

Route 66 Bridge Club

20-Nov-2019 Board Meeting #3

Start time: 2:20 pm

End time: 4:40 pm

Notes by Mary Heinking

Board Members Present

President: Phil Wilner

Club Manager:

Secretary/Treasurer: Mary Heinking

Publicity/New Members: Carol Gammell

Facility: Ron Crowell

Guests Present: None

Board Members Absent

James Tyner

1.0 Roll Call/Approval of Meeting Minutes

Four Board members were in attendance.

The meeting minutes of 6-Nov-2019 (Board Meeting #2) were approved without additions, deletions, or changes.

2.0 President's Report

Donors/Pledge Packet

The pledge packet was updated with comments from our last board meeting. Phil put together 50 packets and handed them out to prospective donors. More packets have been requested and the Monday night bridge game would also like a few. Phil will create another 25 packets or so.

To date we have received pledges or promises of same for over \$47K or 63% of our goal. Mary created and posted a tracking thermometer on the Club Bulletin Board.

Unfortunately, Mary discovered an error in one cell of the Operating Budget spreadsheet included as part of the pledge packet. The 2018 table count was overstated at 3234 instead of 2740 (Mary thinks this is because she used figures from early Jan-2019 when she created the Tulsa Regional tournament Publicity Plan and did not verify in September.) This resulted in an incorrect 6 year table count average of 3048 per year instead of 3119. And it means the conclusion as to relatively stable table count over time is no longer accurate. In particular, the 3150 table count basis for the annual operating budget is now overly optimistic. Mary created a detailed spreadsheet to track table count at every 2019 game at the Bridge Studio and it appears as if the 2019 table count will be closer to 2500 (some of which is due to the loss of Wed evening game plus closure during Tulsa Regional). The statement about the achievement of 3150 tables remains the same but the challenge is now much greater.

One donor asked for a priority list of how the monies raised would be used in the event that less than \$75K was raised. Mary created a draft which was reviewed at this meeting. Essentially the highest priorities were: money already spent, money required to start operation (e.g. rent and utility deposits, insurance, ACBL fees, legal and filing fees, website domain, etc) followed by marketing, new chairs, and the remodel of both bathrooms. Enough money has been pledged to cover these items. Future priorities are exterior signage, new tables, electrical, and misc.

Action Item: Mary will update the Operating Budget and Phil will make available to all of those who make a pledge.

Action Item: Phil will hand out updated Operating Budget to all donors and use the updated document in all future pledge packets. Phil didn't think this would impact the donations but we want to make sure we are transparent.

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5-Dec-2019 Fund Raiser

There is a sign up sheet posted on the Club Bulletin Board.

Phil still needs to add information regarding the pre meeting to the flyer to emphasize that not only will the Board be available to answer questions from 3 to 5 pm but that suggestions and ideas are welcome.

Carol finished the suggestion box and it is now on the kitchen counter. It needs to be attached in some way.

We will be selling prepaid tickets at the fundraiser as a way to generate positive cash flow this year.

We also agreed that we need to do more to promote our fund raiser. The flyer should emphasize fun as well as the extra points that can be earned as this will be a club championship game. We are also going to send out an email blast to Tulsa area players. The Board approved the purchase of (1) new table and (4) new chairs so that we can demonstrate these at the fundraiser.

The Board approved the refurbishment of the (3) Bridge Mates which are currently not working so that we can handle more tables at the fund raiser and for the Wednesday game which has been growing.

Action Item: Phil to add information on the pre meeting to the flyer

Action Item: Carol to figure out how to affix the suggestion box to the counter.

Action Item: Carol to develop text for email blast. Mary will review to confirm adherence to the ACBL Privacy Policy.

Action Item: Mary to email Unit 158 address list to James.

Action Item: James to create a Tulsa specific email list and send out Carol's email blast.

Action Item: James to figure out how to generate the prepaid tickets.

Action Item: Mary to send information on table and chairs to Ron for purchase.

Action Item: Ron to purchase table and chairs and get assembled before the fundraiser.

Action Item: James to get the (3) broken Bridge Mates refurbished.

Action Item: James to create sign up sheet for club emails/newsletter and announce at fundraiser.

Action Item: Mary will put out sample EasyBridge book for members to look at as many may not be familiar with the program.

Our next meeting (Board Meeting #4) will be the day before the fund raiser to make sure that there are no last minute items needing attention. Phil will follow up with Greg Burton as to any other requirements.

