



The Canberra Bridge Club Inc.

President Gordon Henderson
Secretary Ruth Gallagher
Treasurer Andrew Kettle
Manager Molly O'Donohue/Philip Thompson

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MINUTES

Monday 20 June 2011 at 5.30pm

Attendance:

Gordon Henderson (President), Ruth Gallagher (Secretary), Andrew Kettle (Treasurer), David Hoffman (Past President), Tony Marker, Liz Van Der Hor, Sue Welbourn,, Ruth Thomson, and Molly O'Donohue (Manager).

Apologies: Val Carmody, Peter Giles, Val Brockwell, Niek Van Vucht

1. PREVIOUS MINUTES

MOTION: That the Minutes of 9 May 2011 be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

MOVED David Hoffman SECONDED Liz Van Der Hor

CARRIED

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

2.1 Tony said he had developed the criteria for Honorary Life Membership and the process for nomination. This had been agreed with Gordon and posted on the notice board. Members wishing to nominate a person needed to prepare a paper with criteria for the Committee's consideration by end July if it is to be considered by the AGM.

2.2 David prepared a paper on the existing Honor board arrangements in the Club rooms and the BFACT request for additional Honor Boards to cover events not currently recognised. This was considered by the Committee. It was agreed that all the results currently displayed on the boards be included on the CBC website. David would record all the names and details of events listed on the Honor Boards and these would then be stored on the website under "Honor Board Results". It was also agreed that the existing Honor Boards would eventually be replaced and the names listed archived after twenty years. Existing Honor Boards will be replaced as they become full. New Boards will be in an acrylic material as these are less expensive and replaceable text will be used. CBC would coordinate with BFACT to ensure consistency. Molly was asked to undertake more research on the preferred boards plus costs. This needed to be done fairly quickly and before the next meeting.

3. MANAGERS' REPORT

There was little to report. Molly noted that the CBC had changed to Office Works for purchasing supplies as they were 20% cheaper than the previous supplier. She also said that a large number of bidding pads had now been printed.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Andrew provided a Financial Statement for the year to end May. Net income for the year to date was down on that for the previous year but not by too much. He said that before depreciation the CBC was \$5,000 down on a year ago. This reflected the lack of major capital expenditure items in the year and was a satisfactory outcome. There was some discussion of the Barry Turner Fund. Gordon said he would like to see the capital from that fund remain intact and indeed, to grow slowly, while still meeting its objective to assist CBC members participating in interstate and overseas events especially the ANC.

5. SUB COMMITTEES

5.1 House

5.11 Gordon said that he was still waiting for Sean to get back to him on the type of white boards which might be installed.

5.12 Sue said that mats had been purchased for the kitchen and were now installed.

5.13 Sue brought up the carpark resurfacing again. There was discussion about whether it should be just a spot repair for \$15,000. The Committee's view was that the surface was not in a good shape generally and it would be better to wait a little longer and consider a major resurfacing of all the carpark. It was acknowledged that this would be a major expenditure item but preferable in the longer term. The current quote is \$50,000. Several members felt that the toilets needed to be a higher priority than resurfacing the carpark.

5.14 The graffiti problem was discussed. Sue said that the walls were harder and more expensive to clean but the doors could be easily addressed. She wants the doors painted and was seeking volunteers. Removal of graffiti on the brickwork will be further explored as will possible preventative measures. Having a graffiti artist paint the east wall was an option for future consideration.

5.15 Molly was still awaiting a quote for repair of the exhaust fans in the kitchen and men's toilets.

5.16 Sue had obtained quotes for blinds for the high windows in the top kitchen. It would cost \$388 for two blinds colour matched to the existing verticals. The Committee agreed to proceed with installing the blinds.

5.2 Teaching

5.21 David said the Advanced Lessons went well and the lessons paid for themselves. He said it was clear that the CBC needed to run more advanced classes especially for daytimers. Gordon said that it would be good to follow up these lessons in about 6-12 months.

5.22 For intermediate classes it was noted that they are still catering for a similar group, just above beginners. Gordon said the Committee needed to look at the levels for lessons – post beginner, intermediate and advanced – for targetting the lessons next year.

