

**Welsh Bridge Union**  
**Minutes of the Council meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2008 at Llandrindod Wells**

**Present**

**President**

**Judith Graham Jones**

**Vice President**

**NWBA**

**Jean Hand**

**MWBA**

**Alan Screen**

**EWBA**

**Patrick Jourdain**

**Area Delegates**

**NWBA**

**Catherine Spalding David Spalding**

**EWBA**

**Ken Richardson**

**Margaret van de Weyer**

**WWBA**

**Chris Davies**

**WWBA**

**Betty Brookes**

**Jo Davies**

**Chief Executive**

**Neville Richards**

**Treasurer:**

**Linda Greenland**

Apologies for absence

Mike Amos; Noelle Bond; Graham John; Daphne Patrick; Beryl Warner

**1.1. Minutes of the last meeting**

The previous minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting and approved subject to the following:

- a. The Tournament Organiser's Report was not presented until after the meeting
- b. Under 11.3 Remove the name David Spalding
- c. There were 5 ½ tables and not 5 ½ entries under NTO's report
- d. 5.3 typing error should read "men's"
- e. 4.3 the word "not" to be removed

## **1.2. Matters Arising:**

1. The Magazine is ready for printing but has been held back due to editorial comments. It was agreed that it may be unwise for the editor to have complete editorial freedom and before the Magazine goes to print there should be proof reading of the magazine by the Chief Executive Officer and the immediate Past President. The Chief Executive is to send a letter to the Editor expressing concern at some of the comments and informing him that in future before the magazine is printed proof reading of the articles will take place.
2. The Council has received a response from Mike Bond re paragraph 3.6.2 in the previous minutes. It is difficult for him to know who is not getting the introductory pack. There must be some onus on the club treasurer/secretary to ensure that Mike Bond is made aware of new members and if those members are not receiving the pack. Mike sends out lists to each club asking for these lists to be checked and to inform him of any amendments. The Chief Executive to write to Mike Bond informing him how we appreciate his work and the Council with his advice to look into revising the membership form and ways of preventing members from falling through the net.
3. It was felt that every member should receive a copy of the magazine. The difficulty is that we do not have a reliable database of members. We need to exhort each club secretary to make sure that all their members receive the magazine and to make sure that Mike Bond receives from them an updated list of their members with postcodes and email addresses where possible. It was felt that we should send out the magazine to each and every member as members are entitled to feel that they are getting something from the WBU. It was agreed that David Spalding would look into the cost of mailing the magazine to each member.
4. Linda Greenland explained to Council in respect of paragraph 4.2 that there is an internet banking account with Lloyds Bank which is operated by the CEO and the treasurer. There is a deposit a/c with Standard Life again internet based on 10 days notice. The way this account is set up it would be impossible to confirm with Council's proposals. Council felt that they had a duty to protect members' money and in order to implement the agreement reached at the last meeting £70,000.00 be transferred to another deposit account with three signatories.
5. It was confirmed by East and West Wales that they have agreed at committee to implement the proposals that the CEO and the current President be honorary members of their area.

6. Margaret Lane has completed her investigations for the Camrose and this will now take place at the Park Hotel Eastern Avenue Cardiff (formerly the Moat House).

## **2. Chief Executive's Report:**

Council appreciated the many difficulties which the CEO has faced since being appointed to Office.

1. It was agreed that Linda Greenland continue as our delegate to the BGB. This appointment is normally made in July. We receive 20% of the income of the BGB which is secure but there is uncertainty as to how the 20% is calculated. There is an undertaking from John Neville that this income is secure for the foreseeable future and that if it is to be varied we should receive a year's notice.
2. We need to ask Elaine Sharp to ensure that our junior teams obtain the relevant experience by competing in the British tournaments (entries to these events are funded). It is noted that Rabbi Helman is unwell but Mike Horton is chasing him for outstanding monies. The Rabbi has entered junior teams in some of our tournaments.
3. It was reported that the international players are prepared to undertake work on behalf of the WBU but the Council must allocate tasks for them:
  - a. John Salisbury is prepared to pursue the Welsh Assembly to support the Junior Team in Beijing (chess players have received a grant). It has also been proposed that John be approached to be the East Wales Tournament Organiser.
  - b. Adrian Thomas is doing the Simms commentary
  - c. Peter Goodman is not doing anything at the present but with his computing skills we should be able to allocate a task for him
  - d. Phillip Kurbalija is also not doing anything at present but if asked may do a training session and a commentary for the Simms
  - e. Tim Rees runs bidding competitions
  - f. Diana Jones is area master points secretary
  - g. Mary Moore does some teaching
  - h. Paul Denning doing the Camrose database
  - i. Pat Shields writes articles
  - j. Gary Jones has never been asked to do anything but may be prepared to do some commentaries.

