

## WELSH BRIDGE UNION

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2009 (edited for small changes made at meeting 1/11/09).

Present:

President:	Alan Screen
Immediate Past President:	Jean Hand
Vice- Presidents:	Chris Davies (WWBA) Allan James (NWBA) Mike Best (EWBA) Mike Tedd (MWBA)
Area Delegates	Judith Graham-Jones (substitute for Anne Davies) & Beryl Warner (WWBA) Jean Cufley & Dewi Jones (MWBA) Jill Knight & Peter Hand (substitute for Margaret Smith) (NWBA) Joan Jenkins & Gwynn Davis (EWBA)
Chief Executive:	Neville Richards
Treasurer:	Linda Greenland

**Apologies for Absence:** Sheila Shea (NTO elect), Anne Davies (West). Alan Jones, Junior Co-ordinator who had been invited by The President to address Council on the issue of support and funding of Junior Teams and Council's commitment to Junior Bridge.

The President welcomed members to the meeting especially those newly appointed.

**Minutes Secretary:** The President reported that because of the resignation of Margaret Van de Weyer as Minutes Secretary it would be necessary to appoint a replacement at the start of this meeting. Although a volunteer had offered to take this role, it was commented by Beryl Warner that this vacancy and the vacancy of the NTO should have been advertised to Clubs. The President invited nominations; Jean Cufley and Judith Graham-Jones were each duly proposed and seconded and left the meeting while a vote was taken. Judith Graham-Jones was elected.

Mrs Beryl Warner asked for an assurance that in future such matters be openly announced to Clubs and on the website; the President gave such an assurance. (NB the primary concern is to fill a vacancy caused by a resignation as swiftly as possible and notifying every club is unwieldy and time consuming. A posting on the website is adequate. The President believed that both resignations and consequent vacancies were public knowledge.)

- 1 Minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2009, were subject to the following corrections confirmed nem.con.
  - 1.3 after people insert "viewing the sessions on-line."
  - 1.4 Delete "Filip Kurbalija is in charge of the training budget"
  - 3.1 a. insert "in numbers" after "improvement"

- b. delete "comply" insert "compile."
- d. insert "a Magazine/Newsletter" before editor.

7.1 Delete 2010 insert 2011

## 2 **Matters arising** from those Minutes

- 1.2 Standing Orders - Judith Graham-Jones reported no progress but will rectify that by the next Council meeting.

**Action JGJ**

- 3.1.b List of Bridge teachers: Dewi Jones asked that this be treated as a matter of urgency.

**Action CEO**

- 3.3.b Tournament Directors' fees. Clarification was sought and it was explained that TDs in Wales should not receive a lower fee than their English counterparts

- 6.1 Role of the CEO - a working party consisting of the President, CEO, Mike Tedd, Jean Hand, Linda Greenland and Gwynn Davis would be convened by the CEO to discuss this and other structural issues of the WBU.

**Action CEO**

Linda Greenland observed that there has been no change in these matters since the inauguration of the WBU in 1948.

A report from this sub-committee will be available for the next Council meeting in November.

**Action CEO & Committee**

This committee is referred to below as the "**Structure Reform Working Party**".

Before leaving item 2 of the March minutes, Judith Graham-Jones observed that as that would probably have been the last meeting of Council attended by Patrick Jourdain, for the foreseeable future, Council may consider it appropriate for a letter to be sent to him expressing Council's appreciation of the hard work over many years and contribution that he had made to the functioning of Council. This proposal was agreed.

**Action President**

## 3 **Council meeting 17 May**

There being no Minutes a report was given from memory. One suggestion had been that the AGM be held at a more central venue and separate from Perry & Spickett. This was referred to the Structure Reform Working Party appointed above (2.6.1).

## 4 **Correspondence**

John Wain (NWBA) had suggested that the WBU be part of a Welsh Games Council with other games bodies such as Chess. Such a body could perhaps apply for lottery funding. Linda Greenland had already researched the matter

and discovered that the other Games organisations did not have a parent body; therefore the burden of administration would fall on the WBU. Judith Graham-Jones emphasised the arduous work entailed in applications for lottery money. Matching money for any grant to be obtained could negate the effort involved in the application and, in any event, when the subscription rate and other funds of WBU were made available to the Lottery she thought it unlikely that there would be any progress in such an approach. It was agreed not to pursue this idea.

