



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE EBU LIMITED  
AT BAKER TILLY, 2 BLOOMSBURY STREET, LONDON WC1B 3ST  
ON THURSDAY 19<sup>th</sup> JANUARY COMMENCING AT 11.30AM**

<b>Present:</b>	Sally Bugden	(Chairman)
	Andrew Petrie	(Vice-Chairman)
	Michael Hill	(Treasurer)
	Jerry Cope	
	Heather Dhondy	
	Jeremy Dhondy	
	Val Gibson	
	Graham Jepson	(Note Taker)
	Malcolm Oliver	
	Ian Payn	
	Barry Capal	(General Manager)

The Chairman opened the meeting by:

Welcoming elected Board member Val Gibson to her first meeting.

Congratulating the English Women's' Team on winning Silver in the World Mind Sports Games held in December 2011 in Beijing. She also congratulated Nicola Smith who won the Silver medal in the Individual competition at the same event.

Thanked Jeremy Dhondy for taking the minutes of the previous meeting.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

None

**2. Minutes of the Last Meeting:**

Were accepted as a true record

***Matters arising:***

***Strategy***

JC produced some headlines on strategy each of which had been submitted by at least two directors of the Board. These will be expanded on further and will be discussed in full at Board Strategy meeting 27 June 2012.

***Tournament Directors Development Group***

HD informed the Board that the Tournament Directors Development Group has discussed the 'Code of Conduct' guidelines for Tournament Directors' accreditation and that she would

submit these to the Board after they have been finalised at the group's next meeting in February.

### ***Mind Sports Event 18<sup>th</sup> November 2011***

JD had attended the Mind Sports Event at London Eye on 18<sup>th</sup> November although there was little publicity for the event, except in the Poker press and the promised announcement of the venue and dates for the Mind Sports Olympics in 2012 didn't happen.

### ***County Constitutions***

SB reported that she had circulated counties with the new disciplinary additions for their constitutions in a letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> December 2011. She also took that opportunity to request updated constitutions from those counties who had not submitted a revised constitution since the advent of Universal Membership. She reminded those present that the counties were informed in January 2009 about the need to adapt their constitutions to take account of the new policy. JD suggested that we use the website listing of counties with approved constitutions to highlight those counties which have not undertaken this task.

#### **Action BC**

SB also informed the counties that a new model club constitution would be publicised to all clubs at the beginning of 2012, encompassing the new disciplinary process. The new National Club Committee will be undertaking this communication

#### **Action VG**

AP stated that with the advent of possible charity registration it was imperative that county constitutions are up-to-date

### ***Bridge Great Britain***

JD reported that 2 tenders to run the Gold Cup had been received by the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011. A decision on the successful tender will be taken at the BGB Annual Meeting in April 2012.

Scotland may rejoin the Portland Mixed Pairs from 2013.

### ***LMBA Proposals***

The Chairman reported she had written to Ian Payn who had dealt with the matter locally.

### **3. Financial Matters:**

The Treasurer reported that at the end of November the position was approximately £57K ahead of budget.

MH thanked both Aylesbury and Editorial Board on the actions they had taken to reduce the projected deficits.

Another aspect which has helped the situation is that there have been 56,000 more player sessions in the first 9 months of 2011/12 than in the same period last year. Part of this may be due to the milder winter.

### **3.1 Budgets**

There was a discussion on the timings of the budgeting process each year.

SB suggested slightly earlier setting of budgets to assist those who have to make commitments in the following financial year. This had been highlighted at the previous day's Selection Committee meeting.

JC stated it may be worth revisiting budgeting and its use in the projections for the organisation. SB requested that this be done as part of our strategy meeting in June.

The Selection Committee had, for timing reasons not spent the £4k budget for squad training in the current year and the Board voted to allow this to be added to next year's Selection Budget in the light of an exceptionally large international programme in 2012/2013.

### **3.2 T.D.Fees/Charges**

BC will address these and submit to the officers.

