four queries back from the counties so far. We will be responding to the all queries in one document that will be sent to all shareholders towards the end of February so it is current for the March Shareholders meeting.

3.2 **Treasurers Report**

The Treasurer informed the Board that in November there was a shortfall against the budget but there were potential savings to come and we should know more about the likely impact after the re-forecasts which are scheduled for the end of the month.

3.3 **Communications with the Shareholders**

The Chairman reported that she will be creating central email addresses to deal with specific issues and projects. This has been done to minimise the time spent answering individual emails, the queries will now be answered all at once in a single response document. The Chairman was extremely worried about the heavy level of work visited on volunteers on the Board and felt that unless certain measures are taken there will be little or no take up from potential candidates in the future.

4 UNIVERSAL MEMBERSHIP

4.1 Club affiliation update

The latest figures are 545 positive club responses, 202 negative responses and 93 clubs have not replied. This equates to 53,556 members of clubs - there will be duplication of EBU members in these figures - 17,847 sessions, 433,255 tables which is 1.73 million player sessions. The Chairman will be writing to both affiliated and non affiliated clubs by the end of the month updating them on the progress of implementation of universal membership and encouraging non affiliating clubs to rejoin.

4.2 Implementation of IT systems and data collection

The General Manager reported that the data collection has started; over 100 clubs have sent their files in, which is a great response. Other aspects of the software are on target for 1 April 2010.

The number of anonymous members will be higher than we first thought.

Non affiliated clubs will be removed from the EBU website for the 1st April 2010 but we will keep in touch with disaffiliated clubs. Parts of the EBU website will become members only access.

4.3 Exemption from P2P session

The Board agreed that clubs can apply for one further event over and above those items that are already exempted from Pay to Play. A policy on charitable giving will also be composed.

5 MASTER POINT AND LICENSING FROM APRIL 2010

The Vice Chairman presented the Board with the Master Point and Licensing Handbook with corresponding documents for discussion, pointing out key changes or area for decisions to be made.

5.1 Proposed preface to Handbook and summary documents

The Vice Chairman brought the Board's attention to the Preface asking them to note that the handbook will only be available on line; this will enable the EBU to update any necessary changes with no additional cost. There will be a checklist created of changes/updates to be managed by Aylesbury, similar to the system used for the Orange Book. Copies will be available from Aylesbury at a small charge for printing and postage or free if downloaded. The summary of main changes was agreed subject to minor amendments. The summary of main provisions relating to clubs was also agreed with minor amendments. The summary of main provisions relating to counties was agreed, with one main change, the Board voted on the number of county simultaneous pairs events open to affiliated clubs. The Board agreed it should be two.

5.2 County implementation issues

A few counties may find it difficult to comply fully with the new regulations immediately, for historical reasons. In such cases the Board requests that the Counties advise the EBU in writing of the details before 1 September 2010 and work towards full adherence as quickly as is possible.

5.3 Proposed licence fees amended

An initial proposal for 2010/11 Licence Fees was discussed. Additional work was identified and this issue would be finalized at the March Board meeting.

Licence fees from April 2010

Events run by an affiliated club / county – charges per table per session		
1 Beginner/Improver events – no results submitted	-	£0.60
2 Swiss Events	£1.75	£1.75
3 Charity Swiss Events	£1.60	£1.60
4 Non-Swiss Events	£0.90	£1.75
5 County Green-Pointed Events	£7.25	£7.50
Multi-Venue (Simultaneous) Events – charges per venue		
6 Charity – affiliated club		£1.60
7 Non-charity – affiliated club		£4.70
8 BGB Sim Pairs - non-affiliated club		See below
Events run by commercial organisations – charges per table per session		
9 (e.g. Bridge Holidays)	£3.45	£3.45
Leagues (also County Knock-out events)		
Per team	-----	£5 per team of 4 £10 per team of 8

(8) There is a proposed additional charge of £1 per player per session at non-affiliated clubs, discussions continue with BGB to determine date of implementation.

5.4 Simultaneous Pairs

The Board discussed whether Pay-to play should operate for County Charity Simultaneous Pairs the Board agreed that it should, only the annual ECATS charity event for Children in Need will be exempt.