Arising from that discussion Mike Tedd reminded members that Bridge had been accepted as a Mind Game/Sport by the Olympic committee. It could be more fruitful to pursue an approach in that direction particularly for the promotion of youngsters' involvement in Bridge. Gwynn Davis suggested an approach to the EBU to see if they had tried this route. It was agreed that John Wain be invited to explore this possibility.

**Action: CEO, John Wain**

## **5 Reports – all on file**

### **5.1 CEO - The report was received and the following matters discussed;**

- 5.1.1 **Agreed** to purchase playing cards bearing the WBU logo and barcoded – suitable for either duplimate or hand dealing. A proposal by Mike Best that they be sold to clubs at a subsidised price was referred to Finance Committee.

**Action CEO**

- 5.1.2 CEO outlined a possible scheme whereby members would be able to access services from suppliers at preferential rates including WBU ties, scarves etc. WBU would not be involved financially for VAT reasons.

**Action CEO/President**

- 5.1.3 Public Liability insurance for Clubs now available at under £70 p.a.

- 5.1.4 A need for Training for Tournament Directors at Club and Area level was agreed.

**Action CEO/Treasurer**

- 5.1.5 A request from a third party to include on the WBU website a link to an on-line Poker website was rejected.

### **5.2 Treasurer - Linda Greenland introduced her report and referred to the following items:**

- 5.2.1 Our VAT registration ends on Tuesday 21 July.

- 5.2.2 Mike Best queried the status of the World Fund and Council was given a clear exposition including the fact that BGB income is designed to meet obligations for international events (members' subs, do not subsidise such events) the World Fund supports European and World events, including a proportion of CEO's time spent on such matters. The Treasurer had never intended that the Fund should reach its present level but there must always be a reserve to

cover e.g. the unlikely event of participation in the Bermuda Bowl. Camrose and Lady Milne costs are met by the general fund.

Beryl Warner asked how much longer can WBU depend upon a BGB contribution; the current agreement extends for the foreseeable future. However, we must be aware that the other home Countries, Scotland and England, could seek a review of the apportionment of BGB funds. The last review was about 3 years ago.

5.2.3 Regarding the Finance Committee's request that Honoraria be reviewed, Judith Graham-Jones requested a reduction in the honorarium paid to the Minutes Secretary, as she considered the previous amount excessive.

5.2.4 The schedule of **International Events** (i.e. European) prepared by the Treasurer and on file was tabled.

### **European Teams Championships 2010 at Ostend**

5.2.5 Any entry fees would be paid by WBU - agreed.

The treasurer's paper showed that, based on current income persisting, there would be some £15,000 available to support selected teams. It had been agreed at previous meetings that the Open Team has a priority for grant funding and the treasurer's recommendation was accepted. Each player would receive a grant of £500 and provision would be made for a non-playing captain and a scorer.

Re Women and Seniors, the following points were made:

- a. that there should be training for prospective international players (Jill Knight)
- b. that selected teams should be capable of competing at international level (Gwynn Davis)
- c. that teams should commit by entering high level competitions in UK over time and that when such commitment has been demonstrated then there should be WBU funding. (Gwynn Davis)
- d. it was suggested that there should be a pool of Ladies created who must commit to training and high level experience for 2-3 years (Chris Davies)

The President summarised discussion, suggesting that Seniors' and Women's teams, recommended by the selectors, should receive a grant of £250 per player. AGREED

NOTE: if any team is not fielded the available monies could be re-allocated.

5.3 **Junior Co-ordinator** - A Report from Alan Jones was received and Council confirmed its commitment to continuing support, including financial, for Junior Bridge, at both development and international levels. Various concerns were expressed by Mike Best, Gwynn Davies and Mike Tedd that Juniors tend to leave the Principality for further education and employment and it may be that they will never return when they are older.

Suggestions were made that members living locally to Congress/Competition venues could offer overnight accommodation to Juniors. Travel expenses could perhaps be underwritten from the Juniors' budget.

Council supported the view that Juniors, and indeed all Welsh Players, should register their Master Points with the WBU rather than other Bridge Unions. For those who continue to register with the EBU rather than Wales it should be possible to obtain the necessary information from the EBU to list them in The Journal under a separate heading.

It was reported that Elaine Sharpe, who is responsible for development of junior Bridge in Wales, is willing to attend any school to give introductory bridge sessions. Elaine is keen to build on her success at Monmouth Comprehensive, in which she has been ably assisted by members of Monmouth BC. Elaine sought continuing financial support for her activities, which Council confirmed.

Alan Jones and Elaine Sharpe were thanked for their reports.

