

American Cribbage Congress

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Virtual Meeting March 9, 2024

Approved 11/15/2024

1. Call to Order:

a. Roll Call:

President James Morrow called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm PST. Jeanne Jelke took the roll call. Present at the beginning of the meeting were: David Aiken, Joe Bowen, Betty Brumley, Tammy Gibbons, Opal Gunn, Roland Hall, John Hazlett, Jason Hofbauer, Jeanne Jelke, Jennifer Johnson, Bob Joslin, Jason Matheny, James Morrow, Lana Newhouse, Sandy Sands, Todd Schaefer, Dan Selke, Rick Shea, Mark Soule, Vickie Soule, Terry Weber, and Keith Widener. 22 Board members were in attendance at the beginning of the meeting. We had a quorum. Rick Baird and Cy Madrone joined the meeting later on. Excused Absence: Patrick Barrett. Also in attendance: Ivan Wells, Scott Harker, Brenda Nason, John Schafer, Kat Hartsell, Rick Montague, Eric Davis, and others.

b. Approve Agenda:

James M. noted the following changes: there would be no 4.f. (Tournament & Rules/Guidelines by Pat B.; Agenda item 5.a. will be presented by Jennifer J., not Terry W. **Action:** David A. made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Dan S. **Motion approved.**

c. Approve BOD meeting minutes of Virginia Beach VA Oct 13-2023:

Jeanne J. presented the latest draft of the minutes from the October 13, 2023, BOD meeting in Virginia Beach, VA. **Action:** James M. moved to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2023, BOD meeting in Virginia Beach, seconded by Joe Bowen. **Motion approved.**

2. Officer reports:

a. Membership Secretary:

Brenda Nason referred to her written report. She raised the idea of the ACC subscribing to Meetup, particularly to help recruit for Grass Roots clubs. Scott Harker said that he uses it a lot, and that it is only \$10 per month as an individual. The ACC might be able to negotiate an organizational rate. Grass Roots directors would have to respond to any inquiries. Opal G. offered to spearhead this suggestion for Grass Roots. Sandy S. said that several Grass Roots directors have told him that Brenda N. is doing a phenomenal job as membership secretary.

b. Treasurer's Report:

James M. referred to the written report submitted by Marlene Lazachek. He asked Scott Harker about the \$1,600 for "Software-Statistician" on page 3 of the report. Scott H. did not know, and John H. also did not know. James M. said he would ask Marlene L. for an explanation.

c. Grass Roots:

Ivan W. referred to his written report and said that Grass Roots is having a great season. Participation is now above the pre-pandemic level. It is also a pretty stable operation. More and more renewals are being done online. Betty B. has taken over the awards. Rick B. is taking over the GRTOC. He said that they have now identified all previous Club Champions since 1985. This

list will be posted. Anyone who has been a Club Champion will be invited to participate in the Grass Roots TOC.

d. Internet:

James M. referred to the written report emailed by Sally Henderson. There were no other comments.

e. Youth Program:

Mark S. noted that Dan Zeisler gave his six-month notice. An ad will be placed in Cribbage World. Don “Grumpy” Howard will help in the interim and train the new Youth Commissioner. James M. stated that there have been two youth tournaments recently, one in Maine and one in California. The Youth Grand National is being planned for Reno in June.

3. Board of Director Reports:

a. Web Site:

John H. reported on website updates. These include HOF page, Rookie of the Year, and Volunteers of the Year. He will include a page to update committee assignments, which James M. will provide. He will get with David A. to update the 2024 Grand National information. Once Dan Z. and Grumpy H. are done with youth, he may move the current stand-alone youth website to be its own section of the ACC website.

b. Tournament Commissioners:

i. West: Rick S. said that things in the Western Division are going forward smoothly.

ii. Central: No report.

iii. East: Mark S. stated that things are going smoothly, and the number of tournaments is now well the above pre-pandemic level.

c. Awards [ACC]:

Mark S. said that he is waiting for the end of the season to end to begin ramping up preparations for awards before the Grand National in Las Vegas. There won't be any big price changes, and perhaps the total cost will be a bit lower.

d. Grassroots Awards:

Betty B. said that progress is going pretty well, and that she's caught up now. The letter to awardees has been updated.

e. Executive Committee:

President: James M. stated that the Executive Committee had not been very busy in the last four months. They are recruiting for a Youth Commissioner.

