

Welsh Bridge Union

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 4th November 2007 (Website Version)

Present

President		Judith Graham Jones
Immediate Past President		Daphne Patrick;
Vice President	NWBA	Jean Hand
	MWBA	Alan Screen
	EWBA	Patrick Jourdain
	WWBA	Graham John
Area Delegates	NWBA	Catherine Spalding David Spalding
	EWBA	Ken Richardson
		Margaret van de Weyer
Chief Executive		Neville Richards

Apologies for absence

Mike Amos; Noelle Bond; Betty Brookes; Beryl Warner; Chris Davies Linda Greenland.

The President introduced and welcomed Margaret Van de Weyer as the Minutes Secretary; Patrick Jourdain confirmed that Margaret had also been appointed as East Wales' second delegate and was therefore entitled to vote.

1 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 22nd July 2007

Item 16: The President said that she had not proposed this item but had merely raised the question of an ex gratia payment to Linda Greenland .

The members' recollection was that the payment had been duly proposed by Beryl Warner seconded by Patrick Jourdain and passed nem con.

It was suggested that a proposal should be made at the AGM that Linda Greenland should be made an Honorary member of the WBU in recognition of her services..

Item 7. the words "He said" should be added to the second sentence of the first line.

These points raised specific concerns that members of the Council were not receiving the papers to be discussed at the Council meeting in sufficient time to consider the matters to be raised with their own areas prior to the meeting.

Graham John proposed:that: Prior to the meeting and where possible within 14 days, all Council members should receive by e-mail the Agenda and Reports so that there would be time for them to discuss and confer with Area Committees. Seconded by Catherine Spalding. Agreed nem.con.

The Minutes were confirmed.

2. Matters arising from the Minutes

Item 7 Selectors:

There is still a vacancy for the 5th Welsh Selector as West Wales had been unable to fill the vacancy

3. Chief Executive's Report:

CEO confirmed that his report had been sent out prior to the meeting.

3.1 Selection process.

CEO said that one of his main concerns was the dissatisfaction with the selection of the Welsh teams which was being expressed by the players and also those who had not been selected. The Chairman of Selectors Peter Garner Gray considered that the selectors were not accountable to the Council. There are also difficulties in communicating with PG-G

Council felt that the selectors should have an open and transparent policy. Daphne Patrick suggested that there perhaps should be a written policy. It was nonsense to suggest that the Selectors were not accountable to the Council; they were appointed by the Council and as such accountable and responsible to Council.

One of the main problems was the lack of communication between the selectors, and between selectors and players. There had been no communication for at least 2 months between the selectors and players resulting in players not being made aware of whether they had been selected or were expected to attend a further trial.

It was generally agreed that Council can give the Selectors a mandate to "Select the best team" Additionally. Council can set out a structure, by way of a time table with procedures and time limits by which such procedures must be completed, and insisting that candidates be kept fully informed throughout the process and the time in which these procedures must be carried out, including communicating at all times with the applicants. It was considered essential that the selectors met on a regular basis.

It was agreed that the CEO should write tactfully to the Chairman of Selectors stating "That the Council was mindful of the need for communication with Council as well as with the applicants, which communication should be maintained throughout the period of the trial."

Council queried whether we appointed the Selectors at the appropriate time. The Selectors should possibly be appointed between March and May. Patrick Jourdain thought it best that the Selectors be appointed before the end of term of the previous Selectors in May so that the new Selectors could observe how the selection for the European Championships in June is conducted.

As a result of the lively discussion it was felt that there are areas of concern. The President proposed that the CEO took into consideration the various concerns of the Council and to prepare a paper after consultation with the Selectors making clear the following points:

- a. A structure to be followed
- b. Earlier appointment of Selectors
- c. The retiring Selectors to prepare a plan on how they consider applicants
- d. Time Table to be followed
- e. Communication between Selectors and Selectors as well as Selectors and applicants.

3.2. Members of the Council were concerned whether international players put enough back into the clubs. Alan Screen, agreed with the sentiments expressed and stated that the common complaints are “who are the international players?” especially as they are being subsidised by the WBU.

Patrick Jourdain stated that the players were honoured to play for Wales but agreed that all the members of the international squad should be asked what they can offer by way of their various skills. This will of course depend on the individual circumstances for in addition to playing for Wales a number of the squad held down responsible jobs. Some members of the squad regularly contributed articles etc.

There is also a misconception of how the international players are funded. Only entry fees to the tournaments are paid.

