

ACBL Unit 143 Board Meeting Minutes, Monday, February 12, 2024

Location: The meeting was conducted on-line using ZOOM.

Attendees: Dennis Abeln, Sandy Bigg, Mark Boswell, Dian Brazier, Don Chase, Ken Obrecht, Jay Shah, Steve Russell, John Welte, and Mark Zellmer

Absent: Terry D'Amato

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 and met quorum requirements.

President's Report

Mark B reported that effective Feb 1, 2024, the ACBL will be handling all disciplinary matters in an effort to achieve more consistency across districts; district-level disciplinary committees will wrap up any pending disciplinary matters that occurred prior to this date.

Mark B also reported that it is the President of District 8's responsibility to appoint the Tournament Chairperson for the 2026 National that will be held in our district.

Mark B shared that Jay had reported a scam he had been subjected to and urged us all to be aware of this potential and to look carefully at email addresses or to phone a person to verify they were the ones who sent an email, especially when it involves a request for money or information.

Approval of the Minutes

The Board unanimously approved the meeting minutes from December 13, 2024. The January board meeting was cancelled.

Treasurer's Report

The Board unanimously approved the Treasurer's Report.

Sign Up Sheet for Tournament Duties

The board will resume having a sign-up sheet so that members contribute equally towards clean-up efforts.

Tournaments:

January Sectional/NLM Regional

Dennis reported that there were 213 tables and that we lost \$1292, mainly due to the \$5 entry fee for the NLMs. Mark B shared that Debbie Romero had told him Peter felt our tournaments were well-run, and Dennis added that Peter had remarked our turn-out was amazing and the St. Louis Bridge Center was a great facility. Peter has been happy with Beth Percich and Bob McDill as Tournament Assistants.

March I/N Tournament

John reported that the flyers were printed and had been distributed to clubs around STL and the region. Maddy Scallet plans to talk up the tournament with the chat group, and John will be going around to promote it as well.

GNT

Mark B shared that Debbie wants to encourage more C teams to sign up for the event. At least 5 teams need to compete to ensure awards can go to four teams.

May Sectional

Dennis reported we were on track, with flyers distributed to clubs. The ACBL still needs to post the schedule.

As previously voted, we have dropped the educational lesson due to poor attendance and time constraints.

Mark B talked about District 8's policy that precluded us from holding the I/N Regional in May because it falls within a week of another District 8 Regional. Mark Z informally surveyed players who planned to go to the Champaign Regional and asked if going to that event was impacting their decision to attend our May event; the answer was that it was not.

Sandy volunteered to take over photographing winners at our Sectional events.

August Regional

Concern was raised as to whether the Collinsville, Illinois Regional, which had originally been held in Effingham, IL, would impact our tournament turn-out since it falls in September, not far from our Regional dates.

Dennis discussed changes to the schedule: dropping the mini-Soloway on Friday-Saturday due to not enough turnout to support multiple brackets and instead offering a stratified Swiss on Friday (and keeping the bracketed Swiss on Saturday).

He proposed dropping the afternoon side-game series due to poor attendance.

The board unanimously approved the Regional schedule and these changes.

Dennis proposed making entry fees \$15 but dropping all I/N event fees to \$10, and having 0-5 MP members play for free in any event they choose to play in.

The board unanimously approved these Regional entry fees.

Dennis proposed having a start time of 1:00 and 6:00 PM for Monday and leaving the remainder of the schedule as it was (10:00 and 2:30 start times).

The board unanimously approved these game start times.

Dennis proposed a hotel room block of 350, explaining that we just have to fill 75% of this before we're charged. It means more people will be able to take advantage of the special rate. The board unanimously approved a room block of 350 rooms.

Dennis proposed dropping advertisements in the Bulletin feeling they are not necessary. We will use Pianola blasts and flyers.

The board unanimously approved this publicity plan.

Dennis reported that the Sunday lunch would remain free and cost of \$20. Mark B said it was not necessary to vote on this because it was only changing by one dollar/entry over last year.

We discussed lessons for the Regional. The thought is to move the classes to a corner in the main room and to invite pros to lead them. Sandy will follow up with contacting some pros. The flyer will not mention lessons.

Dennis proposed a \$500 budget to cover a PA rental system. The board unanimously approved \$500 for PA system rental.

Dennis had proposed hiring a security guard for the evening events but is putting that on hold for now, unsure that it's necessary.

Dennis proposed a \$500 budget for tipping hotel staff to help create a better relationship. The board unanimously approved a budget of \$500 for tipping that would be dispensed at the discretion of the Tournament Chairperson.

Mark B plans to put out a message in his President's message about the treatment of hotel staff. He would also like to create signage to encourage positive behavior. The hotel has agreed to provide a list of emails of guests who are attending the tournament so that we can put out an email to the guests discussing this issue. Sandy will help Mark B with creating these signs and letters.

Open Board Position

Alan Popkin passed away, and so there is a new position open for the board. The board will work on finding a replacement.

Committees

Membership

Jay reports that we continue to have declining membership. He proposed emailing new members his welcome letter, instead of sending it through the mail, so that he can provide links that people can access directly. Mark B said it was okay for Jay to decide.

Unit Games

John reports all is good order and that dates do not overlap with Jewish holidays.

Education

Mark Z said that we are not doing lectures at that 499r's or Sectionals and invited the board to come forward with new ideas we might have to promote education.

Finance

No report.

Trophies

Dian reported everything was ready for the 499rs and May Sectional.

Hospitality

All in good order.

Caddies

Dennis brought up that there had been complaints leading to the suggestion that we should implement a dress code for our caddies. The board was not in favor of implementing a dress code.

New business:

Mark Z will run the next meeting because Mark B will be out of town. Sandy will also be out of town.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Next Meeting: March 11, 2024