Legal Update

Mary completed as much of the F1023 documentation as possible without getting input from an accountant as to how to characterize our donations, 2019 activities, and items to be depreciated versus expensed. The F1023 form must include 3 years' worth of accounting statements (balance sheets and income statements) which must then be organized in a specific format. Mary sent a detailed list of questions to Phil's accountant who will get back to Mary within the next week with her recommendations. Mary plans to complete the draft of the F1023 package immediately thereafter and send out to the Board for review. Susan Williamson of F&G has already commented on the key parts of the narrative.

Action Item: Mary to meet with the accountant and complete the draft financial statements for 2019, 2020, and 2021.

Action Item: Mary to send out the narrative documentation from the F1023 submission to Board members for review and comment.

Action Item: Mary to send the updated package to our lawyer for his review and submission to the IRS.

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Logo

After our 6-Nov Board meeting, Ron Crowell worked on various logo options. On 9-Nov, via email, the Board agreed to option #7 (see Attachment).

We also agreed on our advertising tag line:

Play Bridge: Your Route to Friendship and Fun

The very attractive road design (an alternate logo suggestion) will be featured in our advertising.

Action Item: Ron to email out a pdf file of the logo to all Board members.

Action Item: Phil to develop stationary and business cards.

Action Item: Mary to add the logo to the Vision Statement.

Action Item: Carol to see if the newsmagazine graphic designer can create in a scalable vision graphic (SVG) format. We will likely need this for our exterior signage as the logo is blown up significantly in size. Carol is already using our logo in the draft ads.

Vision Statement

Prior to the meeting, Mary updated our Vision Statement with comments received from Ron. At this meeting, Mary provided some further insight as to the purpose of a vision statement.

A Vision Statement defines the guiding principles underlying everything an organization does. Typically a vision statement is posted for all members to see (e.g. bulletin board, website, etc). When we think about our operation now and in the future, we want to make sure that it is congruent with that vision. We could, for example, have a vision that we were all about maximizing revenue or table count. Or a vision that said we wanted to cater to only A players or only to newbies via training classes. Or that we wanted to grow a team to compete at the national level (a Tulsa Aces as it were). Or that we wanted to strictly be a social group who used duplicate scoring and bid boxes but without ACBL sanctions. Another vision could be that we want to ultimately become a chain with centers throughout NE Oklahoma (perish the thought). Mary used these extreme examples to illustrate what we don't want to be. A vision statement is about defining **who we want to be**. In the business world it is used as a barometer against which to check new ideas and thoughts. Would their implementation be consistent with and advance the vision or the organization? In our case, it is important to differentiate the Route 66 Bridge Club from the Bridge Studio. While we are taking over the same physical space, we are planning on doing things differently. Spelling out those differences via a vision statement helps to make that clearer.

The Board agreed to adopt this Vision Statement with the deletion of "Enforce ACBL Zero Tolerance Policy" as redundant with "Focus on courtesy, politeness, and etiquette". The Board also agreed to post the etiquette pdf Ron shared at Board Meeting #1.

Action Item: Mary to update vision statement with comments from this meeting and post on the Club Bulletin Board. The Attachment contains the updated Vision Statement.

Action Item: Ron to post the etiquette handout on the Club Bulletin Board.

3.0 Club Manager's Report

Game Schedule

There was no report.

ACBL Sanctions

There was no update. .

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Website

Mary reported on the 7-Nov-2019 phone call with the pianola team (Peggy Gaffke, the Unit 158 Tournament Coordinator set up the call and participated along with Mary). Effective 1-Jan-2020, there will be a charge for every email blast sent using pianola. There is a sliding scale based on numbers of email addresses purchased. \$500 (the largest dollar amount) would buy 100,000 emails (at a cost of half a cent per email). To put this in context, for the Tulsa Regional tournament, Mary sent out email blasts to just under 12,000 recipients within a 500 mile radius each time. This cost is prohibitive for our club; we can create our own data base from the Unit 158 mailing list (350 members). However, this development will impact the decision of whether or not to use pianola to host our website. Pianola is now much less attractive as an option.

Action Item: James to reserve both domain names.

Action Item: James to develop website structure for review with the Board.

Action Item: James to see what is needed to create a FaceBook group page.

Action Item: James to make recommendation as to website hosting, e.g. bridgewebs, etc.

EasyBridge

After the 6-Nov-2019 Board meeting, Mary sent a check to EasyBridge for the purchase of certification for 6 individuals (Sandie Bailey, Carol Gammell, Peggy Gaffke, Barbara Gardner, Mary Heinking, and James Tyner) and educational materials. We received our shipment from EasyBridge: (6) presenter manuals/guidelines, workshop #1 and #2 materials, and (40) EasyBridge 1 books (36 of which will be offered for sale at cost to EasyBridge participants; the book is optional and not required). Note that Mary and Barbara already had their own copies of EasyBridge 1 and so only 4 were needed for the other presenters.

