

**ACBL BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA  
JULY 9, 2012 THROUGH JULY 12, 2012**

**REPORT FROM BILL COOK, JR.  
DISTRICT 10 REPRESENTATIVE**

- The Board, after getting substantial input from management, staff, members, and tournament directors over the last six months, passed the following resolution:  
“It is the intent of the Board of Directors to continue development of the Strategic Plan. Further the Board of Directors directs ACBL management to work with the President to develop and finalize the Strategic Plan for presentation to and review by the Finance Committee and the full Board at the Fall 2012 meeting utilizing the following guidance:”

MISSION: To Promote and Sustain the game of bridge and serve the bridge-related interests of our members.

VISION 2013-2018: We will be a growing, thriving organization that actively develops new ways to meet the diverse needs of our members and bridge players.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS: *(In order of priority)*

- 1) DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT FOCUSED PROGRAMS FOR MEMBER RECRUITMENT.
  - 2) IDENTIFY & REPLICATE BEST PRACTICES & INNOVATIONS.
  - 3) INTEGRATE TECHNOLOGY TO MEET MEMBER NEEDS.
  - 4) RETAIN MORE MEMBERS.
  - 5) PROVIDE TOP QUALITY DIRECTING AT TOURNAMENTS.
- The Strength of Field (SOF) method of awarding master points for sectional and regional pair games, which has been under consideration for over a year, and has been hotly debated, was defeated in a close vote. After much consideration I voted in favor of SOF because I thought it would be a fairer way to award points based on matching the number of tables actually in play in the event with the average master points of those playing in the event. It wasn't perfect but it eliminated awarding points for tables that were not in the event. It doesn't solve all the problems in the master point award schedule but I thought it fixed some of them and was in the best interest of ACBL members' long term for us to use this method.
  - Approved the establishment of a new Grass Roots Fund with December being designated as “Grass Roots Fund Month.” Clubs may hold special games with the same rules and regulations that apply to the other special fund months. Funds raised will be returned annually, no later than March 3<sup>rd</sup> to the individual District in which the funds were raised, and shall be used by the District to help fund Grass Roots events. Grass

Roots events are defined as the Grand National Teams and the North American Pairs. ACBL shall not charge the Districts any fee for the cost of collecting and disbursing these funds. Effective immediately.

- Approved an amendment to the Chapter III Administration Policy. Units dealing with Unit Transfer and Boundary changes that petition for transfer must include a beginning date for the first circulation of the petition. All signatures on the petition must be obtained within six months of this beginning date. If ACBL Board of Directors denies a request to grant a Unit Merger, Unit Boundary Change or Unit Change of District, the affected Unit may not begin the circulation of another petition for a Unit Merger Unit Boundary Change or Unit Change of District for at least six (6) months.
- Amended Special Club Games regulations to allow Special Club games only when the sectional which is within 25 miles of the club games is a limited or restricted sectional.
- Defeated a motion that said master points would only be awarded for sanctioned games that followed the laws of Duplicate Bridge with the exception of teaching games, where teachers are encouraged and often do use specially prepared hands to establish a lesson point. I voted for this motion after learning that the Laws Commission stated they didn't think playing on line with three (3) robots complied with the Laws of Duplicate Bridge.
- Deferred to San Francisco a motion that would establish the removal of master points and rank in addition to other existing penalties for anyone found guilty of being unethical or cheating.
- Approved a motion that stated playing directors and their partner in STAC games are ineligible to receive overall STAC master point (silver awards) but are eligible to receive section awards.
- Defeated a motion that would make someone a Life Master if they had a 1000 platinum master points and an NABC + event win.
- Approved an amendment to the NAP/GNT Residency Guidelines and the NAP/GNT Conditions of Contest that states, "All residency requirements and requests for exceptions shall also apply to players augmented onto GNT teams." Effective immediately for inclusion in the 2012-2013 GNT Conditions of Contest.
- Approved that all Conditions of Contest for NABC & NABC + match point events at NABCs are amended to permit the DIC to combine as many sections as logical and practical for scoring qualification of contestants for subsequent stages based on overall standing in the entire field regardless of section and/or direction.

**ROBERT HARTMAN, ACBL CEO REPORTED THE FOLLOWING:**

- Membership figures have shown a slow but steady increase during each month of 2012. Overall we have grown by 1,219 members for the period January 1 to June 30, 2012.
- Average table count at tournaments has seen a slight decline over the first six months of 2012 as compared to 2011. Average table count at Regionals was down 4% but because there were 10 more Regionals, table count was up 12% (101,145 vs. 90,047).

Average table count at Sectionals was flat but there were eight fewer Sectionals resulting in a 3% overall decrease in table count (83,180 vs. 85,385).

STAC table count with the same number of events was down 2% between 2012 and 2011.

- Currently there are 1,743 teachers elected to be listed on ACBL's "Find a Teacher" web site, up from 1,695 last year.
- 110 students were pre-registered for the Philadelphia Youth NABC including 36 coming from China to compete.
- From March 2012 to June 2012 Youth Membership increased from 797 to 892 (11%) and Junior Membership increased from 1,140 to 1,240 (8%).
- New Staff Members:
  - Bruce Knoll – Director of Information Technology.
  - Bryan Delfs – Education Manager.
  - LeAnn Bowers – part time NABC coordinator.
- Staff Promotions:
  - Sam Whitten to Manager, Bridge Administration.
  - Ken Horwadel to Manager, Bridge Quality & Systems.
  - Debbie Vickinar, Tournament Administration ACBL.
- Open Positions:
  - 1) Director of Marketing Communications.
  - 2) Market Assistant.
  - 3) Assistant to the Recorder.

- Club and Member Service Department has continued the lapsed member calling and email campaign. They have found the main reasons for non-renewals are due to poor health and lack of interest in the game. The majority of the players have been appreciative for being contacted.
- All the proposals submitted for 2013 Regionals at Sea (RAS) have been rejected for a variety of reasons. ACBL plans to run the RAS cruises using in-house resources. An outside travel agency will be secured who will be paid on a flat fee per cabin basis.
- Four bids were received in response to the NABC housing RFP. These have been reviewed by the NABC Advisory Committee. A final decision will be made by August 10 so the new company can prepare for the St. Louis 2013 NABC reservations which open September 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Phase I of the ACBL score project has been completed. The project remains on time and on budget. Patricia Glover is currently serving as the technical point of contact on the project to ensure that Hammond Software adheres to the budget and also acts as the in house coordinator for resources allocated to the project. Bruce Knoll, the new Director of IT will work with Patricia to transition this function over to the IT Department this summer.

Hammond Software provides monthly reports to the key ACBL staff and Merlin Vilhauer, who serves as management's liaison to the Board on the project.

- The Financial forecast for 2012 as of May 31<sup>st</sup> shows a projected net income of \$137,073.00 for the year compared to the budgeted net income of \$86,000.00.
- The revised Actuarial Valuation statements reflecting the Pension Plan Benefit Freeze were prepared and distributed to all participants. The actuary is working on some projections related to cash requirements for the plan so that investments can be reviewed with the estimated liquidity needs in mind.
- The 401(K) Trustees met to review the current Broker and Investment Manager for the 401(K) plan as well as review the new rules on fiduciary requirements. Proposals from three new broker and investment managers in addition to the existing investment manager were considered. Following the meeting proposals were narrowed to two brokers and investment managers, and additional due diligence will be conducted before a selection is made and announced to employees. A change is expected to be in place by January 1, 2013.