LBA Board of Directors Meeting

April 10, 2023

The meeting was called to order by the president, Larry Federico, at 4:00 p.m. Present were Larry, Sid LeBlanc, Sherrie Goodman, Kathy Logue, Newt Jackson, Lowen, Quin Bates, Jennifer Holmes, and Suzanne Cliffe. Absent were Jackie Madden and Wayne Weisler.

The minutes from the February meeting were approved as distributed.

Treasurer’s Report: Sid distributed the Balance Sheet and the Profit and Loss Statement as of March 31, 2023 as well as a chart reflecting the number of tables the club had annually playing in Face to Face games prior to the Covid shut down in March, 2019. He also included the Online tables starting in 2020. The F2F tables have dropped from over 7000 tables per year to a projected approximately 2700 tables for 2023. According to the numbers as of the end of March, the online tables appear to be dropping as well. Based upon the losses being incurred, Sid made a motion that we raise the playing fees at the club in the Face to Face games from $7.00 to $8.00 and if it is a special game with an extra cost, that those be raised from $8.00 to 9.00. There was a discussion that followed with other possible actions: raising the playing fee for all games to $8.00 with the club absorbing the extra fees; charging an annual membership fee for the LBA, the possibility of forming a committee to look into other ways for the club to raise money. After much discussion, a vote was taken and Sid’s motion passed that the fees be raised $1.00 for all games effective May 1. A notice will be sent to the members. We would like to encourage members to play at the club as well as support the LBA Online games rather than playing in the ACBL games, from which there is no financial benefit to the club.

Sid reported that all contractors working on or in the building are required to carry both workman’s compensation insurance as well as liability insurance. Wayne will need to get updated certificates from the contractor that does various jobs at the club.

Club Manager’s Report: Sherrie reported that we would like to get the LBA back into the rotation for regional tournaments. She would like us to consider a Regional for 2025 and another NABC for 2027. Board thinks that after the work for the March 2023 NABC that we just completed that it is too soon to plan another major tournament. This discussion was tabled until the next meeting when Jackie Madden who chaired the last Regional is present.

Sherrie reported that the LBA is ranked #4 or #5 in clubs nationally in size, this includes our face to face games as well as the virtual club.

Sherrie reported that Kathy Plauche wants to make her Thursday morning and evening games “open” games with no masterpoint limits. Her format is a lesson prior to the game, 12 boards played, and a wrap up discussion. She said any level of player is welcome. The Board voted to support Kathy in her efforts in anyway that we can.

In response to requests for follow-up lessons from Iype after his lessons January, Sherrie sent a survey to those that had attended. The purpose was to determine how many were interested and if they preferred a time other than Saturday morning. She said that Saturday morning was the preferred time. A date has not been set for these lessons.

There was a discussion as to the type of lessons that the club will offer. Larry said he sees two alternatives: 1) If the club recruits the teacher and collects the money, then pays the teacher for the lessons, then the club will be required to give the teacher a 1099. 2) If the players pay the teacher directly and the teacher pays the club a fee for the use of the building, cleaning, etc. then there is no 1099 required.

Whether the club recruits the teacher and registration goes through the club (1099 required) or the teacher recruits the students, collects the money and pays the club for the cleaning and use of the premises (no 1099 required) everyone attending will be required to register with the club and provide contact information. Also, everyone will have to comply with the club’s vaccination requirements.

There was a discussion as to the lessons that Lowen previously gave at the club prior to the pandemic closing. Sherrie indicated that she never received a list of people that attended or their contact information. Lowen indicated that it had been sent. Sid asked that he resend the information to Sherrie so that we could include those people in our database for follow-up.

Jennifer Holmes gave a report on her committee to bring people back to the club and increase Face to Face play. She and her committee have set a goal to increase F2F play to an average of 13 tables a day, 5 days a week. She said that the target audience for the efforts is inclusive and comprehensive: New players, New to the LBA, New to bridge, Old to the LBA, Old to Bridge, New to the LBA and Old (experienced) players that have played at the LBA previously, but haven’t returned now. She would like us to activate committees to get the word out and bring both new and old players into the club, including education, tournament, hospitatlity committees. It was noted that the ACBL has a social media program that posts our upcoming lessons and events on Facebook which was very influential in getting a large turnout for our last set of beginner lessons.

Larry will look at the committees and appoint additional people as needed and report to the Board at the next meeting.

Today, April 10 was the third “chat” game. There were 8 tables in attendance.

Maintenance: No report, Wayne absent. Larry said that there were some minor roof leaks that will be looked at. If it is under $1000 to do the repair, the club will do them. If more, we will file a claim against the roofer that did the work after Ida.

NABC: First, the Board extended thanks and praise to Larry as well as all of the club volunteers for the work that he/they did in the execution of the NABC tournament just completed. Larry reported that we don’t have the final bills so we don’t know at this time how the LBA did financially. We are planning a special game/party to celebrate our members that achieved rank advancement to Life Master during the tournament. It has been suggested that it be a Pro-Am Yellow Card game. The date selected is May 12, the Friday after our Derby Day tournament. It will be paid for with the funds that we received and raised for the NABC. Larry anticipates that there will be a small refund to District 10 who gave us $20,000 towards tournament expenses. Larry said that he will be in charge of the party. As a Pro-Am game, people will not be able to play with their regular partners. Sherrie and Kathy volunteered to work on the partner assignments.

By-Laws Committee: Lowen reported that the committee had met and that the next meeting will be in May and that he is hopeful they will have something to present to the Board by the May meeting.

Coffee and Vending report: Suzanne reported that the contract with our current vending service expires on July 23 and that if we want to cancel we need to notify them by June 23. She is getting the break down of information as to our current costs and will compare them to other services. Kathy Logue said that some players in her games have said that they would like other alternatives to the soft drinks in the machines. She volunteered to get canned soft drinks and water and put them in the refrigerators. People will pay for them on the honor system.

It was reported that the Friday game time change has been successful. The 499’er game starts at 12:30 and the Open game at 1:00.

There was a discussion as to the possibility of changing the starting time of the Open game on Mondays in order to better accommodate the Open players and hopefully increase attendance. This would not affect the 9:30 start time of the 199’er game. Sherrie said that the poll she sent out was about equally divided between starting the game at 10:30 or 12:30. At this time no action will be taken. Both games will continue to start at 9:30.

Vaccination requirements: The ACBL is leaving the decision to clubs as to whether they will require vaccinations for club games and sectional tournaments. After discussion, the Board took no action, leaving the vaccination requirement in place for our club and sectional tournament games.

There was a suggestion that a new club directory include pictures of members. It was reported that Keenan Romig is working on a new directory with mentions of whether it would be a paper copy or only online. There was no further discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m. The next meeting will be Monday, May 8.

Suzanne Cliffe

Recording Secretary