



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
THE ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION
HELD AT THE IMPERIAL HOTEL, LONDON
ON WEDNESDAY 15TH FEBRUARY 2006**

Present:	Denis Robson	Chairman
	John Neville	Treasurer
	Philip Mason	Vice Chairman
	Sally Bugden	
	John Carter	
	David Harris	
	Graham Jepson	
	Jeff Morris	
	Martin Pool	
	Max Bavin	Acting General Manager
	Clare Smith	Minute Secretary

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alan Nelson.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 1st NOVEMBER 2005

2.1 Accuracy

Sally Bugden requested that only the final version of agendas and papers should be circulated by post, and that any earlier drafts or incomplete items should be sent by email. This was agreed.

Item 4 Bridgemates 3rd Paragraph

Martin Pool requested that the word “*East*” should be deleted from the phrase “East Sussex”.

Item 2.2 Lancashire Membership Scheme

The second paragraph should be deleted. Satisfactory assurances have been received from Lancashire and the matter can now be considered closed.

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting, subject to the above changes.

2.2 Matters Arising

Board Responsibilities

The role of Board members was rediscussed and it was noted that the minutes of the 1st November 2005 did not show a true record of responsibilities. An updated list of responsibilities is appended to these minutes.

2.2.1 Bridgemates

Max Bavin reported that we now own 90 Bridgemates plus a current version of “Scorebridge” scoring software. However, major software development is still required in order to fulfil all of our somewhat unique requirements and we are still investigating various possibilities in this regard.

2.2.2 Bridge Teaching Video

There is no further news from the developers regarding this; in all likelihood the project will not come into fruition. Jeff Morris requested that any output we might already have received be sent to him.

3. FINANCIAL MATTERS

3.1 Treasurer’s Report

John Neville advised that the overall forecast for the current year is for a small surplus which is broadly in line with budget. He was also confident that a reasonable programme could be put forward for next year, but that declining membership remains a considerable cause for concern. Careful consideration would be needed before embarking on any new initiatives.

3.2 Accounts for 9 Months ended 31 December 2005

The accounts were noted.

3.3 Personal Expenses Allowances, Fees and Charges

John Neville had agreed with some reluctance to an increase from 34 pence to 35 pence per mile for car mileage. An increase in the cost of a Master Point certificate from 36 pence to 38 pence from 1 April 2006 had already been announced. Believing that members had not been informed, he explained that the price increases both for Master Points and for other Bridge Shop merchandise would be deferred until the end of April 2006, the plan being to mention the increases in April *English Bridge*.

NB. It was subsequently discovered that affiliated clubs have already been notified of the increase due to take effect 1 April 2006, and that a price list showing increased prices in the Bridge Shop was an insert in February English Bridge. In spite of the preceding paragraph, therefore, all price increases will take place on 1 April 2006 as originally planned.

He also advised that the *Bridge for All* package had been re-designed to make it more marketable. In order to keep the cost down, no provision had been made for the £3.00 element payable to the County Associations. It was proposed to pay this element out of central funds in 2006, but to then stop this payment thereafter if shareholders agreed (the alternative being an increase in the cost of *Bridge for All* material). It was noted that in making this proposal that the sums involved are relatively minor. Other changes to fees and allowances (e.g. tournament directors) were presented in a separate paper and were in line with inflation. It was noted that no change to the current lunch and dinner allowances were proposed and these remain at £7.00 and £18.00 respectively (£5.00 and £15.00 respectively for EBU employees).

3.4 Licensing

John Neville reported that new rates are now in place for 2006. He recommended immediate implementation of a membership initiative scheme via licensed Bridge Holiday Operators. New members could join the EBU until the following 31 March for the sum of £10.00 provided they completed a Direct Debit mandate; from this £10.00 the Holiday Operator would be paid a £5.00 rebate and the EBU would receive £5.00. County Associations would not receive a subscription for the year in question, but would receive them in subsequent years assuming the Direct Debit was not subsequently cancelled. This was agreed. It was also agreed on a suggestion from Sally Bugden that we need to do more to encourage all Holiday Operators to obtain an EBU licence by explaining the benefits of this to them.

3.5 Membership Renewal

Several more County Associations have now opted into the central collection of subscriptions service offered by the Aylesbury office. Consideration should now be given to encourage more members to pay by Direct Debit and in this regard the Board have in mind a surcharge of around £2.50 in 2007 for members who do not pay by Direct Debit. It was noted with pleasure that the new Web Portal is now active and is being used by our members; Sally Bugden requested that she continues to be informed of the number of people using this service over the next few weeks.

4. REPLACEMENT OF GENERAL MANAGER

The Chairman advised he has received 3 applications to date. A poster in the same format as the advert in *English Bridge* is to be produced and circulated to Counties and Clubs. County Club Websites are also to be encouraged to carry these details or link into the EBU website.

5. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – PROGRESS REPORT

Sally Bugden gave a positive report on visits made to Burnham and West Sussex Bridge Clubs and discussed with them ideas for the services they desire from the EBU. The Membership Development Committee will meet again on the 7th March 2006 and will report their findings to the Board. John Carter proposes to give a presentation on the subject at a future meeting.

6. KETTERING CONFERENCE CENTRE – EVENTS TO DATE

Questionnaires had been circulated at the Swiss Teams Congress, Mens & Womens Pairs and Tollemache Final. A considerable amount of correspondence has also been received from both individual members and County Associations.

There is clearly a vociferous minority who are very angry with the compulsory charge of £3.50 per day for tea & coffee. However, it was noted that this is an integral part of the arrangements with Kettering and any attempt to renegotiate this would have an inevitable effect on the basic room hire charges. It was also noted that the dinner at the Tollemache Qualifier had been subsidised by the Union to the sum of approximately £2.00 per person and that playing times had been purposefully adjusted in order to discourage members from going out to eat. The Tournament Committee have been invited to discuss all these matters and report back to the Board. The matter is also on the agenda for the forthcoming Shareholders meeting.

7. GLOUCESTERSHIRE PROPOSAL

7.1 Proposal from Selection Committee

It was noted that there was an error in the original paper and that the point of reference should be to junior squad members rather than to all junior members.

7.2 Letter for Andrew Kambites to Chairman – 18th December 2005

The Board were pleased to note that the Selection Committee had agreed to adopt much of what had been proposed, apparently to the complete satisfaction of both Andrew Kambites and the Gloucestershire CBA. This being the case the matter could now be considered closed, subject to approval by the Shareholders.

8. PROPOSAL FROM PAUL HACKETT

The Board decided that it was worth pursuing the idea of a “Bridge Patron” member although it doubted that a subscription of £100.00 per year was sufficient bearing in mind the cost of the annual dinner which was being proposed. Alan Nelson and Sally Bugden were asked to pursue the idea with Paul Hackett, along with the idea of “Bridge Hall of Fame”.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1 Laws & Ethics Committee – 30th November 2005

Not discussed at meeting, item carried over.

9.2 Laws & Ethics Committee – 11th January 2006

Not discussed at meeting, item carried over.

9.3 Selection Committee – 15th November 2005

Not discussed other than the Gloucestershire CBA item above. All other items to be carried over.

9.4 Tournament Committee – 5th December 2005

Not discussed at meeting, item carried over.

9.5 Editorial Board – 6th December 2005

Not discussed at meeting, item carried over.

10. BGB MATTERS

Not discussed at meeting, item carried over.

11. EBL AND WBF MATTERS

It was noted whilst annual subscriptions to the WBF and EBL are based on the actual number of members the NBO has, the WBF have stated that it would be “unacceptable” for any NBO to declare a membership this year which is less than it was in the previous year. Nonetheless, it was resolved that we declare our actual membership and assume that our annual subscription will be based on this figure.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 Trust Account

David Harris is liaising with Brian Smith at the Aylesbury Office in order to satisfy the bank of certain details they require before the account can be opened.

12.2 World Universities Championships – China

It was agreed this was not a suitable tournament to justify the provision of considerable funds towards the cost of sending a British team.

**The next Board meeting will be held on Tuesday 14th March 2006
12.00 noon at Kettering Leisure Village**

CURRENT BOARD	CURRENT RESPONSIBILITIES	PROPOSED RESPONSIBILITIES 2006/07
Denis Robson	Chairman Aylesbury External relations	Chairman External relations
Philip Mason	Vice-Chairman Master Points Tournament Committee Licensing County and Club liaison	Vice – Chairman Chairman – Membership Development Committee Tournament Committee County and Club liaison
John Neville	BGB matters Acting - Treasurer	Aylesbury BGB matters Treasurer Licensing
Sally Bugden	Editorial Board - Chairman EBUTA Sponsorship Marketing	Chair – Editorial Board Membership Development Committee Sponsorship Marketing
John Carter	Remunerations Committee Technical Developments Youth Development	Remunerations Committee Technical Developments Membership Development Committee
David Harris	EBL/WBF matters Legal advice	EBL/WBF matters Legal advice
Graham Jepson		Youth Development EBUTA
Jeff Morris	Youth Development Mind Sports Council – (Sec. general)	Youth Development CCPR Mind Sports Council – (Sec. general)
Alan Nelson	Tournament Committee Sponsorship Remunerations Committee	Chairman – Tournament Committee Sponsorship Remunerations Committee
Martin Pool		Chairman – Laws and Ethics