NATIONAL DIRECTORS REPORT
SUMMER 2021

The ACBL Board of Directors held its summer meetings via Zoom July 14-16, 2021. During these unprecedented times, the ACBL Board of Directors, committees and work groups continue to meet regularly through conference calls, GoToMeeting and Zoom.

The information presented in this report has been sourced from the following:

- Summer Management Report.
- ACBL Board and staff.
- July motions -- attached.

FINANCE

Operating gain for the first five months of the year is just over $900K; non-operating gain is $150K. ACBL presently has $19M in assets. With the resumption of face-to-face tournament bridge, revised projections for year-end 2021, show a gain from operations of about $130K. This is highly dependent on the success of NABC Austin in November, the first national tournament held by the ACBL in two years.

The reduction in projected operational gain is because face-to-face regional tournaments do not provide the ACBL with the same level of income as online regional tournaments, and the ACBL is currently planning only one more online regional tournament in August of this year. Net income from face-to-face regional tournaments goes to the district or unit sponsor while net income from online tournaments goes directly to the ACBL.

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL RECORDER

The Office of the National Recorder, headed by Robb Gordon, continues to see a substantial number of player memos generated from online play. Most of the memos involve unethical behavior. As of July 2021, over 630 player memos have been received.

The volume of player memos is expected to decrease as the ACBL transitions to face-to-face tournament play. Player memos generated during face-to-face play are more commonly conduct related.

Whether playing online or face-to-face, the message from Robb Gordon remains clear: “If you 'see' something, 'say' something. Do not state it in public or accuse someone. Fill out a player memo. I guarantee we will investigate.”

More than 15 volunteers currently support the investigative process. District Disciplinary Committees will become more active as face-to-face play resumes.

Compliance Coordinator Sabrina Goley has been promoted to the roles of Administrative Coordinator and Assistant Corporate Secretary. Her duties as they relate to the Office of the National Recorder will be limited to disciplinary matters.

APPEALS AND CHARGES COMMITTEE

The Appeals and Charges Committee presented its report on (a) hearings and (b) revisions to the Code of Disciplinary Regulations.

During "Special" board meetings, A&C previously reported on hearings it had held since the March 2021 Board meeting. Under Item 212-01 Report on Hearings, A&C reported on its two most recent hearings: A Negotiated Resolution and an automatic review of an Online Ethical Oversight Committee hearing.

Under Item 212-02 CDR Revisions, A&C presented a revision that was then approved by the Board during the meeting. This revision includes substantial clarifications and simplifications, and a reorganization that includes deletion of Article IX and Appendix A and moves their provisions elsewhere within the CDR. A new section was added to provide guidance to all disciplinary bodies on how to determine appropriate disciplines. Disciplinary options were greatly simplified, improving the process for application of discipline.

An online tour of the ACBL website demonstrated means to access disciplinary case disposition charts, hearing reports and helpful documents. All of the decisions of our Disciplinary Committees (set out in “Hearing Reports”) and summaries of the results can be found here: https://tinyurl.com/yevw898s

BYLAWS COMMITTEE

The Bylaws Committee brought forward a motion -- Item 212-04 -- (first reading) to make certain technical amendments to the ACBL Bylaws, Article IX, Board of Governors, correcting omissions made effective April 2021.

MEMBERSHIP

ACBL membership continues to decrease slightly each month, down approximately 9.0% since last year. Currently, the ACBL has approximately 146,300 members.

CLUBS

Over 85 percent of previously sanctioned clubs have renewed in 2021. This percentage continues to increase slightly as clubs return to live play.

The table counts for Virtual Club games are decreasing as table counts for face-to-face play continue to climb. Table counts below were sourced from an ACBL email sent to club managers on August 4.

Table Counts by Platform	Face-to-Face Tables	Virtual Club Tables	Total Tables
May 2021	17,981	110,169	128,150
June 2021	38,066	86,822	124,888
July 2021	53,230	77,072	130,302

STRATEGIC COMMITTEE

Strategies for a robust return to face-to-face bridge continue to be refined as club openings are monitored and the Delta variant continues to surge. While the majority of the Board favors an invitational/restricted model, discussions regarding an open (unrestricted) market model continue. Therefore, for the near term, the

following prospective actions were discussed along with timelines for implementation:

Eliminate the masterpoint multiplier* for Virtual Club games effective August 2. Due to the cancellation of face-to-face tournaments through August, the multiplier will remain 1.25 percent until further notice.