Apart from the ECATS Children in Need event and the BGB Simultaneous Pairs, only EBU affiliated clubs will be able to enter any Simultaneous Pairs event organised by the EBU or licensed by the EBU. The BGB Simultaneous Pairs will be subject to the surcharge of a £1.00 per person, where heats of this event are held at non-affiliated clubs.

5.5 SBU and WBU Gold Points and reciprocity

The Board discussed the reciprocal value of Gold Points earned at SBU and WBU events as they believe it to be too high currently. The Board asked Malcolm Oliver, current Chairman of BGB, to raise this issue at the next BGB annual meeting in April.

5.6 Reward and Recognition Framework

The new reward and recognition framework for the Master Point Scheme was agreed by the Board.

The Chairman thanked Andrew Petrie for all his hard work and dedication in updating the Master Points and Licensing Handbook.

6 CHARITY REGISTRATION

The EBU Chairman, Vice Chairman and General Manager met with the Charity Commission on the 7 December 2009 along with Mary Groom our charity expert. As far as those present at that meeting were aware, no other sporting governing body has tried to register before with the Charity Commission, and as such the EBU is trail blazing. Whilst the Charity Commission are interested in what we want to do, they cannot get back to us until February to say whether we should put in an application. Mary Groom stated that the documented information that EBU Chairman and Vice Chairman provided saved the EBU thousands of pounds.

7 GOVERNANCE CHANGES

The EBU Chairman and Vice Chairman reported on their research on governance in similar membership organisations to the EBU. As well as reading through corporate governance literature provided by the Charity Commission and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, several membership organisations structures were reviewed including:

The National Trust

Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales

England Netball

Badminton England

Confederation of Co-operative Housing

English Chess Federation

The Board discussed the proposed governance changes and key issues. There was discussion about retaining the status quo, and publicising more widely the ability for each member of each county to attend the AGM. One member one vote had been researched and reviewed and after very careful consideration had been deemed to be too expensive and too cumbersome when other more accessible methods of members becoming involved in corporate governance are available. An option, based on the England Netball voting process, is for the county voting system to be aligned with a club voting system. The scale to be apportioned but basically every club would have one vote on behalf of all its members.

The practicalities of the system would need to be reviewed in detail but ideas put forward involved holding the AGM at one of our major tournaments such as Brighton which would provide the appropriate space for a larger AGM at little extra cost, along with possible reasons for more voting members to be present, perhaps taking part in a special tournament. The Board agreed that it would make this recommendation and discuss this at the County Chairmen's meeting and would then put it on the Agenda for the Shareholders meeting in March.

Discussion also took place on the length of time any individual can serve as an Officer of the Association. It was decided that this should be proposed as 6 years or 6 years out of any 10.

There is also a suggestion in the new corporate governance recommendations that Bye Law changes should move to the Board's responsibility although any change must be clearly publicised and can be challenged at a General Meeting through the process of a member proposed resolution i.e. enough notice of any changes would be given to EBU constituent members to enable representatives to challenge the bye law, if necessary, by submitting the Membership Proposed Resolution with the appropriate support.

If this change is to be made it would require a change to the Articles with a 75% vote.

8 COUNTY CHAIRMEN'S MEETING

The County Chairmen's meeting is to be held on the 16th February 2010 at the Imperial Hotel in the Tudor room. The agenda is being sent to the County Chairmen by the end of January. EBU to put on website which counties have informed us that they are attending. Any questions raised by the County Chairman are to be recorded centrally and answered at the meeting.

The agenda will deal with charity registration, voting structures and corporate governance, education, the master point and licensing handbook.

9 BRIDGE GREAT BRITAIN

9.1 Response from Liz McGowan

The EBU Chairman wrote to the BGB Chairman informing him that the EBU propose to charge unaffiliated clubs in England a per person, per session surcharge payable to the EBU if they wish to take part in the BGB Sim Pairs. This information was circulated to the rest of the BGB members and Anna Gudge of Ecats. Liz McGowan SBU representative for BGB matters questioned the validity of the levy. The EBU Chairman is to write to Liz McGowan again.

