

**NEW SOUTH WALES BRIDGE ASSOCIATION - COUNCIL MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY, 23 August 2006**

Present: Alex Yezerki, Kim Morrison, Nick Horne, Keiran Crowe-Mai,  
Matt Blackham, Peter Gill, Julian Foster, Ben Chosid, Kim Neale  
Special Leave: Ken Storr (until 10/09/06)

**1 Opening**

AY opened the meeting at 6:30pm.

**2 Confirmation of Minutes of July 19, 2006**

Motion: *That the minutes of the July 19 meeting be accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting, subject to two minor amendments.*

Moved: Kim Morrison  
Seconded: Alex Yezerki

The motion was carried.

**3 Matters arising**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
AY	Write to Strata re lifts and to attend a meeting	Outstanding
KM	Have Tournament Committee review feasibility of holding selection events at multiple clubs	Done
JF	See if we qualify for "fee free" banking with NAB as a not for profit organisation	Done
BC	After submitting proper proposal, proceed with getting new tablecloths.	Outstanding
BC	Supply full report on costs and income for canteen activities	Outstanding
AY	Look at publicity policy – web, bulletin, flyers	Done
KCM	Look at possibility of quick lessons before sessions	Ongoing
PG	Arrange & promote supervised sessions	Outstanding
KN	Do analysis of survey of players	Done
BC	Organise next working bee	Outstanding
KCM/KM	Organise appeals advisors	Outstanding
KCM	Promulgate interstate holiday decision	Outstanding
KCM	Write to Ray Borland re on-line bridge affiliation with the ABF	Done
KCM	Write to Tony Howes to accept his application for	Outstanding

	Director Accreditation Position	
AY	To get informal advice from Ombudsman, Neville Moses on whether NSWBA can intervene in an intra-club dispute or if it's outside our charter?	Done
JF	Project cash flow to determine club finance situation for remainder of calendar year	Done
PG	Follow up beginners from 2003 classes	Outstanding
KM	Have the tournament committee review the impact on finances of the ABF proposal for GNOP & Restricted Pairs when there are so many events on the calendar already	Done
KCM	Consult the Honorary Solicitor re the State Government requirement for adult supervision of Minors in organised activity and advise the Council, and subsequently the ABF.	In progress
KCM	To liaise with Liz re procedure for psych register	Outstanding
KCM	To advise Lismore Congress convenor that they can change the name from "Novice" to "Restricted to under 150 Masterpoints"	Done
NH	To liaise with Liz regarding the holding of a fund raising event for Stroke Recovery during "Stroke Awareness Week: 18 <sup>th</sup> -24 <sup>th</sup> September	Done
KN	To arrange for Spring National flyer to be printed for distribution at ANC in Adelaide	Done

#### **4 Correspondence**

Letter from Armidale bridge club re development application.  
Action: KCM to write letter of support.

#### **5 Chairman's Report**

The Chairman's report was tabled. In brief,

- 1 Publicity policy - accepted
- 2 Recommend that we do not intervene in club disputes unless invited to do so by all parties.
- 3 Restructure subcommittee report – to be discussed later

## **6 Treasurer's Report.**

The Treasurer's report was tabled. In brief:

- 1 We are about \$91,000 worse off than this time last year.
- 2 Projected result for the financial year ended 30 September 2006 is a loss of \$50,000
- 3 Director payments schedule finalised. Increase to be backdated to 1 July.
- 4 Single price for Monday night State championships organised for next year.
- 5 Revenue raising measures proposed. Action: JF to provide estimates of likely impact.
- 6 A first draft club v state allocation of the NSWBA's activities was presented. Council agreed this was a useful initiative. The treasurer felt other parties should review his assumptions. Council members undertook to do so, and recommended Michael Phillips also be approached (JF to do).

## **7 Committee Reports**

### FABC

Matt Blackham gave a verbal report. The FABC is in desperate need of new officers, the President and Secretary positions are both vacant for next year. It was questioned what the Constitutional position would be if no-one came forward. MB to investigate.

### Youth

Peter Gill gave a verbal report. The NSW youth team did well to come 3<sup>rd</sup>. The youth triathlon takes place in 4 weeks time – will be in Eastern Suburbs.

### Rules & Ethics, Appeals, Teaching

Report was tabled

### Promotion and services

The player survey results were circulated. Council thanked Kim Neale for her fine efforts in summarising the data.

### House

No report.

### Tournament

Report was tabled.

It was noted that between them, Trumps, NSWBA & Lindfield have almost ½ the calendar at weekends. The TC to review the basis of allocating congresses.

The possibility of moving the main tournament night from Mon to Wed was discussed. Feelings were generally in favour but it was felt that players should be surveyed.

### Library

NH reported interest from Paul Lavings in purchasing remaining copies of History of Australian Bridge, and in seeking funds for new books as the present stock was old. Council was in favour and allocated \$500 for new books.

### Sponsorship

No report.

## **8 General Business**

### Stroke recovery fund raiser

NH outlined the arrangements for Thursday September 21. Ron Klinger is providing a talk.

### State Mixed Pairs

Val Cummings' report was tabled and accepted. It was noted that the numbers continue to drop and it was felt that clubs no longer felt any desire or obligation to support State events, largely through saturation of events and the wider availability of red masterpoints.

### Northern Roadshow

The arrangements to date were discussed.