Executive VP: Rick S. had nothing to report.

VP for Competition: David A. said that there had been a few tournaments with payout issues but nothing much else.

VP for Policy & Ethics: Keith W. stated that there are a few new pages to insert in the ACC Policy & Procedures Manual. He said that maybe we will eliminate the hard copy unless requested, because the updated version is always available online.

VP for Operations: Mark S. said that progress was being made with the new MRP program. He said that Cribbage World is going fine.

4. Standing committee reports:

a. Technology:

Scott H. reported that recording scores from GRRT's and GRNT's need to include plus and minus point totals. He said that they have automated the sending of emails to expiring and expired memberships. Also, refunds (which are rare) can now be issued. Membership cards can be sent by pdf to club directors. He is working on synchronizing the ACC MRP and GR databases, as well as converting youth to regular members once they are no longer youths. The online MRP system is now the official one; Marlene L.'s old one is no longer being updated and is being phased out. The new MRP system, which will allow TD's to input their results directly online, will be tested in April and May with several tournaments.

b. Promotions:

Jennifer J. reported that the costume contest spearheaded by Kat Hartsell was well received, as was the backdrop for photos of winners. Kat. H. provided more detail. The costume contest and backdrop for photos will be continued at the Grand Nationals. They are ordering more backdrops, one for each region.

c. Judges:

Keith W. said that people are emailing him questions about judging calls in response to his monthly column in Cribbage World, so they seem to be paying attention to the column. James M. noted that the Senior Judges list needs to be updated on the ACC website. Keith W. said that the list in the ACC Policy & Procedures Manual is kept current. John H. asked if Tournament Commissioners could let him know when someone falls off the list of judges.

d. Ethics:

Keith W. reported that there has been a lot of ethics activity since Virginia Beach. There have been some warning letters and some suspensions. A one-year suspension was appealed, and will be discussed at a special meeting right after this BOD meeting. He also discussed the issue of "hauling wood," and whether that merited being expelled. He said that every situation is different; when it comes to expelling people, there needs to be at least two affidavits from witnesses. He also said they were considering what to do about a player who has walked out of a Grass Roots session for the second time, ignoring communications. This has a detrimental effect on new players. He noted that the Ethics Committee is doing a good job, and he appreciated the work that they've done. Everyone is given a fair shake. Rick S. reminded everyone that no ethics actions can be considered unless someone writes a letter describing the issue.

e. Rules:

James M. said that he was dissolving the current Rules Committee and establishing a new committee chaired by Rick B. It will consist of the three Tournament Commissioners, Peggy Shea, Darlene Stier, and Bob Joslin. After some discussion, he asked BOD members who were on the disbanded committee if they wanted to remain on the committee. Roland H. and Jeanne J. will remain on the committee. In addition, Eric Davis volunteered to be on the rules committee, and James M. appointed him to the committee. Dan S. said he would step off the committee. David A. stated that he will help with the next printing of the rule book, but didn't want to be active on the committee. Jeanne J. noted that Dave O'Neil had done a great job as chair of the committee, especially while leading the committee through the process of preparing the most recent version of the Rules Book. James M. said that a notice will be sent to the members of the committee who were removed. He also expressed a thank you to Dave O.

f. Tournament & Rules/Guidelines:

There was no report from Pat B. However, Tammy G. reported that the Sportsmanship Award committee has chosen Ron Logan from the Western Division as this year's recipient.

