

WELSH BRIDGE UNION

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 14th March 2010 (including corrections agreed at subsequent meetings)

President:	Alan Screen
Vice-Presidents:	Mike Best (EWBA) Chris Davies (WWBA) Mike Tedd (MWBA)
Area Delegates:	Judith Graham-Jones & Kate Craven (WWBA) Jean Cuffley & Dewi Jones (MWBA) Joan Jenkins (EWBA) Peter Hand & Jill Knight (NWBA)
Chief Executive:	Neville Richards
Hon.Treasurer:	Linda Greenland

It was reported that the Chairman of NWBA had resigned on grounds of ill health. His place was taken by the NWBA Acting Vice-President Marie Topp.

Apologies for absence: Noelle Bond, Sheila Shea, Jean Hand, Gwynn Davis

1 Minutes of the meeting held on 1st November 2009.

Approved nem.con.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

2.1.2 Minutes 9 July 2009 Standing Orders 2

A paper with further information had been circulated by Judith Graham-Jones; thus far she had received no comments/suggestions and it was agreed that progress should not be made pending possible Constitutional changes.

5.1.Minutes 1st November. Brecon Bridge Club

Council's offer of a loan had not been taken up. It was agreed that a grant might be available for teaching associated initiatives.

5.3 Buffett Cup It was reported that the event is generating enthusiasm and excitement; Bridge luminaries such as Zia Mahmood, Rothwell and Meckstroth had indicated their intention to play.

3. National Tournament Organiser's Report.

Received with thanks and congratulations especially upon the success of the Graded Masters competition although it was acknowledged that greater numbers and therefore more flights would be desirable.

The importance of holding Area Finals on the same day in each Area was emphasised. Chris Davies commented upon the casual approach of many players towards entering competitions by the due date; it was agreed that there should be greater publicity of deadlines. The non appearance of the Veteran Pairs was again regretted. The President urged Areas to approach the NTO if they wished this competition to return to the Calendar.

4 Chief Executive Officer's Report.

4.1 WBU Simultaneous Pairs

There was considerable discussion regarding the number of Clubs in Wales that do not participate in these twice yearly events and it was agreed to make more strenuous efforts to attract them in to a relatively inexpensive event with a commentary aimed at Club rather than tournament players. Paul Gagne and Diana Harris who wrote the commentary would welcome feed back on their commentaries. Swansea BC has asked for low-cost Inter Club Simultaneous pairs to be organised.

4.2 Electronic registration of Master Points

Within three years the WBU must fall in line with the other Home Unions and have abandoned the issue of paper Master Points. There is also concern should the computer systems run by the Master Points Secretary and the Membership Secretary, both housed at the same site suffer catastrophic breakdown. It was agreed that after the AGM in May there should be discussion with Noelle Bond re forward planning on these matters during the next three years.

4.3 In the absence of a formal report from the Laws & Ethics Committee the President reported that the Committee had recommended:

- a. that there be sufficient hand records available at the end of competitions
- b. there must be adequate staffing levels during events
- c. All Club Tournament Directors should have access to a current Orange/White book.

It is current policy to give new editions of the Books to each affiliated Club . They can also be down loaded from the EBU website..

5 Treasurer's Report

This had been circulated together with the Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 12th March and is on file.

Perusal of the income and expenditure accounts revealed a likely deficit of £5000 p.a for at least the next five years; the Treasurer expressed herself content with this.

The costs arising from Home International matches and participation in International events aroused considerable discussion. In 2011 the Camrose will be costly with the first weekend in Northern Ireland and the second hosted in Wales; the latter entitles WBU to a second team so there will be six to nine pairs playing. Although England and Northern Ireland players fund their own expenses it was agreed that both our teams should be fully funded. However players must be informed that they have to book cheapest flights available.

Consideration was given to a possible entry to the Commonwealth Games event in India in October 2010. Such entry was supported by Mike Tedd who observed that Wales stood a reasonable chance of doing well. It was proposed by Chris Davies, seconded by Kate Craven that the entry fee only be funded for this event; approved nem.con.

Arising from the Minutes of the Finance Committee Linda Greenland proposed, Dewi Jones seconded the proposal that the WBU subscription remain at £6 for the year 2011-12. Agreed nem.con.

It was agreed that approx. £40,000 be retained in the World Fund for the time being until the BGB Simultaneous Pairs income becomes clearer.

Council confirmed the Committee's view that it would be desirable to reduce the amount of money in the Monmouthshire Building Society with a shift to another investment.

