

ACBL Virtual Board of Directors Meeting

July 12-14, 2020

Hello, I am your new Director for District 18 on the ACBL Board of Directors. Claire Jones resigned effective June 8 after 11+ years of stellar service. This included serving, often as Chair, on a number of committees including Masterpoint (when it brought about the Ruby, Emerald and Sapphire ranks) Finance, Minutes, and Appeals and Charges. He was the ACBL Board Treasurer for 4 years. He also initiated the first ever ACBL on line GNT District Final. After District 18 did this many other Districts followed. I can tell you he also attended our District 18 Board meetings and was an invaluable source of information and opinion. Be sure to thank Claire the next time you see him at the table, virtual or face-to-face.

ACBL "MONTREAL" BOARD MEETINGS

The ACBL summer board meetings were held on Zoom July 14th to 16th. These 3 full days of meetings followed committee meetings held in the weeks prior. Below is a summary of the major decisions.

BOARD REORGANIZATION

Last July, a Task Force headed by David Lodge (D22) was formed to develop a plan to reduce the size of the ACBL Board of Directors. Other groups have attempted to do this over the last ten years without success. The plan included combining geographically contiguous districts into larger regions to be represented by 13 regional directors, replacing the existing 25 district directors. This would keep districts intact, not affecting district treasuries, regionals or NAP and GNT events.

This plan was initially presented to the Board last fall in San Francisco and failed by 2 votes, 15-10. A super majority of 17 votes was needed to pass because bylaw changes are required. The Board of Governors requested a reconsideration of the vote and the motion was reworked and presented again at the Spring ("Columbus") virtual board meeting. Five new board members had started their terms in 2020, all five supported the changes, and the vote was 20-4-1 in favor. Claire was one of the 20 but reserved his final approval pending a further report from the Task Force.

The plan was presented to the membership in the May bulletin, and because it required changes in the ACBL Bylaws a second vote was required to pass the motion.

At the July board meetings, the motion passed 18-7. I was one of the 18. The Board of Governors approved the motion at their meeting on July 19.

Implementation will begin with the election cycle next year when the first 8

regional directors will be elected. Four more regional directors will be elected in 2022. District 18 and District 19 will be combined into Region 13 and our regional director will be elected in the third quarter of 2021. A recent count of members has D18 at 3,952 and D19 at 6,562. As required by NY not-for-profit law, all current district directors will remain on the ACBL Board to finish out their terms, which in my case is December 31, 2021.

TRANSITION TASK FORCE

The Transition Task Force, headed by Kevin Lane (D23), is working on the process of moving non-core committees off the Board of Directors. This is a vital part of the implementation of the Board Reorganization, and should result in the Board spending more time on policy, and far less on execution. Four motions were presented by the Task Force and approved unanimously by the Board.

STRENGTH OF FIELD

A motion was presented by Doug Couchman, not a Board Director but the chair of the Masterpoint Committee, that will attempt to equalize the masterpoints that are paid in all events. Doug presented an excellent and comprehensive analysis that was approved unanimously by the Board. When it is implemented, if a team game and pair game with the same number of entrants are held on the same day, the masterpoints awarded for each will be the same. Adjustment will be made based on the strength of the field of entrants based on masterpoint totals. The idea is to prevent "event shopping" by players, and allow tournament organizers to hold events their attendees like playing, not events that pay the most masterpoints. In Doug's analysis, Gold Rush events will receive slightly more masterpoints while the difference in points in other events will change only by a small percentage.

APPEALS & CHARGES

The board approved a rewrite of the CDR (Code of Disciplinary Regulations) that will simplify the code for the use of District disciplinary bodies.

The ACBL will also begin the process of handling major cheating cases with the use of an arbitration panel administered by the American Arbitration Association and staffed with high level volunteer arbitrators. When completed, this change will provide protection for the ACBL from lawsuits resulting from these decisions.

ACBL TREASURER

The position of ACBL Treasurer was vacated by the resignation of Claire, and Joann Glasson (D4) was elected by a unanimous vote of the Board of Directors.

NABC

A new pair event was added to the Spring NABC schedule for players with fewer than 2,500 masterpoints.

A motion to approve a Spring NABC in Memphis in 2025 was defeated. The Board felt that it was not prudent to commit to conference and hotel space so far in advance since the future of face-to-face bridge is unknown because of the pandemic. This will be reconsidered next year.

The complete list of motions and votes will be available on the ACBL website shortly.

<https://www.acbl.org/about-acbl/administration/board-of-directors/meeting-motions-and-minutes/>

Please contact me at district18director@acbl.org with any questions or concerns.

Happy bridging,
David Johnson