10 EDUCATION

10.1 New Committee

It has been decided to set up a working group for a year to undertake research and consultation at various levels to align operational needs with the five year plan. This group will consist of Suzanne Gill, June Booty, John Pain and Sally Bugden and their first meeting will be held in March.

10.1.1 MiniBridge Update

The MiniBridge campaign is going well. David Adelman and Cindy Cole, a primary school teacher from Tunbridge Wells, have written a paper aligning the current mathematical curriculum links to elements of MiniBridge. This paper was presented to the All Party Parliamentary Group meeting earlier in the week by Cindy Cole and it is hoped that this will lead to more publicity for the project.

11 REDUCED MEETING SCHEDULES

A proposed reduced schedule of EBU meeting was produced taking in to account the business the various committees need to complete:

Subject to ratification at the AGM in 2010 - Shareholders meeting reduced to 2, phased in from the beginning of 2010 as follows: March 2010, July 2010, October 2010, April 2011, October 2011, April 2012, October 2012 etc. This will be raised for discussion at the Shareholders meeting in July 2010.

The Board meetings reduced to 5 times per annum in October, January, March, June and September.

Business Planning Team will meet prior to each Board meeting to review business for the Board and make reports and recommendations to the Board.

The Tournament Committee will continue to meet 3 times a year, it is difficult to reduce number of meetings due to the extensive tournament program and the need to meet changing segments of our market.

Selection committee will meet 3 times a year plus 1 extra meeting for junior squad managers. There is a possibility for an extra meeting per annum when international events timing dictate.

Laws and Ethics Committee will meet 3 times a year, to discuss disciplinary matters, interpretations of regulations, allowed systems and provide guidance for Tournament Directors. Disciplinary matters will require consultation and this may result in extra meetings. People do not offend to timetabled meetings!

Club Committee to meet 2 times a year, communicating with this group is extremely important.

Editorial/Communications Board will meet 6 times year at Aylesbury after each issue. It will also monitor and review all other electronic newsletters and the website.

Education Committee will meet 3 times a year to discuss the elements of the strategy and determine whether they are being successfully implemented.

County Chairmen's meeting to be scheduled when necessary most probably once every 2 years.

There are a number of working groups which will need to meet to manage and implement certain projects. These are: the National Grading Scheme which requires a maximum of 3 meetings per annum up till the end of 2010, Charity Registration Working Group a maximum of 4 per annum during 2010.

These proposals were agreed by the Board.

12 BRIDGE SHOP

Malcolm Oliver reported that the Bridge Shop's original purpose was to generate additional revenue and provide a benchmark for traditional suppliers. Since those days the Shop has grown into a major part of the EBU activities but has yet to reach full potential, which is not a criticism of the current staff. The General Manager informed the Board that the online ordering facility was being worked on but due to implementation of Universal Membership has taken a secondary role. Malcolm Oliver is to start a detailed research and review of the Shop with assistance from Aylesbury.

13 CONSTITUTIONS

The Cumbria, Lancashire, Surrey, Wiltshire and Northampton county constitutions were approved by the Board subject to minor changes. Berks and Bucks county constitution was not approved and Martin Pool was asked to liaise further with the county. The Board thanked Martin Pool for all his work with the constitutions.

14 SELECTION COMMITTEE

14.1 Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference were approved by the Board.

14.2 Integration of youth international selection

Malcolm Oliver to arrange meeting with Squad managers, Heather Dhondy and Paul Hackett before the end of the financial year.

14.3 Research on other countries' formation of selection committees

The report from Max Bavin showed a wide diversity of methods used; almost everyone seems to have a different way of doing things. We received replies from 22 Federations out of 123. This does not include France, Spain or Poland, whom we are going to ask again.

