

NIBU COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the NIBU Council held at Walsh's Hotel, Maghera on January 29th 2014 at 6.45pm.

In attendance: C. Burns (Chair), J. Bergin (Vice-Chair), M. McFaul (Hon. Secretary), N. Cauwood (Hon. Treasurer), E. McNicholl, R. Connolly, A. Hassan.

1. Apologies

I. Hamilton (President), R. Burns (Hon. Master Points Secretary), N. Irwin, I. Lindsay, P. Johnston

2. Minutes of the meeting held on September 14th 2013

The minutes were approved.

3. Matters Arising

(14) After considerable discussion, it was agreed to start the second session of the Congress Pairs at 12.30pm on the Saturday.

4. Minutes of the Emergency meeting held on October 29th 2013

The minutes were approved and there were no matters arising

5. Reports from Office-Bearers

a) CB reported that the Chairman of Castlereagh Council had accepted an invitation to attend the Junior Camrose event at La Mon.

She also congratulated the Camrose team on their recent performance – a sentiment which was strongly supported by all present. She stated that another club – Portstewart – were expected to affiliate shortly.

b) MMcF reported that NIBU news had now been reported in two issues of the Irish Bridge Journal but that there were still very few subscribers in Northern Ireland.

He reported that all but four affiliated clubs were now contactable electronically and that the email database now listed over 460 members.

Correspondence had been received from Ms Pauline McCusker confirming she had reached an amicable settlement with St. Michael's Bridge club over the right to sit during play.

He also reported that he had contacted the University of the 3rd Age with regard to their Bridge Groups affiliating to the NIBU. U3A had agreed to post 'Come and Join Us' on their website.

c) NC reported on the closure of the Educational Trust for British Bridge (ETBB) and stated that the remaining funds would be distributed evenly between the Home Unions i.e. £5k each and ring-fenced for junior bridge.

He then reported that public liability insurance was deemed to be inadequate and that £2,000,000 cover was needed for up to 500 attendees. This would cost an extra £223 making a total premium of £400p.a.

He stated that there had been a number of anonymous lodgements in the NIBU account and reminded all clubs to make their identity known when making BACS transfers.

He also stated that the NIBU was in surplus for the 9 months to 31 December 2013 and reported the current account and Business Reserve balances as at that date.

d) MMcF stated that RB had informed him that 32 clubs had submitted members' listings and 11 were still outstanding. There were currently c. 1700 individual members. It was agreed that MMcF, NC and RB would meet to co-ordinate an updated list of paid-up affiliated clubs.

Action: MMcF to convene meeting with NC and RB to agree updated clubs database.

6. Newly-affiliated clubs & 'Welcome Pack'

CB confirmed that the packs – consisting of stationery items, diaries, 24 packs of playing cards, tournament guides and a 'welcome' letter – were ready for distribution to the new clubs. A discussion ensued on the desirability of providing gifts, favours and spot prizes at competitions to encourage club participation. It was suggested that NIBU embossed playing cards would go down well.

7. NIBU Bridge Centre

MMcF reported that the questionnaire had been sent to all clubs in the Greater Belfast area but that only four clubs had responded and only one club expressed an interest in the proposal. It was agreed that any further developments in this area would involve a number of clubs reaching agreement to proceed together, perhaps using NIBU as a broker.

8. Review of the Constitution

MMcF stated that the Constitution Review group had had one meeting to discuss a first draft and were due to meet on February 4th to discuss a second draft. AH spoke of the need for Council to approve the final version prior to any consultation process involving clubs. MMcF circulated recent email correspondence from Rex Anderson, which was noted.

9. Commonwealth Nations Championship

MMcF highlighted correspondence received from the Scottish Bridge Union with regard to this event due to take place in Glasgow from September 8th-14th 2014. All agreed that at least one team should be sent to represent the NIBU and that a second team could be sent if they were prepared to pay their own entry fee. It was agreed to refer the task of selecting a team to the Selection Committee.

Action: J. Murchan to convene a meeting of the Selection Committee in order to determine a process for selecting a team for the Commonwealth Nations Championship. MMcF to confirm with SBU that NIBU will be entering at least one team.

10 Bridge Tables

CB confirmed that these could be purchased at a discounted price of 70 euros from the CBAI shop. NIBU had ordered 50 – to be stored at La Mon for use in forthcoming NIBU events and that a further 50 would be ordered for clubs. MMcF confirmed that clubs had been informed of this offer and that orders were already coming in. It was agreed that only orders via affiliated clubs would be considered. Tables were expected to be ready for collection in Belfast around mid-February

11. Youth Development Plan

NC announced a total budget of £7000 had been ring-fenced for spending on Junior Bridge (Closure of ETBB funds plus 'EasyJet' money). He suggested setting up a small team to draw up a plan and spoke of the request he had received from S. Millership to be involved in the spending of this fund. MMcF raised the question of Diane Greenwood's 2013 proposal and reminded members that Diane was due a response to her proposal. A long discussion ensued as to how the funds would be spent and it was finally agreed that a 'Youth' sub-committee would be set up to plan and co-ordinate all aspects of Junior and Schools Bridge.

Action: CB to convene a meeting of interested individuals to form a 'Youth' sub-committee, Chair to be agreed at the first meeting.

12. Internationals

CB announced that the team for the second Camrose round would be unchanged. The teams for the Lady Milne, Junior Camrose and Peggy Bayer had been announced. AH asked for volunteers to assist with airport-pickups (if need be) for the junior events at the end of February. CB stated that Castlereagh Council had awarded £100 sponsorship money. JB agreed to make the 'Welcome' speech and CB was hopeful that the Belfast Telegraph would cover the event.

The Senior Camrose would be held at La Mon in May and was being sponsored by Ian Lindsay.

13. Stena Cruises

There had been a slight fall-off in numbers but still general agreement that the events were a success. Nine or ten dates had been selected for cruises in 2014.

14. Mini-Bridge

MMcF briefed the meeting on progress as outlined in Norma Irwin's email.

15. Business Cards

CB stated that Office Bearers should all have business cards to hand out at events, congresses etc.

16. Mooney Hotels

MMcF stated that this group had expressed an interest in hosting bridge events and suggested possibly more 2 day events (i.e. one night) could be attractive on an inclusive package basis. Included in the group were the Dunadry Inn and Wellington Park Hotel.

17. Inter 'A' and 'B' event

CB reminded all that this pilot one day event would take place at La Mon on August 3rd and that a significant marketing exercise was needed to maximise attendance.

18. Council meetings

CB expressed concern at the level of attendance at Council meetings, stating that attendance should be mandatory except in the case of medical emergency.

19. Date of the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held at 1, Lenamore Drive, Jordanstown on Thursday March 27th at 6.30pm.

The meeting closed at 10.20pm.

Michael McFaul

Hon. Secretary