

MINUTES OF ACBL UNIT 547 BOARD MEETING

Thursday, March 9, 2023, at Temple Beth Torah

Board Members Present: Margie Butler, Mark Eckhout, Sue Houk, Craig Kavin, Parker Mann, Kay Mendel. Members Absent: Suzanne Brenner, Raeann Koerner

Guests Present: Susan Lang

The meeting was called to order by President Margie Butler at 10:37am

Old Business

Approval of February 9, 2023, Minutes

Parker pointed out that Pianola was spelled wrong. Mark moved that we accept the minutes with the proviso that the spelling error will be corrected. The motion was seconded by Parker. All approved (M/S/A)

Treasurer's Report (Kay Mendel)

Kay pointed out that our annual property tax obligation to TBT has been paid. The amount this year was \$4,201 ... Someone asked about the CD investment we were going to set up at First Citizen Bank. Kay said we are waiting for Suzanne (our Secretary) to return from a trip so that she can be set up as a signer. Margie Butler also needs to be set up as a signer at the bank. ... The Treasurer's report was accepted. M/S/A by Parker and Craig.

Club Operations and Management (Parker Mann)

Parker provided the attendance graphs. Our attendance continues to increase, but Parker noted that soon we will be having fewer special games on the calendar and it will be interesting to see the effect that has on attendance. ... Parker again mentioned the importance of running the games on time. Margie will investigate purchasing a portable round timer that the players will be able to see while they are playing.

GNT Team game on 3/30 (Margie, Parker)

The Practice team game on 3/2 went well but took a long time to get started and to complete. For GNT we need to be more efficient. We discussed the situation and made the following decisions: Everyone has to pre-register. This will allow Chris to set up the game before people arrive. The deadline for pre-registration will be Wed 3/29 midnight. Game will start at 12:00 instead of 12:30. We will play 4 matches of 6 boards/match. The fee will be \$36 per team. Five-person teams will be allowed because it may be handy to have extra players. The director will have a helper. Margie volunteered to be a helper.

Tournament Updates (Mark Eckhout)

General question from Mark – what to do if a player comes without a partner and the player is not a duplicate bridge player and/or has very little bridge experience? (This happened at the Valentine Tournament). A suggestion was to ask the unknown player a few questions to determine their bridge experience level before they register. **If they do not have appropriate experience they will not be allowed to play, but they will be invited to kibitz if they want to get more familiar with the game.**

Before talking about the Strawberry Sectional, Mark gave some quick result statistics from the **Valentine 499er Sectional**: 25 tables (vs. 26 tables in 2022); Net \$314 (vs. \$542 in 2022);

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Players: The majority of players were from Ventura or Santa Barbara. A few were from Los Angeles, Lancaster, Bakersfield.

The date for the **Strawberry Sectional** has been set as Sat-Sun May 6-7. We had wanted Friday and Saturday, but Camarillo PVPRD has stopped offering the Senior Center room for rent on Fridays. To prevent misunderstanding, the flyer will specify that both days are pairs games.

For good will with the other nearby Bridge Units (514,542,561), we will include 4 free plays when we send them our flyers.

Last year's Strawberry Sectional was very successful. We will do most everything the same way this year, including pre-registration and an ACBL Tournament Director. The venue holds 30 tables.

Dave White is selling used bridgemates from a unit? club? that recently disbanded. Mark pointed out that our club owns only 34 bridgemates and some are not in good working order. For tournaments and special games, sometimes we have to borrow bridgemates from other clubs (e.g. Ojai and Guys and Dolls). Mark asked if we could purchase a box (12) of the bridgemates that Dave White is selling. Everyone agreed we should do that.

New Business

Saturday Online Game—Change in circumstances (Margie)

The Saturday online game has not had enough players for a game since December 10, 2022. Last week we got word that one of the existing regular Saturday pairs is dropping out. Kay moved that we discontinue the Saturday online game and Parker seconded. M/S/A.

Publicity (Susan Lang)

Susan attended the meeting so that we could discuss the Publicity coordinator position which has been unfilled since we returned from the Covid shutdown. She provided a list that separated tasks into Assignment Groups: Newsletter reporter(s), Distribution specialist, Special Games, Bulletin Board. We discussed each of these areas.

Newsletter reporter(s): Mark Eckhout had been sending a monthly Bridge Buzz newsletter along with other quick reports such as Bridge Briefs and Bridge Blasts. But now that Mark is coordinating our tournaments, he does not have time to keep up with these publications. Someone mentioned that Jody's Unit News column in the D22 Connection is very good and contains Unit news, but that most players probably don't read the D22 Connection because it has so much content that doesn't relate to them. Someone suggested extracting a copy of Jody's D22 column and sending it by itself to our members using Pianola. And we could add more recent news items in the same email if needed. Everyone liked that idea. When Mark has more time, he can continue writing the Bridge Buzz which was a very well-liked publication. But he won't have the burden of being the only publication that provides Unit News.

Distribution Specialist: There wasn't much discussion about this area since we've been relying on pianola blasts lately. But someone pointed out that many players are not tech-friendly, so we should not forget about promoting things the old fashioned way as well.

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Special Games: We've mainly been using flyers and pianola to promote special games, but we should start using other distribution methods as well. Susan indicated that Iris would be willing to distribute flyers after they are created.

Bulletin Board: This area is covered. Susan Lang is in charge of the Bulletin Board displays at TBT and updates the display weekly as needed.

Miscellaneous Other New Business

Name Tags – Susan suggested we make another mass purchase of name tags. All agreed.

Sue Houk will be the point person for ordering the name tags. Cost per badge is \$11.00, to be paid ahead of time. The badge design will be the same as last time.

Minnie McKenney and Ace of Clubs – Margie will find out why certificates have not arrived yet.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:00pm

Respectfully submitted by

Margie Butler (substituting for Suzanne Brenner, Secretary)