### **4. Aylesbury Offices**

The streamlining of the EBU central administration means that it may be appropriate to change our office accommodation. The Board decided to *investigate* the sale of the Aylesbury office and a move nearby to premises run by a charitable foundation for not for profit organisations and registered charities which could result in reduced running costs for the EBU. The staff would be informed of the investigation as soon as possible – the location allowing us to capitalise on the experience and knowledge of our existing staff.

### **5. Charity Registration**

Caroline Jones is our 'agent' at the Charity Commission aiding our application. Jim Clifford at Baker Tilly has already helped us a great deal on a pro bono basis. The Board agreed to hold a special meeting on February 20 to discuss this topic. AP will also organise a workshop on tax and financial aspects of the project.

SB thanked AP for his continued hard work on this subject.

### **6. BBO Approach to EBU for Online Events**

SB was thanked for her paper on the matter which dealt with BBO's regulatory framework and the experience of other national bridge organisations that have been involved with online competition on BBO. The Board thought it was an exciting new service to offer the membership and BC was asked to set up a small group to determine the investment required in the following two options:

1. Own the games ourselves:

- \$1 per person charged for entry by BBO with \$0.70 coming to the EBU.
- Allow anybody to play to encourage individuals to earn points
- Directed by one of our directors – this will require identifying and paying these TDs.
- Promotion of the service

- No kibitzers

This option provides us with complete control.

2. Allow an online club to run the EBU games on our behalf. This would be the ACBL model and would involve us licensing these games and charging a per table fee, with all the other costs met by the online club.

#### **Action BC**

There is another option which could be set up very quickly which would allow EBU sanctioned robot games which involve an individual playing against three robots, all of which play Standard American. This is regarded as one of the purest forms of duplicate bridge as each individual playing in a robot game has the same chances against the opponents. However, according to the ACBL this robot game could put many players off in the first instance with the lack of human interaction thus creating a really technological experience and we should only run these games once we have established conventional online EBU games on BBO.

AP reported that he thought the Charity Commission would look favourably on a service which increased accessibility to the game.

#### **7. EBL/WBF**

The Mind Sports Olympics venue had still not been decided although there was a rumour that it would take place in Cardiff between the end of the Olympic Games and the start of the Paralympics games which would clash with the Brighton Congress. The rumoured dates being the 5-18 August 2012

Greece had withdrawn from holding the Europeans 2012 which will now be held in Dublin. The 2013 Open European Championship may be held in San Remo

#### **8. Letter from Warwickshire Re a Player**

SB had asked AP and MH to review the documentation re a player being asked to pay an extra subscription to a county to play in its events. A paper had been produced to analyse and make recommendations on the current situation. Within the model county constitution, approved by the Board, we had allowed counties to state the following to cover dual membership:

*“A member of the Association becomes a paid up member through payment of any Association Pay to Play county component when participating in events at an affiliated Duplicate Bridge Club, and/or through payment of an annual subscription for their Association membership category”.*

However, we did not foresee that a county would use this to charge an extra subscription to a member which it considered had not contributed enough in pay to play payments. Whilst counties are entitled to make their own decisions on how many sessions in affiliated clubs constitute “fully paid-up, there is clearly benefit in a common approach. To this end a policy document was produced. Warwickshire County Bridge Association would be informed of the situation and the policy document would be circulated to counties for guidance.

Leicestershire would also be advised that there had been a query over their practice and that although in line with the EBU and Leicestershire Constitutions, it may prove problematic if challenged.

#### **Action BC**

## **9. NCC Request for Increased Charity Sessions for Larger Clubs**

VG reported that the first National Club Committee meeting of the elected regional club representatives had taken place on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2011. She was delighted with the group which she thought would make a considerable contribution to the success and development of our clubs through consultation at national level. She thanked GJ and the previous committee for the work that they had done.

SB thanked VG for producing a document outlining a proposal to allow a sliding scale of charity sessions for clubs:

The Midlands Regional Club Committee proposed that a sliding scale be adopted based upon the number of club sessions played, as follows:

1. Up to 250 sessions per year, one exempt club session
2. From 251 to 300 sessions per year, two exempt club sessions
3. Above 300 sessions per year, three exempt club sessions

The NCC also asked that an alternative proposal be costed based on annual player sessions at a club;

1. Up to 10,000 player sessions a year, one exempt club session
2. From 10,001 to 20,000 player sessions a year, two exempt club sessions
3. Above 20,000 player sessions a year, three exempt club sessions.