Jean Hand said that a lot of the players give up their holidays to play for Wales. Also when an international player turned up at a club some of the club members felt intimidated.

A suggestion that an article is written in the magazine highlighting the pro and cons of being a Welsh international player, each issue focusing on a particular international. This would be a valuable PR exercise.

Also members of the Council including the President and Patrick Jourdain to meet with the players asking what they can contribute to bridge in Wales.

3.3 Journal

The proposal that the National Tournament Organiser and the CEO should produce the Journal was passed.

3.4 Scoring Programme.

Ken Richardson agreed with the CEO that there were inadequacies in our current scoring programme. In light of the comments made by the CEO in his report it was proposed by Patrick Jourdain and seconded by Jean Hand that the CEO spends £400 on the ASE programme. Agreed nem.con.

3.5 The Draft Ratings Paper

Council members felt that before they could comment on this paper that they should discuss it with their various Area Committees and then have a discussion on the proposals, which would be on a similar basis to a golfer's handicap.

Ken Richardson proposed that we should ask a few clubs to give ratings a trial. Concerns were expressed by Patrick Jourdain that we should not adopt it wholesale at the present time as he felt that the author of this paper may stand to gain financially.

David Spalding expressed concerns that the terminology was similar to our current terminology. (*Use of title Master & Grand Master*).

4 Treasurer's Report:

Unfortunately Linda Greenland was not present to give her report but a copy was handed to the Council members.

4.1 The future of the Treasurership was raised . Ken Richardson informed Council that Linda was prepared to remain as Treasurer and is prepared to stand again. On the other hand she would be prepared to give up the role if a suitable person could be recruited. Ken Richardson informed the committee that Linda was prepared to give an undertaking to deal with all matters as they arise.

It was agreed that Council members should return to their Area Committees to canvass for a new Treasurer in waiting to work alongside LG. in case she should wish to stand down at any time..

4.2 Accounts and signatories.

There are two accounts held with Lloyds TSB

A The working account: Day today running accounts which includes a current account and a savings account

B Deposit account: Containing the bulk of WBU funds which are invested in a long term interest account.

It was proposed that: the CEO should be a second alternative signatory on the working account, the Treasurer being the other signatory; each may withdraw money independently while keeping the other fully informed. This would enable the account to be operated electronically so that there can be greater flexibility between the savings and the current account.

And that: The Deposit Account will have three signatures and two of the three signatures must sign to withdraw money. It was agreed in addition to the Treasurer the CEO will be a signatory and the Council agreed to ask Noelle Bond to be the third signatory; if she felt unable to be a signatory then Robert Upton would be approached. Agreed nem.con

*4.3 Consideration took place as to whether the balance sheet should appear in the Journal. After discussion it was felt that it should appear in the Journal.

The President thanked the Treasurer for her report and further endorsed her positive remarks re the David Lloyd Centre. where the Welsh Foursomes were held in September. The Senior Congress is planned to take place at this venue.

5 National Tournament Organiser's Report .

Although not present a report had been provided to the CEO. This report contained information re the Llangollen Congress. However, there were other events on which the Council would have liked a report including the venue and other problems re the Graded Masters.

Council would welcome a NTO report to include: progress re the Welsh and Cambrian Cups, Graded Masters, Llangollen congress and venues for 2008-9

The national Men's pairs event and teams were a cause for concern in that they did not seem to be very well supported. The latter was to be held in East Wales but was cancelled due to lack of support. The pairs event did slightly better in North Wales where there were 5 ½ entries. On the other hand the Ladies equivalent which is held over a weekend in Builth Wells proved to be successful. Council queried whether we could

hold the Mens' event there at the same time as the Venue was big enough to accommodate the additional tables.

Council agreed that if there was enough interest in running the men's event then it should be arranged at the same time as the Ladies Weekend in June 08

David Spalding suggested that perhaps we should also try to include a junior section in this event. This was not accepted by Council but acknowledged in that perhaps we could perhaps incorporate a junior section in the Graded Masters .

The Council expressed disappointment that there was not a full NTO report available and the CEO was asked to consult with the NTO so that a full report would be available at the next meeting.

6 Magazine Editors Report:

Council felt that the magazine had been well received.

6.1 Daphne Patrick had organised advertising with three holiday companies who were pleased with the advertisements. This had generated income of £500.00.

We need to continue with advertising but Council felt that we should devise a policy on what items we should advertise. Daphne Patrick suggested that we should approach HSBC insurance services to see whether they would place an advertisement in the magazine.

