

NORTH JERSEY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
September 30, 2023
Held remotely via Zoom

President Pat Rogers Linnemeyer called the meeting to order at 10:03 A.M. Attendance was taken by Carole, and it was confirmed that a quorum was present. Board members in attendance were:

Pat Linnemeyer	President
Carole Gelfer	Administrative Secretary
Mark Whitman	Treasurer
Pam Mills	Tournaments, Hospitality
Robert Sorce	Recording Secretary, Tournaments, Site
Susan Koster	Club Coordinator, Newsletter Editor
Michelle Lanigan	Sanctions, Hospitality Committee, Annual Brunch
Peri Namerow	Novice/Intermediate Promotion
Amy Nellissen	Flyers, Distribution
Tod Thorgersen	Johnke and Reitman teams, Prizes
Ron Nelken	ProAm
Joel Lipset	Pairings, Membership
Richard Podkowik	Webpage, Player of the Year, Site
Abby Brawer	Johnke and Reitman Teams

Honorary board members and/or guests in attendance: None.

Absent and excused: Sam Ghosh, Doug Cestone, and Fred Shubert.

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Bob made a motion to remove references to Conduct and Ethics as the position no longer exists at the unit level. Carole made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, and Amy seconded. The motion was approved without objection.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We had a decent attendance at our September Sectional, considering one of the days was a Thursday, which is a working day. This makes it difficult to make a year-over-year comparison. Mark has provided the financials to all board members for review. We were able to make a profit by reducing expenses. Hopefully we will have better attendance at the November Sectional.

We had a good turnout for the Johnke, and feedback from attendees on the new location was positive. Unfortunately, Trinity Church has raised rent and fees going forward.

Our financial situation has improved. We are in good shape financially, and Mark is doing a great job handling the money.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mark said financials are much improved from last year. We basically broke even on the Johnke as opposed to a \$1,000 loss last year, and had a \$1,700 profit on the September Sectional, an improvement over last year's \$2,500 loss. These improvements are due solely to reduced expenses, as revenue was down.

TOURNAMENTS

Pam said moving the tournament to the Ridgewood location was a good idea. She did not hear any complaints. The only problem is the lighting. A discussion followed on ways to improve the lighting. Pat said the church would not change the lights, but they would allow us to change them at our expense. Bob said the difficulty in changing to brighter bulbs lies in accessing the chandeliers, which are approximately thirty feet above the floor. We will likely have to hire someone. Pam suggested we ask the church for recommendations based on workers they've used in the past. Joel agreed, saying the church is unlikely to allow an unqualified person to do the work. Pat said she would talk to the pastor to see if he could recommend someone. Bob added the bulbs in the wall sconces could easily be replaced and he will order a few brighter, whiter led bulbs so we can evaluate the effectiveness of changing bulbs.

Pam said expenses will go up for the next Sectional as serving dinner will cost a good deal more than a sandwich lunch. Bob said the sandwich and salads lunch was well received and suggested we keep the same menu for the next Sectional. Amy said the flyers, which promise dinner, have not gone out yet and the text could be changed to "light meal," and "bagel brunch." There was general agreement to do so.

Susan suggested raising the entry fees, to \$45.00 per person for the Sunday Swiss, and \$18.00 for the pair events. Joel wondered if our current price is competitive. Amy said attendance is not low because of the price. People are staying away for other reasons. Prices are going up on everything, and it is better to do small, incremental price increases rather than a big price jump down the road. Inflation is off the charts, and we must raise our card fees. Tod agreed, saying an increase in card fees is in line with what is happening in the economy. Pat suggested we raise the fee for the team game but hold off on the pair events until next year. Pam made a motion to raise the card fee for the Sunday team event to \$45.00 per person. Amy seconded. The motion passed on a vote of eleven to two.

HOSPITALITY

No report.

SANCTIONS

Michelle asked for confirmation of the dates of the 2025 events. Pam and Pat agreed the change in venue has no impact on the previously agreed dates, and Michelle can go ahead with obtaining the sanctions. It was also confirmed the proposed dates for the 2024 Johnke and Reitman were acceptable. Michelle reported we have the sanction for the 2025 January Sectional, and we can decide at some time in the future if we will hold this event. The 2024 January Sectional has already been cancelled.

SITE COMMITTEE

Pat said there is less work for the Site Committee at the new venue, as parking assistance is no longer required. Bob said there is still a need for setup and breakdown assistance from the Site Committee. He will handle it and seek assistance from volunteers if necessary.