5.23 Gordon asked about the rating system to be introduced at the CBC and what further the CBC needed to do for its implementation. David said we had followed the instructions provided for getting it operational but there were problems getting the files to Ian McKinnon who was managing the system. He said we might need to have Sean talk with Ian to see how to sort out this

problem. It was noted that Bruce Crossman had implemented the system at South Canberra and he might be able to help.

5.3 Tournament & Calendar

5.31 David said he had spoken with Niek Van Vucht about putting the calendar together and possible schedule of events. CBC is looking at putting together generic playing regulations for the events. The AGM is scheduled for Sunday 25 September and the next meeting would need to start putting together an agenda and other details necessary for that meeting. One issue to be considered will be membership fees and whether the Committee should be recommending an increase.

5.4 Employment & Contracts

5.41 Contracts have been given to all Directors, Managers and Sean and most had been signed.

5.5 Congress and Social

5.51 The Autumn teams event went well and there had been a positive response from participants. The Club made approximately \$700 and the prize money had been considered reasonable.

5.6 BFACT Representative.

5.61 Gordon circulated a paper prepared by the ABF, Attracting New Members, (*Attachment 1*). He asked for several Committee members to look at it and report back to the next meeting. Ruth Thomson and Liz Van Der Hor agreed to do this. It was suggested that they also speak with the youth group to provide input.

ACTION: Look at the ABF paper, Attracting New Members, and report on any possible initiatives or issues relevant to CBC. **Ruth Thomson & Liz Van Der Hor**

5.7 Finance

5.71 Nothing in addition to the Treasurer's report.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

In:

Out: Letter to Rebecca Plush .

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Gordon raised the matter of trying to conclude meetings expeditiously and how this might be done. It was suggested that much of the work could be done outside the main Committee in preparation for the meeting. Mostly this would be using the Sub Committees and providing reports and recommendations to the Committee for their consideration. He was going to look at how the Sub Committees could be reconstituted to take a more active role.

7.2 Gordon also circulated a paper on possible ways to change the outlook for the Barry Turner (lower) Room and make it more welcoming for players. One matter raised was the possibly of replacing the many cork boards, especially those on the eastern wall which were rarely used by Members. The Committee agreed that the cork boards containing the Master Point printouts would be taken down and the information they currently contain placed in a folder in the library should members

wish to refer to the sheets. If the Club needed to have printouts of members in each of the respective Master Point categories then these could be obtained electronically. There was some discussion about painting the walls but this was not considered a priority at this stage. The main priority was seen to be redoing the toilets.

7.3 Gordon reported some issues with mobile phones. He would remind members both in his notes to Members and at the beginning of sessions to turn them off or put on silent if playing.

7.4 Gordon said there was the opportunity to have five more red point events this year and asked when they could be held. It was suggested that Tuesday or Friday daytime might be possibilities. He would talk with Sean about his suggestions.

7.5 Gordon suggested the Club adopt graduated joining fees for new members and showed a scale with membership being reduced incrementally each quarter when joining during the year. This was agreed by the Committee.

8. **NEXT MEETING**

Monday 8 August, 2011 at 5.30pm in the Clubrooms.

Meeting closed at 7.25pm.

ACTION ITEMS and Members responsible

ACTION 1: Look at the ABF paper, Attracting New Members, and report on any possible initiatives or issues relevant to CBC. **Ruth Thomson & Liz Van Der Hor**

There are two key elements to 'growing' club membership. Firstly, the difficult prospect of attracting beginners and secondly, and perhaps more importantly, retaining new players.

The following information on how to attract new members is based on research undertaken with ABF members at the Summer Festival of Bridge in 2011, with Youth Bridge participants during January's Youth Week and also from information gleaned from the ABF Club survey program which was undertaken earlier this year.

A separate **Marketing Tips** flyer will be distributed on the topic of *how to retain members* and this will also be informed by research undertaken to date.

- **Promotional material**

From research findings, promotional material should stress all or some of the following in terms of what people will enjoy about bridge:

- 5.17 it is mentally challenging
- 5.18 provides ongoing learning (*good for mental health*)
- 5.19 provides social interaction and fun
- 5.20 is an inexpensive hobby
- 5.21 offers travel opportunities (*local/State/National/International*)
- 5.22 is a hobby which can be enjoyed with your partner.