Add masterpoint limited Support Your Club (SYC) games throughout the day and allow members to designate clubs to share in the revenue generated. Implementation: August.

Increase the Visitor Policy to 20 percent and ensure clubs are in compliance. Implementation: August.

Eliminate multi-district pools except for special/local circumstances where players routinely cross district lines for face-to-face games. 99'er NiteClubs are exempt. Implementation in process.

Phase out VACB sanctions for clubs that are not holding face-to-face club games to be extended by Management for Canada depending on its re-opening schedule. Implementation: December.

Make future VACB sanctions granted to clubs a function of face-to-face sanctions. Implementation as appropriate and not earlier than January 2022.

Allow parallel face-to-face and online games. Implementation in process.

*The online multiplier was established at the onset of the pandemic to incentivize players to participate in Virtual Club games, to generate revenue for clubs and to sustain bridge.

Strategic will convene a series of meetings in August to discuss longer-term issues and actions associated with Virtual Clubs and post-pandemic bridge.

Management Membership Proposals

Strategic presented two proposals from Management.

The first proposal would require players in club games to either have a lapsed, retrievable ACBL member number or to acquire a number by obtaining a Guest

Membership. These actions would support ACBL marketing efforts to encourage individuals to join or re-join the ACBL. The proposal was rejected by the Board.

The second proposal recommends that tournament participants have an active membership. This requirement is already in place for NABC-level events. It would streamline the tournament fee structure and make membership universal for sanctioned tournaments. This proposal was accepted by the Board.

Both actions by the Board were consistent with feedback from the Board of Governors.

GOVERNANCE BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Most of the actions were undertaken by the Governance Committee in advance of the July meeting, and were administrative/housekeeping in nature. All were approved by the Board during the meeting.

The work to update and simplify the Codification, the regulatory document of the Board, continued with motions being put forward to address how and when Board motions are made, Board meeting process and Board minutes. In addition, the Board clarified outdated language in the Codification regarding Board expenses. It also voted to eliminate reimbursement for hotel and per diem expenses for district directors (soon-to-be-regional directors as well), with the exception of the ACBL President and the Board of Governors Chair, between the conclusion of the Board of Directors meeting and the convening of the Board of Governors meeting.

Board Reorganization

Many districts are starting to review their respective bylaws, amending where necessary those portions governing the role of the district director in their districts. This is in anticipation of the elections early this fall for the position of regional director that will begin the reorganization and downsizing of the board of directors. Regional directors will be in place for Region 1 (Districts 1 and 2), Region 2 (Districts 24 and 25), Region 4 (Districts 5 and 6), Region 5 (Districts 12, 13 and 14), Region 6 (District 7), Region 9 (Districts 15 and 16), Region 11 (Districts 22 and 23) and Region 13 (Districts 18 and 19) on January 1, 2022.

Therefore, the Governance Committee began an in-depth review of both Part 1: Governance and Policy and Part 2: Bridge Operations, of the Codification where

there are many references to the roles and responsibilities of the district directors. Per that review and as approved by the Board at this meeting, a number of these current responsibilities will not be assumed by the regional directors replacing them, but instead will become the responsibility of district presidents (or their appointed surrogates). Examples include annual appointments of members from their districts to the National Goodwill and Charity Committees, and approval of sanctions for new club games in their districts.

Codification review will continue through the end of this year, with improvements expected to the communications policy; clarification of the procedures for unit governance, formation and dissolution and the composition of the Board Executive Committee, to name just a few. As the transition to a smaller board gets underway, there are many areas of the Codification that will require changing, as Management, staff and members-at-large through appointment by Management or the Board of Governors take on more of the roles currently being filled by Board members. Key functions include: NABC Site Selection, bridge decisions beyond what are fulfilled by the joint Management/Board/member/Masterpoint Committee, and approval of players to compete in grass roots events when they have residences in multiple districts.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REVIEW

During the spring national board meeting, Joe Jones, executive director, ACBL, presented operational goals for 2021. A status update of these goals was presented by Jones during the July board meeting. A newly implemented dashboard which helps track the progress and status of projects was demonstrated to the Board.

MARKETING

Guest Membership Program

ACBL Marketing continues to promote and grow the Guest Membership program.

