



**Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors held at
Baker Tilly Management Centre,
Thursday 20 January 2011**

Present:	Sally Bugden	(Chairman)
	Andrew Petrie	(Vice-Chairman)
	Michael Hill	(Treasurer)
	Jeremy Dhondy	
	Heather Dhondy	(from 1.35)
	Suzanne Gill	
	Graham Jepson	
	Malcolm Oliver	(Note Taker)
	Barry Capal	(General Manager)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 28th October 2010

2.1 Accuracy

The Minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting after correction of minor typographical errors. The Chairman thanked Graham Jepson for producing them.

2.2 Matters arising

Jeremy Dhondy reported that the policy on Junior entries to EBU competitions had been finalised with a few minor changes none of which had any effect on the budget provided for entries by the Tournament Committee.

The Chairman reported that Honorary Counsel had not yet produced a draft policy on financial sanctions against recalcitrant members and will follow the matter up.

2.3 Review of action list

All actions from the previous meeting have been completed progress of which are agenda items later.

3. FINANCIAL MATTERS

3.1 Budget 2011 – 12 Extraordinary Items

The Treasurer reported that no extraordinary items had been notified to him with regard to the 2011/12 budget. However, potential issues with increases in print and postage prices had been highlighted for *English Bridge*.

3.2 Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that due to a reduction in advertising revenue from English Bridge and reduced income from tournaments against budget that the projected loss for the year might be an additional £15,000 - £20,000. However taking 2009/10 when we made an un-projected surplus of £50,000 and 2010/11 together then we are approximately in line with the 5 year plan.

Savings for 2011/12 will be made by not employing a National Education Officer and some reductions in Tournament costs.

3.3 Personal Expenses and Allowances, Fees and Charges

The updated fees and expenses schedule was tabled and it was noted that TD fees had been held at 2009/10 rates but allowances had been increased slightly.

The General Manager will advise the Tournament Manager that he expects to see a reduction in costs at EBU tournaments.

3.4 Fundraising Initiatives Update

Bridge England Patrons Fund

There were no resources for signing up Patrons and, after consultation with Heather, Andrew and Mike, this scheme was cancelled. Baroness Henig and Tony Priday have been informed.

The membership survey showed that of the participants about 20% would take part in a lottery in support of bridge education but less than 10% of respondents were interested in joining an England Supporters Club at a rate of £5 per year.

The Chairman asked the meeting for a volunteer to come forward to investigate the ways and means of operating a small lottery. Malcolm Oliver agreed to take on the task and to produce a report for the Board strategy meeting in June.

Heather Dhondy would discuss the disappointing responses for a supporters club with the Selection Committee. It is highly likely that the work involved in running such a supporters club would be prohibitive.

4. BGB MATTERS

4.1 Report on Meeting of 18 January 2011

Jeremy Dhondy reported that a constructive meeting with delegates from WBU and SBU had taken place on 18 Jan 2011.

EBU tabled a proposal to manage the BGB Simultaneous Pairs using newly developed software which would enable WBU and SBU to maintain the level of income they have enjoyed for a number of years and would give EBU a reasonable share of the proceeds. WBU and SBU delegates agreed to take the proposals back to their respective Executive Committees for approval and hopefully finalised at the annual BGB meeting scheduled for April.

Provided the WBU and SBU Executives agree then licensing will continue to be administered by EBU but it is probable that this will be at a significantly reduced rate because of ultra vires licensing decisions made by the SBU earlier in the year. The finances of all three NBO's will be affected by this.

The charges levied on unaffiliated clubs in England for participation will continue.

It is expected that final decisions by WBU and SBU will be made by 7th Feb 2011 and that a draft agreement can then be formulated for signature at the scheduled April BGB Meeting.

4.2 In house Simultaneous Pairs Proposal

A proposal to develop in house Simultaneous Pairs scoring program had been circulated. The intention is to use this to replace the service provided by Ecats scoring providing a more economical service which could be offered to County Associations and groups of clubs.

Some concern was expressed that devoting limited resources to developing new software would delay the updating of the website. The Chairman is a great advocate for improving the website but pointed out that these new programs would save the members money in the area of Simultaneous Pairs and generates a greater surplus from the Shop by providing an on line purchasing facility. Once these programs are up and running it would be possible to address the website issues again. The General Manager pointed out that over the last 3 years or so the website had improved and improvements would continue as new material was added.

5. EDUCATION WORKING GROUP REPORT OF FINDINGS

The Chairman announced that from March 1st, Suzanne Gill would be resigning from the Board, explaining that she is to relocate to Australia. The Board wished her well.

The Chairman thanked Suzanne Gill for the excellent report produced from the nationwide consultation exercise undertaken.

The full report, some 56 pages including appendices, is to be circulated electronically to all participants and County Chairmen.

The results of the report and best practice will be discussed at the June Chairmen's Meeting.

6. SUCCESSION PLANNING

The Chairman thanked Board members for their respective inputs and the ways and means of recruiting successors to existing Board members was discussed.

