

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
December 20, 2015

ATTENDEES: Ron Kral, President
Leo Cardillo, Vice President
Ann Atcheson, Treasurer
Donna Hickling, Secretary
Francesca Mazarella, Board Member
Kevin O'Brien, Board Member
Susan Miskura, Board Member
Jim Gerding, Board Member
David Lindley, Email Manager
Howard Stevens, Education Chair
Lucy McCoy, Newsletter Chair

Unable to attend: Joe Hertz

CALL TO ORDER: The President called the December meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 11:07 a.m. on December 20, 2015 at the Beth El Hebrew Congregation in Alexandria, Virginia.

Secretary's Report

The Board reviewed the minutes from the November Board of Directors meeting and approved them unanimously. The Board also went over the status of all action items. The results of this review are reflected in the Action Item table at the end of these minutes.

Treasurer's Report

The Board reviewed the financial statements for November, which detailed profit and loss since the beginning of the calendar year, set forth budgeted to actual expenditures, and compared the balance sheet for assets and liabilities with that of the prior year. Ann reported that this year's Sectionals have been smaller than the previous year; receipts are down approximately \$6000. The NVBA is currently operating at a \$900 loss through November for 2015. The Mid-Atlantic Bridge Conference (MABC) will be dissolved by April 2016; NVBA will no longer pay table costs to the MABC for Sectionals.

Other Items of Business

1. Holiday Party

The President thanked Jim and David for providing the Unit holiday party poinsettias and eggnog respectively. There were 40 tables. We spent \$1500 on food which is enough for 50 tables. Next year we will plan for 40 tables, saving \$300 on food. The excess food was donated to a firehouse; the firemen were very happy to get it.

2. Real Estate

The Real Estate committee has considered 12 properties in its effort to find a facility for a dedicated NVBA Bridge Center. Four of them met our criteria for table space and location. We are entering into negotiations with at least three of them. In addition to cost per square foot, we are negotiating rent abatement and dollar allowances for renovations. The committee is weighing the costs against the expected revenue. To help with this analysis, the committee is soliciting letters of intent from club owners. As club liaison, Susan will be informed of all interactions with club managers.

We need to provide the real estate owners with revenue projections, a statement of our mission, and our tax return.

3. Unit Game Survey Results

Susan presented the NVBA Unit Game Survey Report. The survey was sent to 1114 NVBA members; 411 members responded. The most frequent barriers to attendance were the distance, the location, and traffic, including a preference for day games. Other important factors included schedule and other conflicts and lack of a regular partner for the Unit Game. Also, about ¼ of the players only come for special events. David will stress special events in the weekly email, including emphasizing that most Unit Games are special events.

The next steps in increasing Unit Game attendance require looking at hard data about attendance. Susan and Ron will identify the data required. Then, a group will be formed to analyze the data. A follow-up survey to assess the potential results of changes that the NVBA could make to the Unit Game to increase attendance may be required.

A summary of the Unit Game Survey Report which Susan provided to facilitate discussion is included at the end of these minutes.

4. iContact and Pianola

ACBL has a two year agreement for email with Pianola through which it provides clubs with access. Although, ACBL has privacy issues with iContact, we are grandfathered in so we can continue to use it. However, Pianola also has data aggregation capabilities that permit players to answer questions such as with which of my partners do I perform best or do I do better as a player or a defender. ACBL's current agreement does not include these capabilities.

5. I/N Swiss Hand Records at February Sectional

NVBA will continue to supply hand records for the Intermediate/Novice Swiss game for the February Sectional; however, Kevin needs to analyze the attendance data for the games that have included these hand records to ascertain whether they have increased attendance. If not, they will be discontinued.

6. 2016 NLM Sectional in Virginia

Mike Zane has submitted a one-page plan for an NLM Sectional in Virginia. Within a week, he will present an MOU. The Board agreed that this tournament would be run as a

WBL tournament not an NVBA one. However, Lucy, in her capacity as District Tournament Coordinator, gave him a list of potential weekends for the Sectional; the dates Mike included in his plan did not coincide with some of the dates that Lucy provided.

7. NVBA Cell Phone

Ron has taken on responsibility for identifying a cost effective NVBA cell phone and plan.

8. Position Descriptions

It has proved impossible to find time during the monthly Board Meetings to review and revise the NVBA position descriptions. Ron would like volunteers to form a committee to gather feedback and draft revised descriptions.

9. Caddy Master and Youth Advisor

The Board is still looking for candidates for these positions.

NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT: The next NVBA Board meeting will be held at 11:00 am on January 31, 2016 at the Beth El Hebrew Congregation in Alexandria, Virginia. The meeting adjourned at 12:48 p.m.

