

Washington Bridge League – October 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, October 20, 2021

Time: 7:30pm-8:30pm

Location: Virtual (Zoom)

Submitted by Lena Maman (WBL Secretary)

Attendees

Hadi Abushakra, Herb Schulken, Lena Maman, Alex Gretsinger, Lloyd Rawley, Mary Tenenbaum, Linda Marshall, Alex Stille, Kathy Kopnisky, Dick Wegman (Invited Guest Speaker)

Absent: Bob Bell and Clyde Kruskal

Secretary's Report

The Board approved the minutes of the September 2021 meeting.

Online Unit Game and Treasurer's Report

Chris Miller, Unit Game Manager, was not present at the meeting. Herb provided an update for the treasurer's report and the unit game.

Herb reported higher attendance for the month of September, with an overall profit of \$360. The WBL continues to pay the regular unit game caddies, Alan Crank and David Solomon.

Following up on Herb's recommendation to deactivate bridgemates, Chris Miller asked David Solomon to remove batteries from the devices. The Board will purchase new batteries once we return to face-to-face bridge.

Communications Committee Report

Linda Marshall will take over Webmaster responsibilities from Alex Gretsinger. Linda is also working on compiling and posting up the Non-Lifemaster List for 2020; she will seek assistance from a Communications committee member to double-check the compiled list.

Free Play Policy Modification Proposal

On October 14, 2021, Herb and Bob emailed the following recommendation to the Board:

The WBL free play policy awards unit game free plays to the unit president, the unit treasurer, designated long standing volunteers (Steve Robinson and Don Berman), and volunteers who enable the face-to-face unit game to function (e.g., refreshment buyers). When WBL sponsored games moved to BBO at the beginning of the pandemic, BBO was unable to award free plays to unit-designated players.

However, it is now possible for us to reimburse entry fees to persons eligible for free plays under our policies by transferring BBO\$ to their accounts. Accordingly, we propose that we begin to do so.

In addition, we propose awarding free plays to Linda Marshall for the next 18 months. As president of the WBL from the beginning of online-only play in March 2020 through September 2021, Linda was eligible for free plays at unit-sponsored games during the period when we were not able to award them. Unlike the other persons who are eligible for free plays, she played frequently in our games and is no longer eligible for free plays since her term as president has ended. We believe that equity demands recognition of this special circumstance and that this special provision is the fairest way to make an equitable adjustment.

The Board reviewed the existing policy and discussed the above recommendation. Herb moved that the Board adopt the proposal effective October 1, 2021, and Mary seconded the motion. The Board approved the proposal and the revision will be posted on the WBL website.

WBL Educational Foundation and Bridge-in-Schools Report by Dick Wegman

Bridge-In Schools is an ACBL-sponsored activity created by Bill Gates and Warren Buffett, both noting the strong correlation between playing bridge and academic achievement.

Dick Wegman told the Board that the local program began five years ago at 6-7 middle schools and high schools in Montgomery County and Washington, D.C – including Sidwell Friends School, Washington Latin School, Richard Montgomery High School, Woodrow Wilson High School, and School Without Walls. Prior to 2020, students in the program participated in an annual interscholastic championship, hosted by Mark Lavine's Bridge Club.

Since the start of the pandemic, nearly all participating schools have curtailed extracurricular activities that involve outside visitors. As soon as restrictions lift, Dick said that school programs would resume. Andrea Weiswasser has taken on the role of primary coordinator. (Before the pandemic, Hugo Van Dyke held this position.)

Looking ahead, in order to add more schools to the fold, Dick explained that the Educational Foundation would need additional faculty sponsors and points-of-contact for new schools. In addition to young people, Dick also discussed the possibility of introducing bridge to those at the cusp of retiring (50-55 year old cohort). Dick mentioned that many federal agencies and trade associations offer pre-retirement seminars that often include panel discussions on new activities to incorporate into retirement.

Dick proposed that he attend a Board meeting in 6-8 months to provide a new update on the Educational Foundation and the Bridge-in-Schools program.

Additions to the Agenda

- The board briefly discussed the existing ACBL BBO Visitor Club Policy, which has been gradually relaxed since the start of the pandemic. The full policy is available on the ACBL website:
https://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/Virtual_Clubs_Visitor_Policy.pdf
- In terms of resumption of face-to-face bridge, Hadi stated all plans are still on hold as we continue to monitor county, public health, and ACBL COVID policies.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, 7:30pm.