

American Cribbage Congress

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

VIRTUAL MEETING

March 11, 2023

Final/Approved—10/13/2023

I **Call to Order:**

President James Morrow called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. PST

II **Roll Call:**

Jeanne Jelke read the roll call. In attendance were David Aiken Rick Allen, Patrick Barrett, Willie Evans, Richard Frost, Tammy Gibbons, Roland Hall, John Hazlett, Jason Hofbauer, Jeanne Jelke, Jennifer Johnson, Cy Madrone, James Morrow, Lana Newhouse, Dave O'Neil, Sandy Sands, Todd Schaefer, Dan Selke, Rick Shea, Mark Soule, Vickie Soule, David Statz, Terry Weber, Fred White, and Keith Widener. 25 Board members were in attendance. We had a quorum. Also in attendance: Ivan Wells, Brenda Nason, John Shafer and others. [Note: Fred W. left the meeting after HOF voting and Pat B. left after giving the Tournament Commissioners Report.]

III **Approve Agenda:**

James M. made amendments to the Agenda:

1. Add Grand National Updates to Old Business
2. Discussion on Board elections to New Business

IV **Approve Minutes of September 23, 2022:**

Jeanne J. presented the draft minutes of September 23, 2022, held at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Omaha, NE. There was no discussion. They were deemed approved.

V **HOF 2023:**

Jennifer J. reported that 88 of the HOF panelists responded to the preliminary online message. Eventually, we received 98 of 100 votes. One panelist didn't return a paper ballot, and one will be replaced by their sponsor. None of the nominees received 75% of the votes. Bob Bartosh (58%), James Morrow (54%) and Keith Widener (72%) each got more than 50% of the votes. Jennifer J. and Dave A. set up a secret board vote through an electronic program. After tallying the votes, Jennifer J. announced that Keith Widener received enough Board member votes (84%) and was declared elected to the ACC Hall of Fame.

VI **Officer Reports**

A. Membership Secretary: Brenda Nason referred to her emailed report. She noted that in five of the last six months the ACC got more than 100 new members. Former members are also coming back. About 30% are using the new online method. Jeanne J. commended Brenda N. on her making the transition so smooth and making many improvements. Dan S. inquired about having lifetime MRP's on the membership card. Brenda N. referred the question to John H. or Scott Harker. John H. said that this will happen when we finish the new MRP system.

- B. Treasurer’s Report:** James M. referred to the written report emailed by Marlene Lazachek. There was no further discussion.
- C. Grass Roots:** Ivan Wells referred to his emailed report. He stated that Grass Roots membership numbers are improving, at about 10% above last year’s numbers. We are still 10%-20% below pre-pandemic numbers. Ivan W. said that there is a new club in Ohio. It will be considered part of the Eastern Division for Grass Roots purposes. Ivan W. stated that the Grass Roots program is meeting its financial goals, and that there are no systems that need changing—things are good. Rick S. asked about having Grass Roots team competition at the ACC Open. Ivan W. asked for an email describing the idea and how it would work.
- D. Internet tournaments:** David A. referred to an email sent to the BOD by Sally Henderson. James M. stated that we are no longer doing bracket tournaments on e-cribbage. Tammy G. said that not much else is changing. The e-cribbage site itself is having some technological issues. David A. noted that Jennifer Curnow had made it easier to log on. John Schafer stated that the main tournament director on Game Colony was out for medical reasons, and a new TD (Richard Rice) is filling in.
- E. IT/Tech:** Ivan W. said that there was nothing to report. He wished there would be a new chair for the IT committee. However, he had no specific person in mind.
- F. Youth Program:** James M. referred to the report emailed by Dan Zeisler. There are new youth tournaments in the Eastern Region, thanks to Joe Bowen. Hopefully, the youth program will make a comeback after the pandemic. Rick S. said that Don “Grumpy” Howard is planning to do a Youth Grand National in conjunction with the ACC Open in June.

VII Old Business

A. Grand National Updates:

- a. **GN XLI:** Mark S. reported for Jack Howser on GN 41 which will be October 10 – 15, 2023 in Virginia Beach, VA. Jack H. asked that it be announced that the deadline for GN entries is September 30, 2023. There will be no walk-ins. This is to get an accurate food order. The Midweek deadline is October 4. All 91 rooms at the Four Points by Sheraton are now booked for the GN. He is working on a back up (Hampton Inn) which is about a 6-minute walk. Prices are \$114 M-Th and \$189 over the weekend. Everything else is going well.
- b. **GN XLII:** David A. reported on GN 42, which will be November 13 -17, 2024 at the Rampart in Las Vegas. He said that the contract is signed, and the committee is working on a preliminary plan. Jeanne J. said that she will look into the possibility of a tournament between Reno and the Midweek, perhaps in Topaz or Carson City.
- c. **GN XLIII:** David A. did not have an update for GN 43, which will be October 1-5, 2025, in Deadwood, SD.

