

NORTH JERSEY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
December 26th, 2022
Held remotely via Zoom

President Pat Rogers Linnemeyer called the meeting to order at 5:35 P.M. Attendance was taken by Carole and it was confirmed that a quorum was present. Board members in attendance were:

Pat Linnemeyer	President
Fred Shubert	Vice President, Site
Carole Gelfer	Administrative Secretary
Mark Whitman	Treasurer
Pam Mills	Tournaments, Hospitality
Robert Sorce	Recording Secretary, Tournaments, Site
Ron Nelken	Pro-Am, Pairings
Tod Thorgersen	Bob Johnke Teams, Nelsen Reitman Teams, Prizes
Sam Ghosh	Caddies
Doug Cestone	Auditor
Susan Koster	Newsletter Editor, Club Coordinator
Joel Lipset	Pairings, Membership
Richard Podkowik	Webpage, Player of the Year, Site
Abby Brawer	Johnke and Reitman Teams
Michelle Lanigan	Sanctions, Hospitality Committee, Annual Brunch
Gale Mirro	Conduct/Ethics
Peri Namerow	Novice Promotion

Honorary board members and/or guests in attendance: Marilyn Wells.

Absent and excused: Amy Nellissen.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Pat said we are having this emergency meeting with a single item on the agenda. We must decide whether to cancel the scheduled January Sectional. The CDC currently rates Covid transmission rates for Bergen County as high. According to ACBL regulations, masks will have to be mandated. There is a question as to our responsibility to the venue in the event of cancellation. The signed contract and deposit have not yet been sent to the church. If we decide to cancel, we must also consider whether we are breaching our contract and liable for the \$2,000 deposit.

Bob asked what other expenses we may incur upon cancellation, such as sanction fees, directors, catering, etc. Pat responded the sanction fees are minimal and we are not committed to director fees. Tod asked if there was a possibility masks may not be

mandated. Pat responded the current situation requires a mask mandate, according to ACBL regulations. Tod thought there might be some flexibility in the ACBL position, given the fact that expenses have already been incurred by the Units. Pat stated her impression, based on a recent Zoom meeting with the new Executive Director, is the ACBL is not interested in supporting the clubs, Units, and Districts. They are making a good deal of money off the online games, and suggest Units and Districts facing live event challenges hold fewer tournaments. Marilyn said the ACBL is not going to tell you what to do. They are relying on you to check local transmission rates and require masks if the rate is high. Michelle asked if the Director can require masking. Marilyn responded if the local transmission rate is high and we are not requiring masks, the Director may decline to come. Bob pointed out we use an objective measure of current transmission rate. The CDC has a website showing current transmission rates by County. Currently, both Bergen and Rockland Counties are listed as high. Pat said at the recent Unit Brunch we did not require masking, although the Rockland County transmission rate was high. Several participants reported Covid infection afterwards. Going forward we must consider possible legal responsibility for not complying with ACBL guidance.

Pam made a motion to cancel the tournament. Carole seconded. The motion carried on a vote of sixteen to one in favor.

Pat opened a discussion on whether we have any legal or moral obligation to forfeit the deposit to the church. Tod said he believes the church has a responsibility to provide a safe environment and might be expected to be flexible given the high Covid risk. They should be more amenable to canceling the event on this basis. Ron said we have had a relatively good relationship with the church for many years. He agrees with Tod we should discuss the situation with them. We are canceling the event out of an abundance of caution and he expects they will be open to working with us going forward. Pam said she feels we have an obligation to pay the deposit. Gale said she is of the opinion we should negotiate. Mark said the church has not dealt with us in good faith in the past, citing as an example a recent charge of \$200.00 for leaving an exterior light on. There is nothing in the contract to justify this charge. He doesn't feel bad at all about asking them for a concession. Joel added his request to bring in a handicap chair was denied by the rental coordinator. Gale suggested we consider adding a Covid escape clause to future contracts. Michelle suggested we tell the rental coordinator we have to cancel due to Covid and leave it at that. It was generally decided we have no obligation to pay the deposit. Pam will contact the rental coordinator to advise her we are cancelling the event.

Pat asked if we should cancel the January Tournament going forward. It has always been a money loser and our expenses continue to increase. Richard objected, saying we are in the business of live bridge and we are not going to save the game by cutting playing opportunities. Rescheduling is one thing, canceling is another. ACBL's lack of support for live bridge is equivalent to sawing through the branch on which they are sitting. Ron suggested postponing the decision to cancel the January tournament until after the April event. Both Michelle and Fred agreed. Gale said making this decision today is absolutely premature. If we change to a different venue, we can re-evaluate the

financials and keeping the January event might make sense. It was generally agreed to postpone any decision about the January event.

A motion was made by Pam at 6:15 pm to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ron, and passed unanimously.