



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION
HELD AT THE SHIRE HOTEL, KETTERING PARK
ON WEDNESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2003**

Present:	Denis A Robson	Chairman
	Philip G Mason	Vice Chairman
	Tom J Bradley	Treasurer
	David R Harris	
	David G Martin	
	Jeff K Morris	
	John D Neville	
	Terry Collier	General Manager
	Michele Attard	Office Manager

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Alaine Hamilton and Roger Amey.

The Chairman requested that agenda items 2.2.2 and 12 be brought forward to the start of the meeting to allow any changes to be forwarded immediately to Aylesbury for amendment to Council AGM agenda papers which were due for distribution this same afternoon.

The Chairman stated that he was now holding regular, informal meetings with the Executive (Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and General Manager); and that these were proving to be highly successful. He also thanked all concerned for their efforts and support.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 2 JULY 2003

2.1 Accuracy

Amendment to 3.6 *Master Points*, first paragraph, as follows:

*“...and a letter sent to clubs and Counties advising them of the change and giving the reasons why this is being done, i.e. no increase since 1998. Mr Morris **agreed** to draft a suitable letter to clubs.”*

The Minutes were **approved** with the above amendment.

2.2 Matters Arising

2.2.1 Sponsor Event (2.2.3)

The Chairman reported that a dinner had been planned for 30 September at The Stafford, and invitations had been sent out to a select guest list. The objective is to produce ideas and events that sponsors could support.

2.2.2 *Constitutional Reform (7.0)*

The Vice Chairman reported that a number of meetings had been held with Hammonds. To progress matters, a report to Council recommending a change to the Bye Laws to give Council the power to dissolve was **approved** for distribution with the Council AGM agenda papers.

2.2.3 *Inland Revenue – Status of Tournament Directors (2.2.1)*

The General Manager reported that a response had been sent to the Inland Revenue, and we were now awaiting their reply.

2.2.4 *English Bridge (2.2.2)*

A schedule of profit had been received from Blue 2. The Treasurer confirmed this had been taken account of within the latest accounts.

2.2.5 *Membership Added Value (2.2.4)*

The General Manager advised that a meeting had been arranged with JLT to further progress the legal and financial services to members.

The partnerships with Baker Tilly, the Ambassador Theatre Group and ItsWine were successfully launched at the Brighton Congress. The General Manager reported that Baker Tilly were keen to discuss further sponsorship, in particular a national business-to-business competition.

2.2.6 *Charity Events (2.2.6)*

A meeting is being arranged with Kitty Teltscher to progress matters.

2.2.7 *Revised Five Year Plan (3.4)*

The Treasurer reported that there are now only 2 Friendly Internationals: Swedish and Irish, with budgets of £4,000 (over 2 years) and £1,500 p.a. respectively.

2.2.8 *On-Line Bridge Club – Report for Council (5)*

Mr Harris confirmed that he had responded to the Chairman by email on the subject of whether the complaints procedure that had been implemented had contravened the EBU Bye-Laws. However, the Chairman had not received Mr Harris' email; and Mr Harris advised he would re-send it.

The Chairman reported that he had received statements from Mr Martin and the General Manager, but, due to holiday commitments, had not had sufficient time to consolidate them. He would consolidate the statements, and email it to all directors for their comment, before issuing to Council.

2.2.9 *BGB Matters – Minutes of 29 April 2003 (10)*

The Chairman reported that a letter had been sent to Patrick Jourdain regarding the BGB funds, to which a reply had not yet been received. However, Mr Jourdain had approached the Chairman at the Brighton Congress with regards to the staging of a Seniors competition, which would operate on a similar vein to the Lady Milne. The Vice Chairman suggested that the matter could be raised at a meeting to be arranged with SBU and WBU in early October in Manchester.

3 FINANCIAL MATTERS

3.1 Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer offered his thanks to Brian Smith for the production of the August accounts.

He reported that the impact of the price increases could not be assessed at present. The Membership budget is looking good. The Competitions budget is doing well, with finalised competitions coming in on budget. The *English Bridge* budget figures include £5,500 profit for each of the 3 issues to date. Overheads are running behind budget due to an underspend on

various Development Plan activities and the work on the single entity. The Treasurer advised that this would not be the case for this particular budget by the end of the year due to forthcoming expenditure on the Development Plan.

The Treasurer advised that there was a large expenditure on meetings. The Chairman asked that if there was a serious overspend on meetings, then this should be reviewed, when the Treasurer felt it necessary.

The Treasurer's report on the key income and expenditure figures for the five months ended 31 August 2003 was **accepted**.

3.2 Accounts for Three Months ended 30 June 2003

The accounts were **accepted**.

3.3 Accounts for Five Months ending 31 August 2003

The accounts were **accepted**.

Mr Harris requested that agenda item 10 be brought forward to this point.