The President urged all delegates to help identify schools which would be willing to invite Elaine to introduce Mini-Bridge to their pupils.

**Action all delegates**

- 5.4 **Selection Committee** - It was reported that Tom Reddy who had been elected Chairman of Selectors at their recent meeting has subsequently resigned as a selector. The previous Chairman, Peter Garner-Gray having died earlier this year, means that there are now vacancies for selectors to be nominated by each of North and West Wales Areas.

The CEO had asked each of Mike Close, Paul Gagne and Laura Woodruff if he/she would be interested in filling a vacancy. West Wales reported that it was hopeful of making a nomination soon. North Wales had discussed the post with Simon Edwards but he had not confirmed either way.

Concerns were voiced re the non-attendance of Selectors at Trials and on occasion a less than enthusiastic and efficient presence.

## 5.5 Area Chairmen

The President had introduced this item because he hoped that Areas could derive ideas from activities in other Areas. All the Reports are on file.

Mid-Wales is considering an event aimed at players and non-playing spouses to be held at a National Trust property. Also stands at e.g. Urdd National Eisteddfod.

North Wales is having a competition for players below a certain level with lots of prizes for everyone.

West Wales is targeting non-tournament and emerging players with significant success at its AGM event (John Isaac salver) and the Porthcawl Congress

East reported that their energies were being turned to more social events to involve more club members rather than just the regular tournament players.

## 6. **Appointments**

- 6.1 **National Tournament Officer** - Sheila Shea had indicated a willingness to accept this post with Mike Best taking responsibility for The Welsh and Cambria Cups. The Journal would be the duty of the CEO. Gwynn Davis remarked that this post contains a totally unwieldy package. The Sub-Committee appointed at item 2.6.1 will be asked to include this matter in its brief. Sheila had indicated in her offer to take the role that she would be examining the continued viability or appropriateness of some of the traditional competitions.

The NTO will be asked to Review the Competition Calendar and Rules.

A query was raised re the venue(s) for Competitions. Builth Wells Showground has become too expensive to hire, so other options will be considered.

A unilateral decision had been made to delete the Graded Masters from the programme; however it was agreed to re-instate it for the time being.

Dewi Jones asked that consideration be given to uniting the two Veteran Pairs heats into one event located in Mid-Wales. The President reported that the new NTO was considering the continuance of this event.

- 6.2 **Newsletter or Magazine editor** - Jean Cufley has offered to assist in news gathering and lay-out but as yet no editor has been found.
- 6.3 **Selectors** - Jim Luck (East), Alan Screen (Mid) plus Council appointees Paul Denning, Paddy Murphy, and John Salisbury. Two vacancies, NWBA and WWBA
- 6.4 **Membership Secretary** - Mike Bond
- 6.5 **Junior Co-ordinator** - Alan Jones. **Assistant Junior Co-ordinator** - Elaine Sharpe
- 6.6 **Laws & Ethics Committee** - Anne Jones, David Stevenson; it was agreed to invite Patrick Jourdain to serve. Peter Hand volunteered if Patrick declines.  
**Action President**
- 6.7 **Tournaments and Master Points Committee** - Noelle Bond, Sheila Shea (NTO) and each Area Tournament Organiser.
- 6.8 **National Tournament Director Co-ordinator** – vacancy, the Treasurer having confirmed that Ken Richardson had resigned this post.  
**Action: Webmaster**

## **7 Any Other Business**

- 7.1 A query was raised as to the status of Tony Haworth when his ban expires in November 2009. The Chairman of the Laws & Ethics Committee had advised the President that he will be entitled to membership of the WBU and to have his Master point holding reinstated, if he so requests.
- 7.2 Arising from a complaint at the Perry and Spickett venue this year, it was requested, by Allan James and generally agreed, that any complaint regarding accommodation or food, at the venue, should be made to the event organisers and not the hotel management.
- 7.3 The publication of an increased charge of £2 table money for First Qualifying rounds of National Open and Mixed Pairs was queried. The fee had been increased from £1.50 by the previous NTO. Council accepted the change.
- 7.4 Gwynn Davies questioned the large size of the Journal. Opinions included:
- a. most non-tournament player members wanted to see where they stood in the rankings
  - b. the cost of production of such a bulky booklet outweighed the advantages.

### **Action: Structure Reform Working Party**

- 7.5 It was agreed that Council meetings should start at 11a.m. instead of 10.30 a.m.

The President thanked all for attending and contributing to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 14.20 hours