

WELSH BRIDGE UNION

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 18th July 2010

President:	Adrian Thomas
Immediate Past President:	Alan Screen
Vice-Presidents:	Mike Best (EWBA) Chris Davies (WWBA) Mike Tedd (MWBA) Marie Topp, (Acting Chairman NWBA)
Area Delegates:	Bob Alderdice & Kate Craven (WWBA) Jean Cufley & Dewi Jones (MWBA) Jean Hand & Jill Knight (NWBA) Gwynn Davis & Joan Jenkins (EWBA)
Chief Executive:	Neville Richards
Hon Treasurer:	Linda Greenland
Minute Secretary:	Judith Graham-Jones.

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2010

Subject to the following correction, Minute 5. line 20: after World Fund add “until uncertainty re income from BGB income is resolved”, it was proposed by Dewi Jones seconded by Marie Topp that the Minutes be adopted; agreed nem.con.

2. Matters arising from the Minutes.

2.1.2 Standing Orders.

The urgency for this initiative had been highlighted by the conduct of the short Council meeting prior to the AGM; this meeting had traditionally been brief, intended to consider the Annual Accounts and any emergency matter only and it had not therefore been necessary to publish an agenda for that meeting. On 16th May 2010 an attempt had been made to raise other matters for which no prior notice had been given.

On a vote 12 in favour and two against, it was agreed that any item for decision must be published on an Agenda two weeks before the AGM. It was noted that the Chairman of the meeting could allow discussion of other items, as happened at the May meeting.

Officers' reports should be circulated one week before the Meeting.

5. Treasurer's Report

5.1 World Fund

Clarification was sought re the £40,000 to be retained in the World Fund. The Treasurer explained that she would manage the World Fund so that it would stay above this level, taking into account anticipated income.

5.2 Officers' Honoraria

Responses to the questionnaire circulated by Jean Cufley had been received and copied to members of Council; it was agreed that this was a complex issue and that

resolution of the matter should be referred to the new management team if and when it is established.

6. Match Manager.

Thus far no replacement had been found for Margaret Lane.

Jean Hand and the CEO had made inquiries re a venue for the 2011 Camrose match. There was some debate re possible venues and the suggestion that this match might be held in the North. However it was observed by the Treasurer that the challenge was in finding volunteers close to the venue.

Jean Hand emphasised that time is fast running out for the reservation of a suitable venue not only for the Camrose but also the Lady Milne in 2012.

It was agreed that WBU is moving to a situation where a professional match manager will be needed. A Tournament Director for the weekend costs £150-200 and it may be a possibility to combine this role with that of Match Manager assisted by volunteers some of whom may need bed and breakfast payments.

3. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 16th May 2010.

Agreed nem.con.

4. Matters arising from those Minutes.

There had been unrest because an increase in table money had been agreed without prior notice on an agenda – there had been no agenda circulated. See 2.1.2 above. However the increase will stand.

5. Minutes of the AGM held on 16th May 2010

These were circulated for review only. However two matters raised by Paul Gagne were considered. See 5.1 and 5.2 below.

There was a plea for Reports to be circulated and not read out and this was endorsed by Council.

5.1 Use of table screens. Before such use be considered it had to be born in mind that, while it is useful for potential international players to gain experience in their use, screens are expensive, they have to be stored and are unwieldy to transport. However the CEO will bring proposals to the next Council meeting, and should such drawbacks be overcome Council will determine at which competitions they will be used. It was noted that screens are not used at the Senior Camrose matches as they are considered to be somewhat antisocial.

It was agreed that for the Finals of the Welsh and Cambria Cups captains would agree whether or not to use screens.

It was proposed that screens be used for the Perry Shield; on a vote there was one in favour, ten against with three abstentions.

Arising from this discussion it was agreed that in future the Final of the Welsh and Cambria Cups should be held in Wales rather than in England.

5.2 In Swiss events results and assignments be displayed on a wall screen; the former practice is already sometimes followed but it was not considered necessary for the latter.

6. Nominations of members of Sub Committees

6.1 Finance Committee

Chairman Hon.Treasurer Linda Greenland; Bob Alderdice, Joan Jenkins, Dewi Jones, John Wain. Agreed

6.2 Laws & Ethics Committee

Chairman Anne Jones, Patrick Jourdain, David Stevenson. Agreed

6.3 Tournament and Master Points Committee

Pending decision on the revised structure of management this was reappointed: chaired by the NTO with the four ATO's and the Master Points Secretary.

7. National Tournament Organiser's Report.

Due to an administrative error this had not been distributed in advance of the meeting.

A query was raised re the rolling Calendar which used to be available at each Council meeting but appears to have been abandoned. A request was made for a draft Calendar to be circulated. It was reported that the NTO had been unaware that she had a responsibility for the Calendar. It was agreed to ask Sheila to produce a calendar for the next 3 years taking into account EBU dates and to maintain the calendar with provisional dates for three years.