B. MRP program: James M. said that the Executive Committee hired Scott Harker to finish the revision to the MRP program, and once it is finished to maintain the system.

C. Element 3 Health: Sandy S. reported that Element 3 had sponsored two ads in Cribbage World. He noted that the optional program for Grass Roots clubs has continued to evolve since it was introduced in Omaha. One such thing is that clubs will receive \$100 when the club signs up and sends out an informational email to members. Element 3 has also offered

an associate level to the ACC that netted \$2,000 to the ACC. James M. said that his club is participating in Element 3 and that after sending some paperwork, they received \$100 after only about a week. He said that Element 3 is willing to help. Sandy S. invited people to ask him questions. He'd appreciate any feedback.

- D. Sportsmanship Award:** Tammy G. reported that an adhoc committee consisting of herself, Lana N. and Vicki S. met to envision a new award to recognize good sportsmanship. They were inspired by the Jerry Gruber sportsmanship theme at the Awards Banquet in Omaha. They decided that the first award will be given at the Grand National to Mike Fetchal. Discussion included whether a process for this award be formalized and include input from the commissioners. Ivan W. suggested that the process be consistent with the Grass Roots Commissioner's Award.

VIII New Business

- A. Slow Play:** Pat B. described a situation where a player continued to play slowly despite requests by the TD to speed things up. The TD then forced the player to start at hole 30 for every game. This decision was made in conjunction with the Western Tournament Commissioner Rick S. and in consultation with Keith W. Pat B. pointed out that this solution contradicts the TD manual. He brought this incident up to get the BOD's opinions on how to deal with slow play. The ensuing discussion pointed out that sometimes there are physical reasons for slow play, but at the same time the TD needs to provide a good environment for all the players and deliberate slow play should not be condoned. It was suggested that if slow play is addressed by a shortened board, the game should start at hole 26 instead of hole 30. That gives the dealer less of an advantage as opposed to dealing at hole 30. Ultimately, the TD has the authority to decide how to handle slow play, but it needs to be dealt with consistently and a shorter board needs to be justified. Pat B. will prepare a proposal for dealing with slow play for the TD's manual and bring it to the October BOD meeting in October.
- B. Publication of Suspended Players:** Keith W. proposed adding the "why" for each member listed as suspended or expelled. This "why" will refer what aspect(s) of the code of ethics was violated. In addition, he proposed that suspended individuals be listed not just once but every month for the duration of their suspension. Keith W. noted that this will require an amendment to the constitution. When asked why this is needed, Keith W. said that people need to know [what caused the suspension.] Jeanne J. suggested that the BOD authorize Keith W. to go forward with implementing it, and formalizing the amendment to the constitution in the fall. **Action:** Jeanne J. made a motion authorizing Keith W. to immediately implement publishing the code of ethics violation for any suspended player, and that he bring back a proposal with exact wording of an amendment to the constitution for formal approval at the next BOD meeting, seconded by Dan Selke. **Motion approved.**
- C. Change of Wording ACC Policy Manual:** David A. said this is simply a wording issue regarding whether the ACC is "granting" or "advancing" \$2,500 to support Grand Nationals. **Action:** David A. made a motion to use the word "grants." Seconded by Roland H. **Motion Approved.**
- D. Youth Scholarship:** James M. noted that there is currently an abundance of donations (\$18,000) earmarked for the youth program. He raised the idea of having an academic \$1000 scholarship per year per region for youth members going on to trade school or

college. There would be some criteria, such as good grades, and participating in the youth program, online, at Grass Roots, and/or weekend tournaments. It was noted that input from Don “Grumpy” Howard and Dan Zeisler will be needed. Concern was expressed that the funds would be exhausted in six years unless there is an increase in donations. It was pointed out that scholarships might be an extra incentive to increase donations to youth cribbage. The concept of a youth scholarship program was tabled. A committee of four people: Dan S., Julie Felkins, Jason H. and Jeanne J. was formed to study the idea and bring back a proposal in October.

- E. Player’s Home Region:** David A. brought up for discussion the suggestion that wherever a player earned the most MRP’s should be considered their “home” region, excepting MRP’s earned at the ACC Open and Grand National. Keith W. felt this was “a can of worms.” Terry W. said that this is not a widespread problem and suggested not changing anything. Cy M. noted that the method of calculating this might be a challenge. Lana N. and others agreed with these concerns. David A. stated that he raised the issue on behalf of someone else and considered it discussed.