Mary sent out a detailed email to the 6 presenters with a path forward for certification and our program. Mary, Barbara, Carol, and Sandie will be going to Fun & Games on 11-Jan to see session #1 of their EasyBridge program. The planned start date for Tulsa is Saturday, 1-Feb, from 10 am to noon. The program will run (15) weeks. The first 4 weeks are free. We will start charging the regular game rate starting in week #5; this is when the session converts into a 0 to 5 game scored with Bridge Plus (no sanction is required). District 15 has approved a joint 0 to 49 tournament for the F&G and Tulsa EasyBridge grads on 16 or 17-May (2 weeks before the Tulsa tournament).

Action Item: Mary to set up detailed schedule as to who presents each week.

Action Item: Mary to follow up and confirm the certification of all (6) presenters.

Action Item: Mary to figure out refreshments.

Action Item: Mary to figure out "props" e.g. writing surface for presenters to use, name badges, etc.

Action Item: Mary to get ACBL application forms as we want to encourage membership.

Action Item: see below for Marketing/Advertising action items.

4.0 Secretary/Treasurer's Report

File Structure/Retention

The files will be setup after Mary finishes the F1023 documentation.

Action Item: Mary to purchase filing cabinet and filing supplies.

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Bylaws

The draft bylaws were sent out to the Board for review and Ron provided comments. Mary also received comments from Susan Williamson. These comments were incorporated and a revised draft was sent out to the Board for review. The bylaws are an attachment to the F1023 application. At this meeting, the Board voted to formally approve these bylaws with the correction that a membership fee may be added in the future at the discretion of the Board. Ron and Carol will conduct a final review for typos and grammar.

Action Item: Mary to update bylaws with one change from this meeting.

Action Item: Ron and Carol to edit the bylaws for typos and grammar.

Action Item: Mary to post the final version of the bylaws on Club Bulletin Board.

Action Item: Mary to send the final version to James Tyner for inclusion on our website.

Bank Account

We currently have just under \$8K in our checking account. Mary will prepare a proper Treasurer's report for the next Board meeting after meeting with the accountant.

Action Item: Mary to develop format for Treasurer's Report and present at the next Board meeting.

Accounting

Mary has done research on various accounting programs which are free to use. Mary would like to try out 1-2 of these to confirm their suitability and ease of use. This was approved by the Board.

Action Item: Mary to set up accounting for the club. This will feed into the F1023 documentation as well as the Treasurer's Report.

Contract with Club Manager

Prior to this meeting, Mary sent out a draft independent contractor employment contract for the Board to review. Comments were received and incorporated. At this meeting, the Board formally voted to approve this contract (Wilner, Heinking, Gammell, Crowell). James Tyner was not eligible to vote on his own compensation per the Conflict of Interest section of our bylaws. He was not present at the meeting during the discussion or vote.

Pricing for Games

Prior to the meeting, Mary did extensive research on prices charged per game at other bridge clubs in our district and in surrounding districts. Her findings were that:

- The price in larger cities was \$10 to \$14 per game
- The price in smaller cities was \$7 to \$10 per game
- The price at clubs offering 1 or 2 games per week at community centers/churches was in the \$4 to \$6 per game range.
- She couldn't find any clubs which charged different rates for open vs restricted/newcomer games.
- Some clubs charged a membership fee while others did not.
- Some clubs had a 2 tiered rate: one for members and one for non members
- Some clubs offered special pricing (e.g. mentors with more than 500 master points playing with beginning players got to play for free)

Prior the meeting, Mary did a detailed sensitivity analysis looking at varying table count and game pricing, recognizing that we need to generate approximately \$75K per year in game revenue to break even before depreciation. The Board agreed that we need to raise our rate slightly, but that we want to be able to hold that rate steady for several years.

At this meeting, the Board voted to approve the following pricing structure effective 1-Jan-2020:

- Single rate per game regardless of whether the game is NLM/restricted/open/pairs or Swiss.
- The regular rate will be \$8 per game.
- Players can purchase pre paid tickets (10 tickets for \$70).
- There will be an additional \$2 per game charged on Wednesdays for the meal.

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Renovation Plan

Later. The extent of the reno will depend upon how much money we are able to raise. This will be discussed at future Board meetings.

