

Unit 487 Board Meeting/Conference Call
March 16, 2020

Attendees: Kristin Steinmetz, Paula Koeller, Tara McMahon, Jon Gassaway, Monte Garrett, Paul Walker, Alan Johnson, Dee Poujade. Absent: Kathi Marcus (unable to connect).

Board President Kristin Steinmetz called the meeting to order, and reminded board members of the previously provided “guidelines” for a telephone meeting.

The main purpose for calling the meeting was to discuss how the Board could best support the local bridge clubs as they remain closed during the Coronavirus crisis, as well as ways to keep bridge players “engaged” during the enforced absences from the bridge tables caused by these closures. Kristin reported that she had talked with the owners of both the Ace of Clubs (Ace) and Portland Bridge Club (PBC) to ask what their needs are during this crisis. She was told that the “needs” were different and this will need to be kept in mind while making any decisions

While the Unit has approximately \$30,000 in its “reserve” account the consensus was that using any of this money at this time would be premature. It was decided that Kristin would check with the District and Regional officers to determine if there is a recommended amount to remain in reserves. Also, the board felt there were a number of things we still don’t know that could affect what role the Unit board plays in all of this. Some unknowns include possible aid being made available through state or federal legislation, or what the ACBL might do to support the bridge community. We will continue to revisit this issue.

We are aware that the ACBL and BBO are working to try to enable club games on line. Kristin said she will recruit volunteers who are comfortable with on-line play to mentor newer players (or older players who are not computer savvy!). One possibility is to keep a database of BBO “handles” of those who already play on BBO and might be looking for games. Jon will work on this. Another possibility is for individuals (or groups of individuals) to hire teachers for on-line tutoring to help provide some revenue for those who are affected by the club closure.

With regard to the May 29-31 Sectional, the consensus was that we don’t need to decide whether to cancel for a few weeks yet. (The current ACBL guideline asks to cancel tournaments through May 11.) Paul will talk to the Elks Club and see what their cancellation policy is if we do have to cancel. Based on a recent meeting at the Elks Club regarding hospitality needs for the May Sectional, we are expecting a catering proposal and cost estimate from the Elks’ manager sometime soon. Monte does not need to make catering orders until April, so we do have time here.

The Board agreed to hold telephone meetings weekly at the same time (4:00 pm on Monday afternoons) for the next few weeks if needed, as we work through the issues generated by the Coronavirus and the changing landscape of how government and private sector is dealing with it. Our next meeting will be on March 23; agenda items should be sent to Kristin by Friday.

Dee Poujade
Secretary