Proposals are to be put to the Chairmen's meeting in June.

7. SHOP

It was pleasing to report that Bridge Shop activity had increased significantly in the last quarter of 2010. It is hoped to build on this once the online shop facility is up and running.

Malcolm Oliver is to produce a paper on stationery supplies to affiliated clubs for discussion at the June Strategy Board meeting.

8. COMPLIANCE WITH PAY TO PLAY

At least one club is manifestly not observing the rules of affiliation.

The Treasurer is to write to the club pointing out the irregularities and asking for matters to be corrected.

9. HITCHIN BRIDGE CLUB CHARITY REGISTRATION

The Chairman reported that Hitchin Bridge Club, subject to some already agreed small changes in its constitution, had been granted registered charity status. All present hoped that the Charity Commission would wish to ensure that duplicate bridge clubs granted such status should be affiliated to the EBU. It was decided to be proactive in this matter and look at some communication with the Charity Commission to determine this matter.

10. BYE LAW CHANGES

11.1 Wording for Bye Law Changes

Minor changes were agreed and the Secretary will incorporate these into the proposed changes for voting at the Shareholders Meeting in April.

11.2 Conduct Unbecoming of Board and Standing Committee Members

Some small changes are required to Articles of Association with regard to the membership status of Board Members and Standing Committee Members. These will be drafted for approval at the Shareholder's Meeting in April.

11. MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

The latest Membership Survey results were discussed. In marketing response terms, 2% of the total membership, is on the high side of expectations. However, the cross section was disappointing, being predominantly tournament players and very few 'new' members.

Ways and means of improving participation were discussed, it was thought that the most effective; *English Bridge* insert with post paid envelope would increase replies to around 20% but the cost would be prohibitive.

It was thought that a 'button' on the individual member's page might work better and this will be tried on the next survey.

A report on the Membership Survey results is to be published in the next issue of *English Bridge*.

12. EBL/WBF MATTERS

12.1 Subscriptions payable for 2012

A proposal is to be put to the EBL and WBF on subscriptions for 2012 which are based on the returns for March 2011 in view of the increased EBU membership resulting from the introduction of Pay to Play.

13. JUNIORS' CONDUCT

A verbal report from a member of the public had been received at Aylesbury regarding alleged poor conduct by the teams returning from the Channel Trophy in Lille .

Heather Dhondy had contacted all three NPC's involved, who reported that whilst there may have been some high spirits - there was nothing untoward in their respective team's behaviour. These reports were accepted and no further action is to be taken.

14. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

The National Grading Scheme is expected to go live in mid 2011, meanwhile volunteer clubs were to be sought to continue testing. A 'How to' document is to be prepared by a nominated member of staff.

An additional junior member of staff is required.

15. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A synopsis of the salient points from the most recent meeting of the standing committees was circulated before the Board meeting and Board members asked to take up matters individually with Committee Chairman.

15.1 *Tournament Committee*

The changes to the competition programme were welcomed.

15.2 *Editorial Board*

Nothing further to report.

15.3 *Selection Committee*

Nothing further to report.

15.4 *Laws and Ethics Committee*

A problem in Dorset was reported concerning the hiring of club premises by the County Association to host a County Pairs Semi Final. A dispute arose when one of the competitors had been banned from the club and the matter referred to the L & E Committee.

There was no consensus in L & E. The Board considered that since the club's premises had been hired by the County Association then that body would be responsible for deciding who may and may not compete.

However in the event of an EBU or County competition heat being held in a club as a session organised by the club, then, since the club organised the event they would be responsible for deciding who may or may not compete.

This information to be included in the MP and Licensing Handbook and conditions of contest.

15.5 *Minutes of Club Committee*

Not available before the meeting, deferred to March board meeting.

16. HONOURS GROUP – REPORT

Next meeting postponed until 3 February due to illness. Deferred to March Board meeting.

17. APPROVAL OF COUNTY CONSTITUTIONS

17.1 *Staffs and Shrops CBA*

Apart from some minor changes suggested by Martin Pool this constitution is satisfactory. Jeremy Dhondy suggested they should consider using consistent nomenclature in relation to days/weeks.

17.2 Dorset CBA

Martin Pool has reviewed and recommended approval. The Board accepted his recommendation.

The Chairman thanked Martin Pool for his continued assistance in this area.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The TD Development Group had discussed TDs accreditation and performance and recommended that if performance was unsatisfactory accreditation could be removed BUT if insufficient work was being done then removal from the panel of active directors would follow rather than removing accreditation. The Board thanked the TDDG for their work in this area and would investigate the methods in which this could be implemented.

The Vice Chairman reported on a meeting to which he and Heather Dhondy had been invited to discuss the establishment of a Charitable Trust outside EBU to support International efforts and Education.

EBU will be invited to appoint a member as a trustee.

The Board were very supportive of the venture and welcomed the assurances that no additional work would be required by EBU staff or volunteers on the Board.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.40 pm.