ACTION HON.TREASURER

It was also agreed to retain the current mileage rate of 30p per mile. The Committee had suggested a review of officers' honoraria in relation to workloads. Jean Cuffley and Judith Graham Jones agreed to undertake this task and report back to Council. The Minutes Secretary Judith Graham-Jones had already indicated that she considered the current honorarium for that post to be excessive and would be happy to accept £150 for the current year without prejudice to subsequent post holders who might not also be Area delegates in receipt of mileage allowance.

Council conveyed its thanks to the Finance Committee and the Hon Treasurer for their work on these essential matters.

6 Selectors' Report

After considerable discussion on the issue of table money for Pre Trials it was proposed by Judith Graham-Jones, seconded by Peter Hand that entrants should pay £20 table money. Carried by a majority.

Mike Tedd proposed, seconded by Joan Jenkins, that those exempt from the Pre-Trials should pay £20 at the Open Trial. Carried by a majority.

Such one-off payments will cover all Trial entries.

Captains and Scorers where necessary will be funded; the Treasurer has budgeted £700-£900 for Captain and £500 for Scorer at Ostend.

Mike Tedd suggested that there is no need for a non-playing Captain for the Seniors; however Linda Greenland suggested that the teams be consulted on the matter.

In view of the need for two teams at the forthcoming Camrose event to be hosted in Wales Chris Davies requested early publicity to encourage potential pairs to establish a proven partnership before trialling.

The Chief Executive reported that Margaret Lane would be retiring from post of Match Manager and invited suggestions for her replacement.

Council conveyed its appreciation of the excellent work done by Margaret Lane and regretted her departure.

7 Junior Camrose and Peggy Bayer Reports

These were received with thanks to the respective Captains.

While the Captain and co-ordinator of the Peggy Bayer team was congratulated on its performance, Council found the Junior Camrose result very disappointing and concluded that the team was not of sufficient standard. The Captain James Ewington had indicated his wish to stand down and Council agreed to endorse his decision.

In further discussion on Junior bridge it was reported that two schools in Aberystwyth may be starting bridge tuition. Chris Davies reported the possible appointments of "Learning Coaches" in schools for projects running up to 8pm on school days. Such individuals may prove to be useful in advancing bridge in schools. Mention of the appointment of an Education Officer within the report of the Chief Executive should be actively pursued.

8 Management Structure of the WBU.

The President invited those present to indicate their support or otherwise for reform and it was agreed nem.con that there should be change.

The following amendments to the original working group proposals were made:

A NWBA that there should be one appointee to the management team from each Area to be appointed by the Areas annually with no limit to the term of office. This was agreed with the proviso that in the event of such Area appointee being unavailable for a significant time during the year of office an Acting replacement be appointed.

It was then formally proposed and duly seconded that there be Constitutional change that day to day management be devolved from Council to a team comprised of the President, Chief Executive Officer, Hon. Treasurer, National Tournament Organiser and four Area appointees. On a show of hands the proposal was carried with nine in favour, two against.

B The Finance Committee be retained and will continue to meet when necessary and certainly prior to Council meetings. Agreed nem.con

C Council will meet twice a year perhaps in October and March.

It will be necessary to consider when appointed officers viz. Master Points and Membership Secretary, Tournament Director Co-ordinator, Selectors will be determined.

Also the timing of the annual re-appointment of the Chief Executive must be determined

D The proposal to enable an additional Presidential year of office if necessary was rejected.

Mike Tedd offered to prepare a paper revising the proposed changes which will be sent to Council members for information and comment.

Feedback on the acceptability of the proposals was requested by the President; such information would support or otherwise the urgency of a Special General Meeting..

Mike Tedd was thanked for the considerable amount of work that he had applied to the papers connected with the proposals.

9 Profits from Congresses and Licence fees.

(This item was raised under Other Business previously notified to the Presidents but there were no supporting papers)

Discussion points embraced matters such as the ultimate destination of Congress profits i.e. General or International Funds, VAT thresholds, BGB policies, Licence fee per table per session. Mike Best proposed that profits be applied to the General Fund. However some Council members were unhappy to make a decision in the absence of more information and time in which to consider the facts and it was decided to do so for one year and to reconsider the issue at a later date.

10 A proposal to change the arrangement whereby Clubs send their subscriptions to the Membership Secretary instead of their Area Treasurer as happened some years ago was referred back to the Finance Committee.

11 Re-appointment of Chief Executive Officer.

It was agreed to re-appoint Neville Richard for the year beginning July 2010, with a small increase in remuneration for his services. Council recorded its appreciation of his work during the past year.

The President thanked those present for their attendance and efforts.

The meeting closed at 3.45pm