5. Special Committee reports:

a. Lifetime Memberships:

Jennifer J. said that she was reporting on two items. First, she did a "straw man proposal" regarding offering lifetime memberships for people younger than 65. A tiered approach was considered using a formula based on age between 30 and 64. After considering this, it was decided not to go forward with a lifetime membership formula for those under 65. There will not be a formal proposal to change the current lifetime membership process. The second issue is how to track the status of current Lifetime members. Brenda N. noted that the post office is no longer returning issues of Cribbage World that are not delivered. Therefore, it is labor-intensive to identify lifetime members who are deceased or no longer interested in receiving Cribbage World. To the best of her knowledge, there are now 826 Lifetime members, one half of which are in Grass Roots clubs. This issue remains unresolved.

b. Welcome and Assisting New Members:

Brenda N. encouraged a systematic approach to reaching out to new ACC members and hooking them up with local Grass Roots clubs. Jennifer J. sends them a welcome email, but it would be best if others in various regions reach out to them individually. Opal G. has been doing so already in her region. A committee, consisting of Opal G., Betty B., Lana N., Sandy S., Joe Bowman, Jennifer J., Dan S., and Jason M. was formed to carry out this outreach to new members by region.

c. Legacy MRPs:

Bob J., along with Jason M., shared a presentation on the committee's recommendation regarding adjusting MRP's awarded at the three Legacy Tournaments (ACC Open, Grand National, and National Open) as an incentive for attendance. He said that they studied what other organizations did to increase attendance at big tournaments, such as the Pro Bowling Association, PGA and World Series of Poker. They concluded that offering a 20% increase in MRP's was a reasonable incentive. Scott H. said that this would be OK to implement from a

database perspective. Keith W. commended the committee, and Dan S. said that the 20% increase in MRP's seemed reasonable. **Action:** Bob J. made a motion to increase the MRP's awarded at the three Legacy Tournaments by 20%, effective August 1, 2024, seconded by Mark S. For: 23; Opposed 1. **Motion Approved.**

d. Slow Play:

Ivan W. reported that the committee is using DeLynn Colvert's 26 theory to make their recommendation. The starting hole is important to determine the minimum advantage. Starting at hole 31 switches the advantage from the dealer to the pone. Starting at hole 26 switches it back to the dealer. Ivan W. asked for feedback from directors who have tried this. A conversation ensued regarding where the skunk line should be, whether it should be moved for a shorter game. On the one hand, moving it will be confusing and perhaps not consistently applied; on the other hand, it makes it an uneven playing field [making it more likely that a skunk might happen than in a regular game.] Ivan W. will take this discussion under advisement. He will talk with Chris Bailey about doing some analysis on this issue.

e. Cross Checking:

Dan S. and Jeanne J. reported on behalf of the committee that they have come up with some recommendations to put forward to the Rules Committee. Any changes will be incorporated into the new Rule Book when it is printed next. The most significant recommendation concerns the minimum number of crosscheckers needed depending on the number of players at the table, i.e. three or more for tables more than 24.

f. Policy Manual:

Keith W. stated that this issue has already been discussed, and he had nothing more to say.

g. Scholarship:

James M. reported that a fillable application form has been prepared and can be sent by email. The committee is ready for youth to apply for scholarships. The application form will be put online.

h. Compensation:

James M. said that the compensation committee was inactive. He asked for volunteers to form the committee to review compensation policies. Besides himself, the committee consisted of Jason Hofbauer, Kat Hartsell, Joe Bowen, Opal Gunn and Terry Weber.