It was agreed that perhaps we could have one page of non bridge services in the magazine. If members objected then Council would reconsider its policy.

The only query is whether we were charging too little for the advertising space. Daphne Patrick was prepared to arrange advertising for the February edition.

6.2 Costs The CEO reported that there was to be an increase in the production costs of £400.00 (*honoraria increases to the Editor and Compiler*) and this was accepted by Council. Query as to whether we could have a smaller print run as some members were reading the magazine in their clubs and leaving it there. Catherine Spalding expressed concern that members and new members in particular were not getting the appropriate information from the WBU. It was her understanding that approximately 2 ½ years ago that it had been agreed that each member would get a copy of the magazine sent to them as part of their membership fee.

New members did receive a welcome pack and a copy of the Journal.

Catherine Spalding queried whether new members were in fact getting a welcome pack. Enquiries will be made of the Membership Secretary.

6.3 Distribution When the data base includes all members addresses, direct delivery to home addresses could be considered.. However Council felt that this may increase costs by a significant margin and before this was agreed we need to consider the costs involved. The February issue would be delivered as normal.

As a result of this discussion it became clear that the Council does not have a list of policies which have been agreed in previous meetings. The President felt strongly on this point and on her retirement would look to prepare a list of agreed policies.

7 International Matters. A report by Patrick Jourdain.

1. The changes in the laws needs to be implemented by September 2008 and they will be first used in the European Championships in June.
2. The WBU should implement the new laws at the same time as the EBU which was to be in August 2008
3. Players needed to be educated on these laws by June.
4. Blue Book needs to be updated
5. Council needs to authorise expenditure for 100 copies of the new laws.
6. The February magazine should make people aware of the change in the laws and where members could find these changes. The changes will not appear in this issue as the new laws will be sent to clubs in due course.

The CEO reported that he had received a quote for £300 for 300 copies of the new laws. Subject to clarification on copyright Council authorised the CEO to put this in hand

The Council unanimously accepted point 5 of Patrick Jourdain's report in that we should make arrangements to select a junior team for Beijing. We should approach our juniors and make sure that they are available for these dates if selected. Our junior organiser Elaine Sharp to put in hand the selection process. There may be grants available for the smaller nations for travel expenses. The CEO to make sure that the selectors began the process.

PJ expressed concern that if we did not field a team in Beijing and we did qualify in the European Championships that we will not get an invite to the World Championships. It was therefore imperative that our trial dates did not clash with the World Championships. Council agreed that the two trial dates for selection in October be removed.

PJ asked the CEO to see whether Wales was fielding a Chess team in the mind Olympics in which case we should get together to plan a joint trip and to discuss uniforms etc. Investigations be carried out as to whether there were any other funding available to assist with the cost of sending teams to Beijing.

8 Venue for the 2009 Camrose

Council congratulated Margaret Lane on providing a comprehensive report on the investigations that she had made. Council agreed to accept the Holiday Inn as the venue subject to clarification on the internet access cost.

Council agreed in principle that we should field a junior and schools team in the Junior Camrose. Elaine should be asked to go ahead and organise this and to liaise with the Selectors.

9 Correspondence:

9. Bill Parkinson, Secretary of the Gwent Bridge Academy, had written to say that he had not received payment for use of the Academy as a Trials venue. Payment has now been made.

9.1 Mike Bond, Membership Secretary, requires confirmation that the part year discount also applies to direct members; if they apply after January their subscription will stand for 15 months.

It was agreed that direct members be treated as ordinary members. This applied to WBU members only

*9.2 Peter Goodman has asked whether any subsidy might be available to assist him in participation in the NEC event in Japan in January as member of a trans-national team. There is no allowance in the Council's budget for this and perhaps the matter should be referred to the Selectors.

Any Other Business.

11.1 Graham John proposed that the President and the CEO be made honorary ex officio members of each Area and that Areas should waive the annual subscription for the President and the CEO.

After discussion it was proposed by Patrick Jourdain and seconded by Graham John that the WBU invites each area to accept that the current President and the CEO be honorary members of their area. This was agreed.nem.con

11.2 The Council expressed deep regret and sympathy with the families on the loss of Max Powell and Barbara Cornish both honorary life members and Annie Favager. All three played an active part in the WBU and they will be greatly missed.

11.3 David Spalding concerned by the allocation of Green Points at Events: There is a definite regulation for each event which is calculated by a formula. Lists should be displayed at each event showing the allocation. The formula should also be made available so that people will know the exact position.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 15.15 p.m.