



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
HELD ON TUESDAY 23rd JANUARY 2007,
HELD AT SIR ROBERT MCALPINES, LONDON.**

Present:	Peter Stocken	(Chairman)
	Sally Bugden	(Vice-Chairman)
	John Neville	(Hon. Treasurer)
	Philip Mason	
	Graham Jepson	
	Jeff Morris	
	Martin Pool	
	John Carter	
	Michael Hill	
	David Harris (for item 11)	(Honorary Counsel)
	Barry Capal	(General Manager)
	Karen Durrell	(Minute Taker)

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming Michael Hill to his first Board meeting.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Alan Nelson

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF December 5th 2006

2.1 Accuracy

2.1.1 Item 7

Jeff Morris asked that our Auditors should provide information with regard to the VAT position of the EBU. As the latest Charities Bill appeared to accept that Bridge was a “sport”, what would be the VAT consequences for the EBU? Would all our entry fees become free of VAT and what would happen to VAT on membership fees – at present we were not paying the full seventeen and a half per cent on subscriptions. What other financial consequences would result from sport recognition? He said that he understood that there was rate relief for sport clubs but were there concessions for sports headquarters and, if so, how much would it be worth to us? There might be other implications – for instance, would educational services be liable for VAT?

2.2 Matters Arising

2.2.1 Item 5.2. Trust Account

Jeff Morris stated that progress was being made. David Harris had updated the information on the deed, such as the Charity Trustees, date etc. The trustees had signed the deed and declaration and now the EBU needed to set up a bank account for The EBU Youth and Education Trust; after that we could proceed with the application form for charitable status.

2.2.2 Item 2.2.3 Education DVD (now confirmed as a CD)

Graham Jepson had corresponded with Terry Collier, who informed him that Louisa Moger from Richard Edwards had the CD and corresponding documents. Graham Jepson agreed to continue with his efforts to retrieve it.

2.2.3 Item 2.2.6 Junior Contracts

The contracts were now all in place.

2.2.4 Item 7.2 Personal expenses, allowances, fees and charges

Barry Capal reported that work was in progress on the creation of the new Procedures Manual.

Graham Jepson said that, in view of the necessity to cut costs in all areas of the EBU's activities, he felt it was anomalous that expenses were paid to Board Members and Vice-Presidents to attend meetings of the Standing Committees. He proposed, seconded by John Carter, that: "No expenses should be paid to Board Members and Vice-Presidents who attended meetings of the Standing Committees, unless (a) they were elected or ex-officio members of those Committees, (b) they were invited to attend by the Chairmen of those Committees, or (c) they were asked to attend specifically by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Union as their substitute in the event of either of them being unable to attend a particular meeting." The proposal was carried unanimously.

The Chairman said he would inform all Vice-Presidents of this decision.

2.2.5 Item 10.1 Recognition of Bridge

The implementation of the Charities Act 2006 was a two-year process. Jeff Morris agreed to keep us informed of progress and to continue to liaise with the CCPR and Government. At a later stage, it was likely that Bridge Clubs would welcome assistance from the EBU in handling the paper-work.

John Neville requested that Jeff Morris ask the CCPR for information on the VAT implications for the EBU and for Bridge Clubs.

3 FINANCIAL MATTERS

3.1 Treasurer's Report

John Neville said that the management accounts were now being produced and that the EBU was ahead of budget for the current year, largely as a result of salary savings.

One or two of the figures on the December Management accounts might be slightly misleading as a result of timing differences, due to the shortage of working days in December.

4 FOCUS ON VALUE

There had been a very satisfactory show of interest from new and existing teachers. The initial courses would be held on 23rd March & 13th April 2007.

5 MDAG

A considerable amount of preparatory work had been, and was being, done by the group; working towards the vision set out by the Chairman in his Christmas email to the Shareholders. It is intended that a strategy paper be submitted to the Board for consideration at its May meeting.

6 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Sally Bugden gave the Board a brief report on the objectives and the results of the Membership Survey. Over 3,500 of our members had responded: while the collation and analysis of the results was still in progress, it was already clear that the survey would tell us much, not only about how our members viewed the EBU but also about what services they would like it to offer to them and how they would like us to communicate with them. The results would be published in the April issue of *English Bridge*.

7 YOUTH MATTERS

Jeff Morris presented three papers. The first was based on the meeting of the Youth Action Group, pointing out the reduction in recent years of the resources the EBU had devoted to Youth and Education; the second on the Under-25 Girls' squad, and the third a draft paper on the role of County Youth Officers. This latter was approved for circulation to all County Associations with the intention of re-activating their Youth Officers. Barry agreed to email affiliated clubs for information on any of their members who were either teachers or who were involved in education and who might be willing to help us.