It was agreed that in future the March council meeting will be the latest opportunity to consider the Calendar. It certainly needs to be available for the next Council meeting, date as yet undecided, but likely to be in September or October.

8. Chief Executive Officer's Report.

This had been circulated and is on file.

8.1. The President regretted that e-mails between the CEO and Noelle and Michael Bond had been made public; this view was supported by Council and it was agreed that in future such exchanges should be confined to the individuals concerned.

The Master Points Secretary has endorsed the Council's policy to follow the EBU with electronic scoring. All Clubs will need to use Scorebridge or similar programmes from 1st April 2011.

Mike Tedd proposed and it was agreed nem.con to thank Mike Bond for his work as Membership Secretary. The Treasurer agreed to offer him payment for his work done up to the date of his resignation.

It was confirmed nem.con that Margaret Richards be Acting Membership Secretary.

8.2. Bridgemates.

It was agreed nem.con to augment the existing stock to 50 units.

8.3. Bridge Great Britain.

The prospect of a significantly reduced share of BGB income could jeopardise the WBU's ability to send teams abroad. Council was content for the CEO to pursue this important matter along with SBU to the benefit of WBU.

8.4. Tournament Directors' courses.

Plans are in hand for such a programme as a number of enthusiastic individuals wish to attend such events.

8.5. Bridge teachers' training courses.

Council agreed that such an initiative would be desirable.

9. Treasurer's Report.

A paper was tabled itemising the current financial situation.

The Treasurer reminded members that if in the future the income from BGB is greatly reduced, choices will have to be made, for example only one team per international event might be supported. The Finance sub-committee advises that the past situation can no longer continue and the Selectors will have to pick the best team that could perform reasonably well. The view was expressed that perhaps recently not all teams have been of an appropriate standard to represent Wales and that more training and development input is needed. At present the Open Team is of sufficient quality but in some years' time several of its current members will be eligible as Seniors.

The Selection procedure was called into question and after discussion the following principles were established:

- A The Juniors are currently not good enough to attend the Junior European Championships this year but the WBU will support their training and development.
- B Only the Open team should represent Wales at the European Championships to be held in Greece.
- C The Olympiad; if held in London two teams might go, providing they are of sufficient standard and finances permit.

After a query from Mike Tedd it was agreed that Teams of sufficient quality could be considered for competitions on a self funding basis with a contract signed in advance to avoid any subsequent claims for repayment.

Home international teams would continue to compete and questions of more equitable funding for Seniors should be addressed by the new Selection Committee (see 10 below.)

Current grants for training may need to be increased from £1000p.a as development is an urgent need.

10. Selectors Report.

John Salisbury has resigned as Chairman of Selectors but not as a Selector.

There was a review of the entire Selection process and it was generally agreed that the time had come for a new approach, including which teams should be allocated financial support. A new Selection Committee should be formed.

Training and development of potential successful partnerships should become a priority.

The intention would be to create a slimmed down selection body assisted by the Treasurer in order to ensure that selection and funding decisions are viewed as a whole, and that a coherent approach is taken to what can be difficult contentious issues.

Opinions were sought as to the ideal number of Selectors providing that none of them had a vested interest. There was consensus that three minimum would be acceptable, but this would require a change in the Constitution. Applications including from current selectors for these positions would be invited and perhaps selectors sought from outside Wales. The necessary qualifications are a good understanding of the demands of representative bridge, sound judgement, and a commitment to fairness and openness in decision-making.

The President offered to find three selectors with Linda Greenland as an advisor so that financial considerations could be born in mind.

11. Management Structure of the WBU.

It was agreed that there should be a Special General Meeting to consider the proposals. The only feasible venue in the near future would be at the Welsh Foursomes 4-5 September.

Mike Tedd offered to prepare a paper to be circulated to all Clubs explaining the proposal in time for the required notice of 28 days.

12. Level 5 Permissions

The Laws and Ethics Committee had made certain recommendations but it was agreed to delay action until the President had asked the Chairman of that Committee for clarification as to the appropriate extent of applicability.

13. Buffett Cup.

A request had been made for financial support from WBU for sponsorship of one of the dinners for players at this event.

There was lively discussion while various other options such as gift mementos were considered; however notwithstanding the original policy of non-commitment to financial assistance for this event there was another view that the WBU would appear churlish if it failed to give any support at all.

Bearing in mind that these prestigious players would be visiting Wales the WBU was between a rock and a hard place. It was proposed by Gwynn Davis that there be a £500 donation for sponsorship of a dinner to be identified as a WBU hospitality event with the President representing WBU. On a vote the proposal was approved, with 8 in favour 5 against and 2 abstentions.

Date of the Next Meeting: To be advised, possibly earlier than listed in Journal.

The President thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 4.40pm.