Consider whether you want to offer:

- 5. first lesson free (*this will let people see whether they will like the game and the club environment without having to pay up-front for the beginner classes*)
- 6. free classes to anyone under 25 years of age (*to encourage youth involvement in the sport*).
- 7. offer classes at **½ price** once a year.

- **Event based promotion**

Rather than focus solely on promoting beginner classes, consider 'event' based approaches – eg a free bring a friend day (*including family members/work colleagues*). Reward members who 'recruit' participants with free playing vouchers for five sessions or something similar.

This will provide prospective members with an opportunity to experience your club's culture and better understand what the sport is all about. The focus should be on enjoyment and the mentally challenging aspects of the sport. Stress that anyone who has played cards would be able to learn and enjoy bridge.

Survey results to date reveal that people who are existing members were attracted to bridge by:

- a friend (37%)
- a family member (23%)
- self motivated to learn (6%)
- University environment (5%)
- work colleagues (4%)

ATTACHMENT 1

- an advertisement for beginner classes (4%).
- other (11%) – eg bridge column in newspaper/ mentioned in a book they were reading/ heard about it during a conversation etc.

Interestingly, research also reveals that approximately 90% of respondents played cards when younger and that approximately 70% of respondents had parents who played bridge.

- **Advertising beginner classes**

There are various ‘market segments’ associated with any advertising campaign. It is suggested that initial focus be on the following segments:

Youth

If your club is interested in conducting specific events for youth, you will need to ensure that your club and the people involved are legally protected by checking first with your State Government on any requirements for a ‘blue card’ or something similar.

For example, in Queensland volunteers and trainee students who work with children and young people must hold a blue card regardless of how often they will come into contact with children or young people, unless an exemption applies (*exemptions could be for Police Officers or registered teachers*).

Strategies for attracting youth include:

1. Offer free classes to anyone under 25 years of age (*all beginner classes*)
2. Conduct a youth mini-bridge event similar to the May 2011 Brisbane pilot (*details available from your State/Territory secretary or contact marketing@abf.com.au for information package*)
3. Conduct free beginner classes during school holidays
4. Place flyers at high schools/Universities
5. Promote at ‘bare foot bowls’ events at local bowls club (*if applicable*)
6. Promote at local poker and chess clubs

For further information and/or assistance on youth bridge issues contact David Thompson, the ABF National Youth Bridge Coordinator at dave@amontay.com .

People who are employed – including pre-retirement phase

- Seek interest from people in Lions and Rotary Clubs and such like community organisations.
- Promote beginner classes at golf and bowls clubs – *these pursuits keep people physically health but bridge keeps people mentally healthy – this applies to retired segment also*
- If your area has a large employer, offer to conduct lunch time lessons and sessions at their premises for interested parties (*contributes to health and wellbeing of their employees*) – eg large local/State/Commonwealth Government Department
- Advertise beginner classes in train papers (*eg MX at Central Station, Brisbane*), lifestyle magazines, weekend newspaper magazines, City News type papers distributed to coffee shops etc – liaise with other clubs (*through your State secretary*) to advertise a number of options (*locations/times*) for interested people to choose from. Share the cost.
- Advertise in your local suburban/Region newspaper

ATTACHMENT 1

- Conduct a weekend demonstration of bridge at local shopping centre
- Place flyers in doctor surgery/dental surgery/ chiropractor premises (*linking bridge to mental health and general wellbeing*).

Retired

- Offer to conduct introductory sessions at local retirement village (*50+ years of age*)
- Place flyers in local caravan parks (*in country areas*) to attract interest amongst the grey army.
- Advertise in any local seniors' newspaper.

Notes:

- Research indicates that **country** area bridge clubs should establish whether their local newspaper would be interested in publishing weekly results (club surveys *highlighted that this stimulates interest within the community and therefore raises the profile of bridge*).
- Advertising tips have been restricted to those things which can be done by our clubs. Some initiatives (*Regional/ State or National focus*) have been excluded as they will need to be undertaken by either State Associations or by the ABF.