Jeff Morris noted with concern that a Youth Bridge Officer still had not been appointed. It was agreed that a job description would be finalized and that the post would be advertised on the EBU website.

At the last Board Meeting it was agreed that Junior Squad members' entry fees should be waived for certain events. Barry Capal asked that, before each event, the Squad Manager give to the Competition Department the names of the players who would be entering.

The matter of an Under-25 Girls Squad was raised by Jeff Morris. After a lengthy discussion, this was referred back to the Selection Committee.

8 EBU OFFICE

The General Manager reported as follows:

8.1 Telephone System

Implementation of the telephone system would be taking place in the near future. The new telephone system would not allow for conference calls as such, but other ways of group communication had been identified; these would be investigated with the intention of providing an alternative – and cheaper – way of holding some of our meetings.

8.2 Membership Meeting

A meeting of County Membership Secretaries would be held on the 13th February 2007 to discuss the new centralized system of subscription collection. Peter Stocken and Sally Bugden would be attending and other Board Members would be welcomed.

8.3 New Website Design

Barry Capal said that various comments had been made about the new design but that the overall response had been favourable. Jeff Morris asked that Youth Bridge be added to the index on the home page. An online Shareholders' Forum had been created; access would be restricted to Shareholders, members of the Board and the General Manager. Barry said he would give a full explanation of it to the Shareholders at the February meeting.

8.4 EBU Scoring Program

Barry Capal and Max Bavin were still considering a scoring program that the EBU could use and recommend.

8.5 Staffing and Aylesbury Headquarters.

The Board agreed to the General Manager's recommendation that the EBU offices should be closed from the close of business on December 21st to January 2nd, 2008, thus giving the staff an extra half day.

9 COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1 Editorial Board – 7th December 2006

Sally Bugden informed the Board that the Editorial Board wished to make clear that any article that is not commissioned or organised specifically by the editor of *English Bridge* would not warrant payment. It was important for all employees and volunteers to understand that the writer must consult with the Editor if payment was to be negotiated.

The Survey findings on the magazine were discussed and the Board gave Sally Bugden the authority to undertake changes to *English Bridge* on its behalf.

9.2 *Tournament Committee – 13th December 2006*

Noted.

9.3 *Laws & Ethics Committee – 10th January 2007*

The Officers and the General Manager would be meeting with the L&E Chairman and Vice-Chairman on 14th February. This would be the first of a series of meetings with representatives of the three Standing Committees of the Union to discuss future policy.

Sally Bugden said that, in cooperation with the L&E committee, she was preparing a survey of the members to seek their views on the recent Orange Book changes.

9.4 *Selection Committee – 18th January 2007*

A presentation on the EBU's international commitments and selection process would be made by Sandra Landy at the February Shareholders' meeting. The material was being prepared by Peter Hasenson, Steve Eginton and Sandra Landy.

10 *BGB MATTERS*

Philip Mason said that the organisation and staging of the recent Camrose Trophy weekend was considered to have been very professional by all those who took part. The Board expressed its thanks to all the people involved in making it such an enjoyable and successful event.

11 *EBL & WBF MATTERS*

David Harris joined the meeting at this point and brought the Board up to date on the present activities of the European Bridge League and its plans for the future.

Jeff Morris said it would be helpful if David Harris could find out the date and venue of the forthcoming European Youth Championships.

The European Bridge League's biennial NBO's Seminar was taking place in Rome from 1st to 4th February 2007; Peter Stocken, Sally Bugden and Barry Capal would be attending. The EBL would be providing free accommodation and the three above had done their best to find the cheapest flights possible.

12 WEB SITE ADVERTISING

The Board agreed to allow advertising on the EBU website.

13 CHARITIES

It was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting.

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

EBU representation at events

Graham Jepson asked about the lack of EBU representation at finals of non-EBU arranged competitions, like the Nicko Plate. It was agreed that there should be an EBU representative and that in future Aylesbury would co-ordinate the arrangements.

County Leagues Final

Graham Jepson also asked if it would be possible for the EBU to organize a central venue for one day for the County Leagues Final. The possibility of this would be explored with the Tournament Committee.

Kettering

Barry Capal reported that he had met with Kettering Leisure Village's Ted Blair to inform him that the EBU would cease to hold tournaments there after those already scheduled had taken place.

Constitutional

Barry Capal said that, as Company Secretary, he was not comfortable with the current election process for the Board. He suggested that a 'Rolling Election', similar to that used for the election of the members of the Standing Committees, and practically the universal process in other companies, would provide continuity and stability. The Board agreed that it should be raised as an item at the February Shareholders' Meeting.

(THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING)

**The next Board meeting will be held on Tuesday 20th March 2007 at
Baker Tilly HQ, London**

(Please note that all meetings will now commence at 12.00)