4 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The General Manager advised that the document tabled was that which would be used to launch the Development Plan at the October AGM; and presented the artwork designs. The internal working plan would be produced later and presented to the Board for approval before implementation.

The tabled document was **approved** for launch at Council.

5 ON-LINE BRIDGE CLUB

There was considerable discussion regarding the existing contract between the EBU and the International Online Bridge Club, and the recent changes within the organisation of the Club. It was **agreed** that the General Manager should terminate the current agreement with IOBC as soon as possible, and negotiate a new relationship with the Club. The Executive was delegated responsibility for approving the agreement, allowing this to be in place as soon as possible.

6 SELECTION COMMITTEE

6.1 Terms of Reference

The proposed Terms of Reference would need to be reviewed in light of the discussion regarding item 6.2 below.

6.2 Youth Selection

Concern was expressed about correspondence highlighting potential problems in respect to the conduct of the youth squads; inappropriate squad development; and the antagonism between the committee and members of the squad, which is having an impact on others.

Following considerable discussion on these issues, it was **agreed** that the Board had a responsibility to investigate fully the concerns raised; and that a recommendation be made to Council for the Board to investigate and form a suitable Committee to develop youth squads as stated in the previous Board minutes. Contrary to the minutes of 4th June 2003, the Board recommends to Council that this Committee be also responsible for youth selection.

7 IT PROJECTS

MIAMI

At the last meeting of the Board both the Auditor and General Manager expressed their concerns regarding the future of MIAMI, and it was agreed that we should explore the possibility of acquiring an “off the shelf” software solution. We have recently explored a number of possible solutions and feel that our requirements could be met, if we are prepared to change some of our working practices to meet the system rather than seeking to adapt the system to meet our current practices. Mr Martin reported that one of these systems was an impressive and genuine package that is worthy of further investigation. It was **agreed** that business practices within the EBU structure should be reviewed against the opportunities such packages would offer; and a report prepared for the Board by the end of the year.

CASS

The General Manager advised that, following a trial of CASS at Aylesbury, and Chris Barrable’s holidays, the launch of CASS had been postponed. Chris Barrable would be attending at Aylesbury on 24-25 September, and the system would be reviewed after that time. If the General Manager felt that progress could not be made, then the Executive have the authority to take all necessary action, including the cancellation of the project, after consideration by the Computer Working Party.

8 MIND SPORTS COUNCIL – Minutes of Inaugural Meeting

The Chairman congratulated Mr Morris on his appointment to Secretary-General of the Mind Sports Council.

The Vice Chairman reported that the meeting had been well attended, with good representation from all the NBOs. The purpose of the Council is for all the Mind Sports bodies to work together to determine the definition of a Mind Sport, and set Terms of Reference.

The General Manager reported that, for some time, the chess organisation has been receiving funding in the region of £60,000 p.a. from the Department of Culture, Media & Sport.

9 COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1 *Editorial Board (informal meeting) – Brighton 13 August 2003* The Minutes were **accepted**.

10 EBL & WBF MATTERS

Mr Harris reported that in a recent “Queen’s speech” in Holland, a change to the funding of Mind Sports in Holland had been proposed, which would see this terminated in favour of increased funding to physical sports. He expressed concern that this may have implications for the EBL, and he would keep the Board apprised of the situation.

Mr Harris advised that the President of the EBL had, on several occasions, publicly apologised for the conditions at Menton.

The General Manager confirmed that the EBU had settled their outstanding debt to the EBL, but had not heard anything further regarding the payment of commission from the EBL in regard to English participation in Menton.

11 CONSTITUTION CHANGES

Nothing to report.

12 CHAIRMAN'S AND TREASURER'S REPORTS FOR AGM

Following minor amendments, both reports were **approved** for distribution with the Council agenda papers.

13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 *Proposed change of date for November meeting to 5 November*

Change of date was **agreed**.

Post meeting note: It was requested that the date move to Tuesday 4th November. Board members were advised by email, and it is now confirmed that the next Board meeting will be Tuesday 4th November, at Alfred McAlpine, 40 Bernard Street, London.

13.2 *English Golf Union – meeting*

The Vice Chairman reported that a meeting had been held at Woodhall Spa with representation from the English Golf Union, to discuss a combined bridge/golf event. A proposal with outline programme had been received and this was being reviewed.

This prompted discussion on the possibility of a Ryder Cup bridge event; and it was suggested that the Chairman raise this as an idea at the Sponsors event.

13.3 *Estoril Congress*

The General Manager reported that there had been an unexpected increase in travel costs to Estoril by OT&T, which he would be investigating.

13.4 *Resignation*

The Vice Chairman advised that he has resigned as an elected member of the Tournament Committee, since he is also an ex-officio member of the Committee, which allows an extra person to be elected at the next Council meeting.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 4th November 2003, at Alfred McAlpine, Bernard Street, London

Approval of Minutes:	
-----------------------------	--