The five main selection methods that are in use:-

- i) Trials results only i.e. 'winner takes all' so no selection process at all e.g. United States
- ii) The Board of Directors are also the selection committee e.g. Germany
- iii) There is a separate selection committee appointed by the Board (or, at least, with its Chairman being appointed by the Board) e.g. Japan
- iv) There is an elected selection committee e.g. Israel
- v) There is a single individual appointed by the Board for this purpose, often referred to as the team 'coach' or 'squad manager' [there may be different coaches/managers for different teams e.g. Open, Women] e.g. Netherlands

Except in case (i) ['winner takes all'], there may be trials, there may be a squad system in operation, or there may be nothing at all, but in any case there would eventually be a subjective selection decision to be made.

For the most part, methods (i) and (v) [pure trials or coach] seem to be free of any potential conflict of interest (i.e. which can arise when a prospective player is also involved in the selection process), whilst the other methods are not (although, obviously, one could devise rules, if one wanted to, which could avoid this).

The Board favoured a part selected part elected method for the future, to be considered under governance changes. The Chairman is to report back to the Enquiry Committee and the Selection Committee.

The issue to be discussed further at the Board meeting at Stubbs in June.

14.4 Fundraising Initiative

A fund raising support group structure is being project managed by Sue Maxwell who will be liaising with the Selection Committee. A trust is to be set up to ring fence this funding.

15 TOURNAMENTS

The Vice-Chairman reported to the Board that more events have been created for the club player. The first one is going to be a stratified Sims Pairs week beginning 7th March 2011 and the second will be to introduce Improver Weekends. Between 2004 - 2010 we lost 20% (800 tables) entries to our competitions; we must bring in new events.

Stratification is seen as a very effective way of allowing various different strength pairs to compete in, and enjoy a single field event. The club committee have requested that this format be considered for implementation, allowing clubs to run stratified events. The club's scoring software must be able to score and award the Master Points for a stratified pair's competition and the General Manager has set up a meeting with Stephen Bligh to adapt his scoring software for affiliated clubs only.

16 CLUB COMMITTEE REGIONALISATION PROPOSAL

The Board approved the proposal and asked Graham Jepson to present it at the Chairmen's Meeting on the 16th February 2010.

17 EBU OFFICES

Apart from the IT update reported earlier in the minutes, there was nothing else to report.

18 FULL TILT UPDATE

Revised agreement has now been done, currently with Jack Mizel.

19 REPORTS ON MEETINGS

19.1 Editorial Board Meeting 8th December 2009

The Editorial Board are investigating management of their advertising sales and looking at the best method of managing printer liaison. These new methods will be in place for the August issue.

19.2 Selection Committee

19.2.1 18th November 2009

In answer to a question, the treasurer explained that the published 5-year plan reflected the amount of money that the Board was prepared to make available for funding international teams/events each year. There was a separate document, produced annually, which identified the international events and the likely total costs. This would enable the selection committee to identify both the scope for reducing costs and the size of any shortfall in funds which they would need to meet from other sources.

19.2.2 5th January 2010

With the absence of minutes the Chairman informed the Board that, although she was not able to stay until the end of the meeting, as far as she was aware the Selection Committee selected the Open and Women Teams for the European, discussed the Seniors play off for the European and at the beginning of the meeting Sue Maxwell presented a discussion paper "Bridge England Supporters Trust (BEST)".

The Board wished Ross Harper a speedy recovery.

20 EBL AND WBF MATTERS

The EBU Chairman to attend the meeting being held on the 27th June at Ostend, Belgium during the 50th European Team Championships.

21 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

21.1 TD Development Group

The Board approved the Terms of Reference of the TDDG. The Treasurer confirmed the budget to be £6,400, Martin Pool, the Chairman of TDDG, to be in charge of budget.

Gordon Rainsford along with Max Bavin will be attending the European TD training course in Italy. If any other TD's wish to attend they will have to be self funded.

Two trainees are to be interviewed next week and further interview are to be organised to be held at the Ranked Masters and Easter Festival weekends.

21.2 Compliance with Universal Membership for Clubs Which Split

The Chairman circulated a paper specifying what a bridge club needs to do to comply with Universal Membership if it wishes to split in two. The document is to be given to any club that is considering taking this course of action.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

24 March 2010, 12.00 Noon, Colson Room, CCPR