Action Items

Item No.	Date	Item	Assignee	Status
1	6/7/2015	Post 199er lecture materials on the Web site	Kevin	Open
2	6/9/2015	Print, read, and edit first 10 pages of NVBA Policies and Procedures	All	Discussion of the Policies and Procedures was deferred to a later meeting, due to this meeting's full agenda
3	7/19/2015	Identify the Google Plus password	Ron	Completed. Joe will establish a new Google Plus account.
7	9/13/2015	Solicit NVBA volunteers and contact other organizations to identify potential caddies, including Marilyn Golias who is a member of the Elks	Ron	Ron did not receive a reply to the email he sent to Marilyn; he will try again.
9	9/13/2015	Check with high school clubs to identify new caddies	Ron	On hold
10	9/13/2015	Identify a new caddy master	Leo	Open
11	9/13/2015	Review Board Member position descriptions	Ron	Form group to elicit feedback and draft revisions
18	10/4/2015	Draft standard contract for directors that hold their own	Margot	

		Sectional games		
21	11/8/2015	Develop proposal to reduce Unit Game free plays to 10% of receipts	Leo/Ann	Need to determine budget breakeven point
22	11/8/2015	Advertise holiday party jewelry trunk show in NVBA newsletter	David	Complete
23	11/8/2015	Explore inexpensive cell phone and rate plan to support Unit Game	Ron	
24	11/8/2015	Find out which clubs want to hold Unit Championship games	Susan	Complete
25	11/8/2015	Draft letter and distribute with free plays for Sunrise volunteers	Donna	Complete
26	11/8/2015	Discuss potential NVBA NLM Sectional with Mike Zane	Ron	Complete
27	12/20/2015	Solicit letters of intent from Club owners	Leo, Francesca	
28	12/20/2015	Develop information required by real estate owners, including NVBA mission statement	Leo, Francesca	
29	12/20/2015	Emphasize Unit Game special events in weekly email	David	
30	12/20/2015	Identify hard data required to make recommendations to increase Unit Game attendance	Ron, Susan	
31	12/20/2015	Determine if hand records have increased attendance at I/N Sectional Swiss games	Kevin	
32	12/20/2015	Solicit volunteers to revise NVBA position descriptions	Ron	
33	12/20/2015	Inform WBL of NVBA Unit Game price changes	Ron	
34	12/20/2015	Provide information about Unit Game championships available to clubs early in the year so that they can be more equitably distributed	Livingston	
35	12/20/2015	Establish Google Plus account	Joe	

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna Hickling, Secretary

Northern Virginia Bridge Association (NVBA) Unit Game Survey Report

I. Introduction

The NVBA Unit Game Survey was done to provide information to address concerns about decreasing attendance at the Thursday night game, particularly in the A/X section. Its objective was "*finding out why people don't attend the Unit Game regularly, with particular attention to people who used to come, but don't any longer.*" The survey questionnaire was e-mailed to 1114 eligible members. Responses were received from 411 members, for a response rate of 37%, a reasonably good rate for this type of survey. 93 respondents reported playing regularly (twice or more per month); 88 respondents reported playing occasionally (once a month or less; 70 respondents reported that they used to come but no longer do; and 160 respondents reported that they never come to the Unit Game.

The results of this survey should be used with other available information to identify and evaluate actions to address attendance or other issues of interest.

II. Major Findings (across Attendance Categories)

There are a small number of factors that have a major effect on attendance:

Distance/location/traffic—Keeping in mind that all members across the NVBA were surveyed, these three factors, alone or in combination, were the most frequently identified by respondents as barriers to attendance. Contributing factors are the high number of members that don't drive at night, and the fact that large numbers just prefer day games.

Schedule and other conflicts—Various types of conflicts affect attendance at the Unit Game. Many are unspecified, but they include other regular or irregular commitments, family obligations, or preferred priorities.

Lack of a regular partner for this game—Many players in several categories said they do not have a regular partner for this game. Based on write-in responses, it did not appear that this is an issue that can be significantly addressed through the GP Program. People seem to prefer playing with a regular or preferred partner, which they likely have for other games but who is not available on Thursday night.

Many (about 1/4) of the players only come for special events (sectionals or the like).

Factors with smaller effects on attendance:

Unfriendliness or hostility appears to have a very small contributing effect on lack of attendance. This factor was not frequently identified for most of the attendance categories (and regular attendees, especially those in the 199er game, often volunteered that the game is friendly). However, just under 10% of those who Used to Come cited the unfriendly or hostile atmosphere as contributing to their no longer coming.

The start time likely affects attendance to a small degree, but a later start time and a consequent later ending would have some negative effect.

A small number of respondents indicated they do not like team games, but any net negative effect of these references could be evaluated using attendance data.

A small number of respondents said that they prefer the WBL game or it is more convenient.

Smaller or interesting effects:

There is little indication that not having transportation contributes to attendance (apart from not driving at night). Cost has little or no effect. There was a small number of complaints about the game setup and administration, and direction, but there were also compliments.

A small number of respondents offered the perception that the game is “elitist” or only for top players.