6. Old Business:

a. HOF voting:

Jennifer J. stated that there were six nominees. 97 of 100 ballots were cast. She said that the three who did not vote will be removed as panelists, and that their board member has been notified. She also reported that only two nominees received more than 50% of votes: Bob Bartosh and Peggy Shea. She referred Board members to a secure website where they could vote electronically. Bob Bartosh received 16 votes, which met the minimum of 2/3 vote of the BOD. He was deemed elected to the ACC Hall of Fame.

b. J Resort Contract:

Rick S. reported that the J Resort and the ACC have signed a 2-year contract. He noted that we will need to revisit the contract soon in order to renew/extend it.

c. Element3/Grouper:

Sandy S. noted that Element3 has been rebranded as “Grouper.” There are a couple of changes, that will be updated in Cribbage World. One change is that participants don’t have to do monthly check-ins. The downside is that clubs will receive a little less income, but the upside is that they are trying to simplify the process. The other change is that someone can get \$10 just for check to see if they are eligible. Only people with certain Medicare Supplemental Insurance policies are eligible. Grouper is still offering the ACC \$1,000 to get the word out to members.

7. New Business:

a. Ethics policy change:

Keith W. stated that he wanted the Ethics Committee to be able to look at the circumstances of a situation such as walking out of a tournament involving potential suspension. He suggested that the Ethics Committee be given some discretion regarding the length of the suspension, rather than an automatic 6-month suspension. Discussion followed, including how frequently such adjustments might be made, and whether it will impose more work for the committee. **Action:** Keith W. made a motion to allow the Ethics Committee to look at the circumstances surrounding a player that leaves an ACC or Grass Roots tournament early and adjust the length of the suspension accordingly, seconded by James M. **Motion approved.**

b. Consolation 9 vs 12:

Roland H. proposed that the minimum number of players in a sanctioned consolation tournament be changed from 12 to 9. He stated that he had observed at least twice when a consolation tournament had only eleven players signed up and almost couldn’t proceed until a twelfth player was talked into playing. There are still only 3 qualifiers whether there are 9 players or 12 players. After some discussion, including the easier rotation for 9 games with 10 players, the proposal was modified to make the minimum 10 players. **Action:** Roland H. made a motion to make the minimum of 10 players for a sanctioned consolation tournament, seconded by Keith W. 20 for; 3 opposed. **Motion approved.** This will take effect immediately. Tournament Commissioners will get the word out to TD’s.

c. Late Player after lunch:

Rick S. proposed that players that return late from lunch be treated the same as a player who is late for the playoffs. That is, if a player is 5 minutes late or more, they will forfeit the game (0 minus 10), and their opponent will get the win (2 plus 10.) This is different from the beginning of the tournament, when a player is allowed to participate if they show up before the start of the second game. **Action:** Rick S. made a motion to consider a player who returns late 5 minutes or more after lunch to have forfeited that game, which will be marked 0 minus 10 on his/her scorecard, seconded by Dan S. For: 19; Opposed: 4. **Motion approved.**

d. GRRT/GRNT Funding Change:

Ivan W. stated that the Grass Roots Awards budget is currently roughly \$2,000 short for the year. He is proposing that the fee for GRRT’s and GRNT’s be raised from \$15 to \$20 per

player. It will boost both prize money and raise more money for awards. Of the \$20, \$12 would go to the prize fund, and \$8 towards awards. He also suggested that unofficial participants only be charged an \$8 entry fee. This proposal would go into effect at the start of the next season. **Action:** David A. made a motion to increase the GRRT and GRNT fee to \$20 per person, seconded by Sandy S. **Motion Approved.**

e. Online Meeting:

James M. for feedback regarding the online meeting format. Jason M. stated that he thought it went well. Kat H. suggested that it went smoother [than the Virginia Beach meeting] because we stuck to the agenda better. Roland H. asked that it not be held on a weekend where there's a tournament. Keith W. suggested that perhaps a Sunday night might work. He also suggested that this may make it easier for people to run for the board if they don't have to be out of pocket twice a year to attend in person.

8. Adjournment:

Action: Keith W. made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Dan S. **Motion approved.** The meeting ended at 8:22 pm (PST.)

Next BOD Meeting: Las Vegas, NV; Friday, Nov 15, 2024, 8:00 am