- F. BOD Elections:** Prior to the Officer Reports that were on the agenda, there was a discussion on the BOD elections. Bios are due to Megan Player by April 1st, and photos to David A. Rick A., Dave O., Dave S., and Richard F. are not running again. Tammy G. has moved back to the Western Division. Votes will be tabulated by June 10.

IX BOD Committee Reports

A. Web Site:

John H. stated that he’d been working on a couple of things. He just sent out an email with statistics about views of cribbage.org. He also arranged for the payment button on the website to be reduced in size. The Grand National page has been updated. A problem on the Grass Roots site was referred to Scott Harker. Next on the agenda: update of MRP’s and standings once the new MRP system is in place.

B. Marketing:

Jennifer J. reported that the marketing committee was looking into purchasing pens in bulk to promote the ACC. There are some license plate holders in the marketing inventory. A cribbage podcast was also being considered. She said that the billboard experiment was not effective in generating members.

C. Rules:

Dave O. reported that he hasn’t received any new requests since the last meeting. He noted that the rule changes that were approved at the Omaha BOD meeting had not yet been published. David A. said he will make sure this is done. Dave O. said that changes were described accurately in the Omaha BOD minutes.

D. Ethics:

Keith W. reported that leaving a tournament is the main reason for suspension. He said that there were some other issues that have been looked at. Perhaps suspensions for less than 6 months should be considered for certain situations.

E. Judges:

Keith W. stated that he was in the process of emailing all Senior Judges, and informing them that their Senior Judge status will be reviewed. He has also started writing a judging column in Cribbage World. Sally H. stated that there are over 20 new judges, mostly due to the push in Grass Roots clubs to have at least one certified judge.

F. Tournament Commissioners:

Pat B. reported that Sandy S. and James M. got new banners made that have the new logo and are sturdier. They got a good discount on the banners, which are being distributed to TD's. More will be ordered as needed. Mark S. said that attendance, while not as good as pre-Covid, is picking up in the East and that there were new tournaments. Pat B. said that there are new tournaments in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois. Attendance is getting back to normal and then some. Cindy Wark wants to start tournaments in Ohio, but she has run into some problems. Sandy S. said that they had similar problems in Montana, and he has some ideas to help Cindy W. Rick S. said that the number of tournaments in the West has been getting back to pre-Covid days, but attendance is not as high. He said that clusters that include weekdays are popular. Pat B. noted that the costs of venues and hotel rooms have been increasing, so some traditional tournaments are falling off.

G. Social media:

Dave A. stated that social media consists mainly of Facebook, and is the primary had nothing more to report on this subject.

H. Nominating:

Jeanne J. stated that we will be voting on Executive Committee Officers in Virginia Beach. She will activate the Officer Nominating Committee in June or July and reach out to invite nominations to prepare a slate of nominees for the next BOD meeting.

I. Awards:

Mark S. didn't have much to report. He said that things are starting to get busy in preparation for the end of the season and the October Awards Banquet. He thanked his committee members.

XI. Executive Committee Reports

President: James M. said that there wasn't a whole lot going on. Postage has gone up. The Executive Committee decided to leave the rule book price at \$2.00. The Executive Committee also hired Scott H. as the MRP system fixer.

Senior Vice President: Rick S. stated that the Sands will be presenting a new contract proposal in June. There will be some changes, including that the Sands' contribution to the prize fund will be based mostly on occupancy in the hotel, not on participation numbers. Additionally, we will have to store our own stuff. The Sands will still add money to the TOC and ACC Open. Hotel rates will go up, but they will be competitive. In response to a question, Rick S. said that there will not be any compensation by the Sands to offset their cancellation of the March tournament, but maybe a contingency should be put in the new contract should that happen again. Rick S. also said that a call will go out for proposals for the next GN to be held in the East (in 2026), and we will vote on it in October.

VP Ethics /Policy: Keith W. said that he didn't have anything else to report. He will hand out new changes to the ACC Policy & Procedures manual.

VP Operations: Terry W. had no further comments except to refer to the new banners that are being produced and distributed to tournament directors.

VP Competition: David A. stated that he already reported on everything he is working on and has nothing else to report.

XII. Adjournment:

Action: Keith W. made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Willie E. **Motion approved.** The meeting ended at 3:08 p.m. PST.

Next meeting date: Friday, October 13, 2023 at 8:00 am at Four Points by Sheraton Virginia Beach in Virginia Beach, VA.