Most of the international players are prepared take a task.

4. Those taking part in the Simms like the booklets commenting on the hands. There have been concerns over the security of the recent Simms event as it was played over 10 days and some results were published before hand together with the commentaries. The CEO has taken on board the concerns and is looking to address these concerns.
5. We have again not received a report from the NTO and no apologies have been received. The NTO has been briefed to produce a competition calendar and this does not seem to have been done. The Council recognises that the current NTO has been a severe disappointment and has not fulfilled his functions e.g. The chaos surrounding the Mixed Pairs Event. This resulted in the CEO making a unilateral decision to reduce the table money to appease the players. Due to the many difficulties it was agreed unanimously to appoint a new NTO. The question arises is whether to appoint a new NTO now or wait until May in the hope that the current incumbent will not stand. It was agreed that we would take no action until May but the Council will not be nominating Mike Amos at the AGM. Ken Richardson is prepared to take over as NTO in May
6. The Journal is the responsibility of the NTO and for this he receives an honorarium. Unless Mike Amos fulfils his obligations his honorarium will be reduced if others have to complete the journal. Also Mike Amos will have to be informed of what dates he has to fulfil before standing down.
7. CEO will question whether it is legally correct for the Portland Club to retain the copyrights of the new laws. If so we may not be able to publish our own copies of the new regulations. Discussions will take place as to whether we are entitled to a discount or whether we can arrange publication of the rules outside the UK
8. Knighton is a new club and we should make sure that they are affiliated as soon as possible. It was agreed that if they join now they will get 15 months membership.
9. Bingo Lottery is sponsoring Bridge and it is essential that we make sure that we get our share of the sponsorship money.
10. The Council unanimously agreed that be made an honorary member and this will be announced at the AGM
11. We currently use EBU score cards. The difference in the cost of EBU scorecard and WBU score cards is negligible and so in future we should use WBU score cards. Not so clear cut with the playing cards as EBU seem to get them cheaper. We should

investigate whether we can get them as cheap for the WBU. Also if the area is putting up the boards then they will use the cards they are provided with. We need to investigate the cost of playing cards.

### **3. Treasurer's Report:**

1. We currently have more money than we did this time last year. There are a number of outstanding bills and so there may not be a surplus at the end of the day but a possible loss of £3-4k. We are not in any immediate financial jeopardy. Main point of concern is the drop in revenue from tournament competitions which is on a decline and may in some cases cost us money.
2. We could raise subscriptions but if we do so we stand to lose members as there is a heavy resistance to the increase in membership fees, although the last increase was 5 years ago. It is clear that clubs are considering opting out of membership to the WBU. It is mainly those players who do not play in competitions. Perhaps we should make it clear to members of our financial situation and the fact that they now receive two magazines a year. We need to undertake some basic housekeeping and look to where we can save money. It is right for members to pay for the inefficiency of the WBU in running competitions at a loss. The NTO was asked to look into the running of tournaments to increase the efficiency of these tournaments. A lot of members want a quiet game of bridge and as such the same point is raised "what do we get from the WBU"
3. It was proposed that in 2009 the subscriptions be increased to £6.50. The proposal was defeated.
4. Council to consider increasing the licence for green point events by 10 – 15%. Although this may cause some events to struggle a modest increase may not affect too many entrants. It was proposed that the Licence fee on green points be increased by 10-12% was carried.
5. It was suggested that we used SKYPE as a means of holding Council meetings, which would reduce costs, as it is free to install. Council meetings would then be held by a conference around the computer. We should perhaps experiment with this method initially at one of the sub committees, such as the tournament committee. If this was successful then we would try this method in one of our Council meetings.
6. The Graded Masters is not attracting entrants and it should be looked at by the NTO as the graded masters are not fulfilling the function for which it was instigated. The lack of sections is one of the problems, as well as the increase in costs. The Rest was

initially cheaper than Llanelli but it has recently been refurbished and so it has increased its fees by £1k. We may have to change the venue, query David Lloyd Centre. It was felt that we should try to preserve this event. Greater publicity may help.

The President thanked Linda for being present and giving a comprehensive view of the current financial situation.

## **7. Selection Procedures:**

1. Patrick Jourdain had circulated a paper setting out the order in which the selectors should operate. It is imperative that a structure should be in place from which the selection committee could work.
  - a. The selectors are appointed immediately after the AGM so that they could work initially with the outgoing selectors so that there would be continuity in views and any decision reached by the outgoing selectors must be carried forward and implemented. To change they would require Council's approval.
  - b. The selectors should be given a budget
  - c. The selectors are to meet as soon as possible after they have been selected (to be arranged by the CEO) to formulate a diary for the coming year of office setting out dates for trials and deadlines and what they will require from the players. The players can then work their own commitments around this diary.
  - d. By November the selectors should make their initial report to Council. Players must not be told of their selection until Council have resolved the grants that the players will get.
  - e. There has been a problem this year because of the increase in international tournaments.
  - f. Communication with the Players must be through the CEO
  - g. Each area must appoint their selector by May

This was approved by Council and should now go to the selectors for their comments.