5.0 Publicity/New Member Report

Marketing Plan

Carol presented an updated Marketing Plan. Since the last Board meeting, she has worked with both Life Vintage Magazine and the Tulsa World. As approved at the last Board meeting, Mary signed the contract with the Vintage Magazine to run a 1/3 page ad in the January issue (\$1200, of which the ACBL will reimburse \$500). The Vintage Magazine graphic designer is working on a design created by Carol. At this meeting, Carol shared a preliminary version of our ad which the Board liked very much. Carol is seeing if this design can be adapted into an EasyBridge flyer. There may be a small charge for this.

At this meeting, the Board approved Carol's suggestion to run 4 ads in full color in the Tulsa World (the pricing is buy 2, get 2 free). We will run in the Weekend Entertainment section and the Scene section. This will cost \$1198 (of which \$500 will be reimbursed by the ACBL). Carol is also working on getting free publicity for the club with both papers.

Action Item: Carol to finalize ad for Life Vintage magazine and send out to the Board for approval.

Action Item: Carol to develop flyer to promote EasyBridge

Action Item: Carol to work with Tulsa World after the Life Vintage design is complete.

Action Item: Carol to continue to work on free publicity e.g. calendar listings, etc.

Exterior Signage

Carol has spoken with Bryan Kirby of the property management company. While Bob Reppe (leasing agent) said we could get 1 or 2 free exterior signs on the shopping center marquees, Bryan says we can only get 1. Carol will follow up with Bryan on this apparent discrepancy. This is not defined in the lease. The Board agreed that we do not have the budget to pay a monthly fee for marquee sign rental.

At this meeting, Ron suggested that he hang a vinyl sign ("Welcome Bridge Players") on the side of our building. This would have to be approved by the property management company.

Action Item: Carol to follow up with Bryan as to number of free marquee spaces and confirm our options as to location (61st and/or Sheridan).

Action Item: Carol to follow up with Bryan on approval to hang a vinyl sign on our exterior wall.

Action Item. Carol to follow up with Bryan on what is needed for neon sign over our doorway.

Action Item: Carol to solicit pricing for exterior signage.

New Member Plan

Carol will work on this after the implementation of the Marketing Plan.

6.0 Facility Report

Storage/Removal of Old Items/Improved Organization for New Club

Right now, Greg Burton is about 95% certain that there will be no game on 31-Dec. If there is no game, it would be a good time to get the Route 66 Bridge Club ready for operation on 1-Jan-2020 in terms of organizing our storage areas and making sure everything is set up.

Action Item: Ron Crowell to arrange for 31-Dec organization/cleanup (Ron, Mary, and James).

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Supplies

As noted at the 6-Nov meeting, Ron's plan is to create a checklist of needed supplies so that he can purchase in an orderly fashion (rather than make daily runs to the store). The checklist can be filled out by directors/James to facilitate Ron's purchasing of these supplies (e.g. coffee, dishwasher pods, etc.). Ron is still figuring out all of the items for this list.

Action Item: Ron Crowell to develop supply list.

Action Item: Ron Crowell to complete inventory and determine supply needs.

Maintenance

Action items from the 6-Nov meeting.

Action Item: Ron to meet with Greg Burton to review maintenance needs and location of physical plant (e.g. HVAC filters).

Action Item: Ron to figure out how to request volunteer help to continue this effort.

Action Item: Ron to confirm cleaning details with Beverly.

7.0 New Business

Addition of Non Voting Board Member

Our bylaws allow for the addition of a non voting member to the Board. At this meeting, the Board voted for this to be Bob Hanson. Bob is a long time and experienced bridge player. His knowledge and experience would be helpful to the Board.

Action Item: Phil will talk with Bob and confirm his interest. If Bob is agreeable, he will be added to the invite list and agenda for the 4-Dec-2019 meeting.

Broken Arrow Senior Center Bridge Club

The BA club will no longer be able to conduct their Monday and Wednesday games at the BA Senior Center effective 1-Jan-2020. The Senior Center has grown significantly and there is a lack of space and parking. The BA club is actively looking for alternate locations. Phil and Mary discussed this development. At Phil's request, Mary reached out to Harvey Swalley, the BA Club Manager, and offered to discuss sharing our space. There was no discussion as to game schedule, pricing, equipment, etc. As of this meeting, the BA Club has the action to contact Mary or Phil to continue this dialogue.

8.0 Next Meeting

Our next meeting (meeting #4) will be after the Wednesday game on 4-Dec (about 215 to 230 pm). It will be at the Studio. Mary will develop an agenda in advance of the meeting and review with Phil.

9.0 List of Meeting Minute Attachments

Attachment: Vision Statement (FINAL) with Logo (FINAL)