It was noted that, unless experts were given precise details and proper invitations very soon, many would accept alternative arrangements for the weekend.

It was discussed whether it was appropriate for Ian McKinnon to attend on behalf of ASE8. Council felt it was not, as the venture was not intended to be commercial in nature, and Matthew McManus and John McIlrath had sufficient knowledge of ASE8 to respond to any questions that might arise.

Action: PG and AY to finalise timetable and email all experts providing details and requesting their attendance.

### NSWBA Restructure

AY outlined the subcommittee's thinking to Council and a wide ranging discussion was held about the subcommittee's recommendations.

Kim Morrison tabled a series of questions about the main recommendations. AY to respond.

Keiran Crowe-Mai tabled a paper summarising estimated costs of running a State association and the present income from affiliated clubs, illustrating a deficit currently funded from NSWBA activities.

The following points were discussed:

***Subcommittee view:***

- Who has contributed to the NSWBA to make it what it is at present? Who “owns” the present asset? What is the greater good? Self-interested view on who owns the present entity is a distraction.
- 75% of existing members are players at regular duplicate sessions. Have they built up the asset? Not sure. Provided we find a suitable home for them and make the transition painless, no-one who has contributed to building this asset should object.
- Need to look forward 10-20 years. If numbers continue to decline, we will eventually lose premises because the NSWBA will become financially unviable. We will become asset rich and cash poor – our ability to do things in the future will drop.
- Currently we are not utilising assets to the best effect e.g. professional coaching.
- Players do not care about non-premier Mon night events any more.
- No-one is saying this is the correct action. This is a litmus test. Are people prepared to contemplate other actions?

***Concerns expressed:***

- Who has contributed to the NSWBA to make it what it is at present? A mix of affiliated clubs, NSWBA “regular duplicate” players and NSWBA “tournament” players. So why is it reasonable to redistribute it towards the affiliated clubs to such an extra extent?
- On the subcommittee’s logic, any country club owning its premises could rent them out & do financially better.  
Response. Yes – but this is not a valid comparison, a country club only has an obligation to run a club – the NSWBA has an obligation to much more – eg the whole State.
- Is club viable? At present arguably yes. Long term no.
- Is running a club actually viable in the city centre? No – too expensive.
- What parameters make an establishment suitable to hold State events? Not defined at present.
- Where would we get representatives from? The FABC already has a huge problem.  
Response: In other states that’s not an issue according to Peter Gill. They are happy to represent. There is confusion about the differing roles of the FABC and NSWBA in the current structure.

**How would voting be structured to ensure assets cannot be diverted?**

***Subcommittee view:***

- Every club would get at least 1 vote.
- Larger clubs would get additional votes, on a sliding scale, based on the number of members.

***Concerns expressed:***

- many players are interested in their club, or their State – but not the level above.
- entrepreneurs are more interested in their own clubs & bottom line than that of the State – any structure must protect the interests of NSW bridge ahead of the interests of individual entrepreneurial clubs or, indeed, any one club or player.
- loss of democracy in practice

### **Meetings in regional areas**

- It was questioned whether these would work in practice, or incur excessive cost.
- It was suggested that they could be coincided with major Gold point events (like the ABF does) where most of the representatives could well be playing.
- Alternatively, more State events could be run around NSW – again in conjunction with meetings.

### **Where will we be in 5 years time?**

#### *Subcommittee view:*

- Cannot build up to 40-50 tables ever again
- But we could do more
- But we don't have the resources to do more
- NSWBA is no longer regarded as “the” place to play bridge
- We could spend a fortune on the premises – would it improve? No.
- Most games are now quite weak – our club is not regarded as superior any more.

#### *Concerns expressed:*

- Is it good to drop existing “club” Mon night events? Mixed feelings.
- How do we grow “good” players if we lose Mon night?
- Sydney still need a game that is renowned as tough and a good grounding for tournaments?
- Long term – can we keep going as we are? Mixed feelings.
- Why is maintaining the level of excellence of bridge in NSW not part of the primary recommendations? It should be.

### **Finances?**

- What is the break-even point for the regular duplicates? Opinion differed between 5.5 to around 10 tables.
- Need clear-cut financials – JF has prepared a 1<sup>st</sup> draft. To do more work.

### **Are players in country clubs losing out compared to the average player here?**

#### **i.e. are we using State resources to subsidise our club?**

- The first draft “Club” v “State” allocation of NSWBA current activities indicates the “State” element is currently subsidising the “Club” element.
- But it is not this simple – there are NSWBA “club” players as distinct from club players in other NSW affiliated clubs. There are also tournament players to consider as well. An average existing NSWBA member, whether playing regular duplicates or tournaments, contributes more than an average player in an affiliated club.

### **Should the draft restructure recommendations be placed in the public domain?**

No they require rework.

Reports to be prepared before the next meeting. All parties to review.

## 9 List of Action Items from August Meeting

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Action Item</b>
KCM	Provide letter of support to Armidale bridge club
JF	Provide estimates of impact of revenue raising measures
JF	Approach Michael Phillips to review Club v State allocation.
AY / PG	Finalise northern roadshow timetable and email all experts providing details and requesting their attendance.
AY / subcommittee	Respond to Kim Morrison questions on the restructure committee recommendations.
JF	Continue to work on projected financial position under various possible restructure scenarios.

## 10 Next meeting

Scheduled for Wed 13<sup>th</sup> September.

The meeting was declared closed at 11.15PM