PAIRINGS

Joel reported there was very little pairing activity for the recent tournament. Players who have been paired for previous tournaments have returned, suggesting careful pairing of compatible players can encourage longer-term partnerships.

Joel discussed some strategies for increasing attendance, possibly speaking to regular club players one on one to address their concerns about tournament play. Mark said we had a good attendance of people who played in the Pro-Am and received free entries. He suggested we might capitalize on that by involving people who play at the Sparta and New Bridgers clubs in the Pro-Am. Joel proposed we consider having a house player who would be available for a last-minute pairing in a team game, if needed. Amy said such a person would be providing us with a service and should play for free. Joel will attempt to find two players of different skill levels who might be willing to participate.

CADDIES

Pat reported we need only one caddy now, due to reduced attendance.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Richard reported the website is current.

ANNUAL BRUNCH

The date of the Annual Brunch will be January 7th, 2024. Michele will get the sanction. Pat said she is hoping for good attendance. This will be our first board meeting for the new year, and the new president will be taking over.

JOHNKE & REITMAN TEAMS

Tod said he has only received three entries for the Reitman to date, and asked if we can send out an email blast reminder. Richard will take care of this. Abby will handle arrangements for both meals. Board members in attendance will help with serving. Tod will go to the venue the day before the event to supervise the setup.

PRIZES

Tod asked for clarification on the budget amount allocated for prizes. Pat said the amount was \$500.00. Bob made a motion to restore funding for trophies. Pat seconded. A discussion followed. Bob pointed out when we decided to cut funding for trophies, we were not at that time aware of the cost breakdown for prizes. The cost of the trophies was approximately \$240.00. The largest part of the budget, \$800.00, went for pens, which we will be replacing with a lower cost alternative. Pat said many people, especially lower-level players, are thrilled to receive a trophy. Sue said Tod should do the analysis to determine the actual cost of trophies. Mark suggested we not vote on the issue until we confirm the actual cost. Michelle said it is possible the cost has gone up. Bob asked if we could amend the motion to put a maximum dollar amount to be spent on trophies. Tod said the cost of trophies is \$200.00, and if we decide to give trophies for the Pro-Am, the total cost would be \$240.00. Mark said we are not at a point yet where we can add additional spending, and he does not believe any adult is excited about getting a trophy. He said he will support the motion if the total budget for prizes is kept to \$400.00. Bob said the motion is to add \$240.00 to the budget to fund trophies. Michelle objected to including a dollar amount. Bob amended the motion to reinstate funding for trophies without stipulating a maximum dollar amount. A vote was called, and the motion passed on a vote of eight to four with one abstention.

PRO-AM

Pat said the recent Pro-Am ended up being a single club event, as Sparta and the New Bridgers did not participate. Amy suggested establishing a committee to investigate the possibility of holding the Pro-Am at a neutral location. Pat suggested we discuss it at our next meeting and decide whether it will be a unit or a club event. She also asked Ron to chair a committee with Amy and Fred Shubert to investigate the possibilities.

Ron said we need to start replacing our old decks with new cards. We have 720 decks, and at least 300 need to be replaced. Amy said we are a bridge organization, and cards are a necessary expense. Pat said she will order 300 decks through Baron Barclay.

Mark asked if we were going to reimburse the Ridgewood club for the discount given to pros who played in the Pro-Am. Ron said it has been past practice to do so.

NOVICE PROMOTION

No report.

MEMBERSHIP

No report.

FLYERS

No report.

CLUB COORDINATOR

Susan said she has been working with Marlene and interfacing with Richard to make sure club events and news were put on the website. She also updates the newsletter as needed.

NEWSLETTER

Susan said she wants to get the newsletter out as early in October as possible, as it contains the Reitman flyer, and will serve as a marketing device for the tournament. She will also add a blurb about the Annual Brunch.

WEB PAGE

No report.

OLD BUSINESS

Tod mentioned the budgeted amount for prizes of \$400.00 is something he was unaware of, and to which he had no input. Pat said we will address this issue at the next board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Amy gave an update on the pending election for board members. We have seven current members who have agreed to return. We have four new potential members nominated, Marlene Case, Martin Becker, Richard Nathan, and Chris Thorn. Amy expressed concern there are not more names on the ballot. The membership should be presented with a choice. Carole agreed, saying while we have a write-in option, in future elections we should work to get more names on the ballot.

A motion was made by Carole at 11:04 A.M. to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Susan and passed without objection.