In February, Marketing launched the $29 first-year annual membership promotion and has successfully converted over 716 guest members to full ACBL members. Currently, there are 781 guest members.

Communications

ACBL continues to use multiple social media platforms, primarily Facebook.

- ACBL Facebook page has over 10,200 followers.
- As of June, ACBL Twitter account has over 3,000 followers.
- ACBL Instagram account has over 1,600 followers.

The Longest Day

Bridge players and clubs rallied around The Longest Day despite the coronavirus pandemic. As of July, over $843,478 has been raised to support the Alzheimer's Association in its quest to end this devastating disease. Funds raised in Canada will be donated to the Alzheimer Society of Canada.

The ACBL will donate all sanction fees from Virtual Club games held the weekend of June 19 and 20 and from face-to-face club games held the week of June 20-27, increasing the fundraising total.

NABC SERVICES

The ACBL has reduced by over $5.4 million 2020-21 financial impacts from hotel contracts related to canceled 2020-21 NABCs.

Hotel and convention center contracts for future NABCs have been renegotiated, resulting in approximately $1.7 million in financial risk reduction.

Strategies were used to adjust contracted room blocks to match historical pick up and to renegotiate concessions to match the needs of the ACBL.

EDUCATION

ACBL Online Teacher Certification

This workshop focuses on how to use online tools in the most effective and engaging way to teach bridge online and emphasizes best practices to apply when face-to-face classes resume. Year-to-date, 84 teachers have completed the workshop and 45 have earned certifications.

For more information, go to: https://www.acbl.org/teach/become-a-teacher/

Intro to Bridge Classes

This interactive online course is comprised of 10 weekly lessons for $50. The first lesson will last two hours, while the remaining lessons are 90 minutes each. After the course ends, students may play on the Shark Bridge App free for 90 days and should feel ready to play in a restricted masterpoint game.

Three separate lesson streams open to 70 participants per stream began in June. Courses sold out within days. More lesson streams will begin in early September.

For more information, go to: https://www.acbl.org/intro-to-bridge/

Club Director Refresher Course

A free club director refresher course led by Melody Euler, tournament director, was held Saturday, June 12. Five-hundred directors attended. An additional 250 received the link to the video.

The ACBL will train approximately 100 new club directors June through August.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Pre-registration Platform

The ACBL is developing a pre-registration platform for future tournaments. This platform will be delivered in four phases with a tentative completion date of spring 2022. Phase one will enable attendees to view, select and register for tournaments. Payment options will be added in phase two. The ability to register for specific tournament events such as open pairs or KOs and to identify and select partners/teammates will be added during phase three.

Further refinements to data analytics and reporting will be delivered during the final phase of the project.

Reporting capabilities will provide tournament organizers with valuable information to select venues, fine tune hospitality costs, adjust staffing levels and modify event offerings. Pre-registration in general will reduce the time spent standing in line and enable directing staff to stay on schedule.

Analytics and Visualizations

IT, in conjunction with Marketing and Field Operations, has developed Tableau workbooks depicting ACBL membership retention trends, pipeline goals for new members, player activity and masterpoint earnings by members and guest members. This is in addition to a daily dashboard depicting the activity of North American Pairs (NAP) club games. Presenting raw data through graphical representations improves the user experience and better enables users to interpret data to meet organizational goals.

Data Warehouse

Advancing its Data Warehouse project, IT has completed analysis of a platform upgrade and has successfully migrated to the new platform. This will provide advanced functionality and increased stability to ACBL data processing and analytics.

BRIDGE COMMITTEE

The committee brought forward Item 212-03 to amend Chapter XI -- Special Events, North American Pairs (NAP). It clarified subsidy provisions and provided Management the authority to establish the dates for finals to be held online.

Also, the committee presented DI212-01B Discussion Item -- Rank Requirements -- on behalf of Management who seeks to simplify grandfathered ranking standards, with ample notification to ACBL membership, so that the process and requirements are more straightforward. Implementation: January 1, 2023. The Board concurred with Management.

APPOINTMENTS

Chris Moll, District 10; Harold Bickham, District 11; David Caprera, District 17; Phil Clayton, District 16 and Bob Glasson, District 4 were appointed to the Online Ethical Oversight Committee to serve three-year terms from the end of the summer 2021 North American Online Bridge Championship (NAOBC) through the end of the summer 2024 North American Bridge Championship (NABC).