2. The CEO's comments in his report that a team manager be appointed to oversee training were approved but it may be difficult to find someone to take over this role. Training may be an excellent idea for those players who do not have the experience and to encourage aspiring Welsh internationals. The juniors have a team manager Elaine Sharp.
3. Perhaps we should appoint a man to be the team manager for our Ladies international team. If this proves to be a success than it could be extended to the Men's team. There would be financial implications as in principle there would be a budget for the training programme.

## **8 International Funding:**

1. A number of views have been put forward including a motion at present before Council from West Wales. A suggested figure of £10,000.00 could be the starting point. It is important to keep income and expenditure in balance as we could be spending in one year £40k. Perhaps Council should cap expenditure for the year. The difficulty is this year we will be spending far more because of the increase in international tournaments and the Olympics. In any event the expenditure is not equal each year and does fluctuate. We receive £6k each year and so we could increase the base figure to £12k. Council has to decide as a matter of principle as to how you allocate the money between the respective teams before the sub committee meets.
2. The junior team is under 28 so some if not all may be in gainful employment and we could perhaps ask them to contribute. This will reduce the £3k cost by half. If we enter a junior team in Beijing we do get financial assistance for our Ladies team in that they would receive free accommodation. Also our current team is significantly better than the under 25 team we selected. John Salisbury is seeking funding from the Welsh assembly and Elaine Sharp is pursuing other means for funding the team.
3. In order to balance our financial commitment Council does not pay the entry fee for the two Senior teams other than a modest gesture. This would leave money over to give a modest grant to the other teams.
4. It is proposed that we adopt the motion by West Wales with the proviso that the budget be increased to £12,000.00. This was carried.
5. It would seem that the WBU due to the situation with the selectors to have agreed to pay the entry fee for the 7 teams (2 of which may be free). After payment of the entry fee we must then allocate what money remains. There may be difficulty in the allocation as the open team is for one week unless they qualify when they will need to stay for a further week. The allocation of funds to be decided by the CEO and the Treasurer.
6. Council should inform Elaine Sharp that £1,600.00 has been allocated towards travelling expenses and to let her decide how this money can be used to the best advantage for the team.
7. Council has to consider the cost of the Ladies' team to go to Pau. We only seem to have 2 ladies pairs going although there is a standby 3<sup>rd</sup> Pair. The difficulty has been caused by some selectors notifying players that they have been selected before the

announcement of the team. The selectors must confirm that the Ladies team that is going to Pau is a competent team and on confirmation of this the WBU will pay their entry fee.

8. If people want to see the juniors getting training in Welsh Congresses then Elaine Sharp must be approached to organise this.
9. Council with the aid of the Selectors needs to define who is eligible to play for Wales and once eligibility has been defined should be implemented over the coming year.

## **9. AGM:**

No resolutions have been received to date for discussion at the forthcoming AGM. The following have agreed to stand and will be nominated by Council:

Jean Hand	President
Linda Greenland	Treasurer
Ken Richardson	NTO
Noelle Bond	Master Points Secretary
Barry Robinson	Auditor
Margaret Van de Weyer	Minutes Secretary

The AGM will take place in Porthcawl on the 18<sup>th</sup> May. There will be a short committee meeting prior to the AGM at 10.30.

## **10. Any other Business:**

1. The Welsh team which is travelling Ireland on the weekend of the 7<sup>th</sup> May is to take the trophy with them as the last winners were the CB team .
2. When the CEO was selected in July 2007 his position was to be reviewed at the February meeting. If we continue with the CEO's appointment and fees at this meeting then it can go in the journal. It must be noted that the work load has changed. The CEO's



time has been taken up by expenditure and funding which has taken more time than anticipated. It was agreed that Neville Richards has done an excellent job and it was proposed that the fee remains the same for this year.

The President thanked Neville for the wonderful job that he had done since he was appointed.

3. Areas should stick to the deadline for playing the heats for national qualifying events as the date for the finals could not be set and posed problems accordingly for the qualifiers . Difficulties had occurred with the teams of 8 as Mid Wales had not played their heats in time due to lack of venue. Council was assured that Mid Wales would comply in future.
4. The break between events in the Camrose should be longer which would give the Captains greater flexibility in announcing the players for each round. The squad to play should be announced at the first session. It is also easier for the Captain to watch the hands on Bridge base.

The next Council meeting will be on the **20<sup>th</sup> July 2008**