The Board considered the issue and accepted the NCC's alternative proposal based on player sessions per year. It was stated that the situation would need to be reviewed annually and will need to be reconsidered if the EBU becomes a registered charity.

**Action VG to communicate to NCC.**

## **10. EBU Archives**

JD had produced a paper on the establishment of an EBU archive, setting out its objectives and purpose. The Board agreed that he should set up a small working committee which would determine some recommendations on a way forward including a budget and required resources.

## **11. General Managers Report**

### ***The National Grading Scheme***

The National Grading Scheme is ready to go live. BC reported that this data would be available in the same way the master point data is available. However it is being widely publicised that those who do not wish for their national grade to be made public should either tick the box in their private membership area which removes their grade from the public domain, or telephone Aylesbury to ask them to do so.

### ***The EBU Website***

Work is being carried out on the creation of the skeletal framework of the new website. It was agreed that the technical side of any development should be firmly in the hands of the IT department at Aylesbury. BC will inform the Board when the website will be available for user testing so that all those who have a stake in these matters, including Aylesbury, can consider the best way to carry this out.

### ***Blue Points***

A small alteration is required by the company responsible for our operating system, Enterprise, to ensure that Blue Points can be accommodated and this will have to be undertaken externally. There are just less than 12 months until Blue Points are launched.

### ***Simultaneous Pairs***

The in-house test went well with very productive input from the members who took part. Another sims test will take place on 27 February 2012 and we will go live in April 2012.

## **12. Sub-Committee Reports**

### ***12.1 Selection Committee Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> January 2012***

The European Open, Women and Seniors teams have been selected. The same teams would represent England in the Olympiad if it takes place in 2012.

The Conditions of Contest for the Premier League Division One players will reflect that all participants have to be eligible to play for England.

Conditions of Contest for all trials events will include that players may have their game shown on BBO.

HD also reported that the EBL had taken up the EBU's and NBB's request to petition the WBF to change the age requirements for the Under 20s in the Youth World Championships. However the EBL had been unsuccessful in securing a change in the eligibility.

### ***12.2 Tournament Committee Meeting 17<sup>th</sup> November 2011***

IP reported that outside mainly routine business he wanted to bring the Board's attention to the changes in the programme for Brighton this year. He will be confirming the detail and publicising this in English Bridge and Tournament Focus. He stated that if the Mind Sports are held in Cardiff in 2012 this will have a damaging effect on Brighton Congress entries

Master Point reciprocity – the SBU and WBU had agreed to meet to discuss this topic and Max Bavin was arranging the meeting to take place in Birmingham.

### ***12.3 Editorial Board 6<sup>th</sup> December 2011***

SB reported that the Editorial Board was doing it all it can to increase advertising income and reduce costs whilst producing an interesting magazine.

### ***12.4 Laws and Ethics Committee Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> January 2012***

At the recent meeting the details of the Mediation Service had been confirmed.

The WBF will be producing an updated Law Book circa 2017.

Frances Hinden was preparing a guide on the penalties available to be given when a player is in breach of the Best Behaviour at Bridge codes.

### **13. Any Other Business**

#### ***Date of September Board Meeting***

The date of the Board meeting is now Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

#### ***Corn Cairdis***

The Chairman reported that the Corn Cairdis was taking place in Ireland on 5/6 May 2012. Board members who had an interest in representing the Officials team should contact SB as soon as possible

#### ***Sussex County Contract Bridge Association Constitution***

BC reported that the Sussex County Contract Bridge Association had requested that the Board approve that they replace their current Disciplinary Schedule with the EBU Model Disciplinary Procedures verbatim apart from one change. The current Sussex Constitution Disciplinary Committee has an additional sanction to those in the EBU Model i.e. "the member shall repay the cost of repairing any physical damage caused by action of the member". The Board accepted this change.

#### ***Tom Bradley and Alec Salisbury Awards***

John Pain will contact SB with the nominees for the 2011 Tom Bradley and Alec Salisbury awards.