****

**Minutes of the Executive Meeting**

**held on Sunday 6th September 2020 at 11:00am via Zoom**

**Present:** Irene Davies (chair), Alan Mould (secretary), Michael Byrne, Adam Wiseberg, Joy Blakey, Rhona Goldenfield, Dave Tilley.

1. **Apologies**

None.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting held 16th August 2020**

Accepted as a true and correct record.

1. **Matters Arising**
   1. Re 4: **Action:** ST to contact U3A groups.

ST is in contact with only 1 U3A. They are looking to start playing F2F. She will go along to one of the sessions. Apparently quite a few U3A are looking to restart F2F.

* 1. Re 6: **Action:** AW to contact BBO for clarification on the payment for teams games.

BBO agreed that they would only charge BBO$10 for a multiple session of 3 or more sessions (such as our league) for any multiple event which is charged for (and UMS is counted as a charge).

A discussion as to how many boards to play. It was agreed on a minimum 16 for season 3 onwards, but the captains to be polled.

**Action:** AW to poll the captains of the online league on the preferred number of boards.

* 1. Re 6: **Action:** MGB to produce a report for the next Executive meeting on the feasibility of running the Ben Franks F2F

MGB reported back.

The document provided to me entitled “Risk assessment template” is actually a guide to making the venue Corona safe.

Most of the suggestions are practical and sensible although some do not apply to a one off event, for example they make reference to leaving the cards between sessions, leaving the cloths between sessions etc.

The main issue is that the plastic screens suggested are expensive and impractical, and in all probability would make no difference at all to the risk involved. If you have, say, a 6 table event with 24 bridge players and a director in one room for two sessions in December they will be breathing the same air the whole time. In all probability if someone with Corona virus comes along to the event then the likeliest scenario for infection is through air born droplets, screens will do little to prevent this.

MGB has no way of working out any realistic way of determining the risk or even coming close to knowing what the risk would be if someone with the Corona Virus comes to play in the Ben Franks but a number of things can be done to minimise the risk, mainly through the cards. If every table has its own set of boards (and this will require a lot of duplimation) then a player has no need to touch anyone else’s cards. (The cards can be made up in advance and left somewhere safe so there is no danger of transmission).

The biggest way to prevent any spread of the disease is by making sure that no-one who is infectious comes along and plays in the first place. Since the majority of our players are retired, it shouldn’t be too hard for them to self-isolate in the week leading up to the event. One possibility is the taking of temperatures for the players upon arrival, similar to what they do at a gym. Although this isn’t full-proof it can stave off anyone who might have the disease and not know. Avoiding cross generational mixes would be best, effectively barring anyone young from playing. Last year there were 4 junior players, mostly school and university age, so it would not be a huge loss.

In all probability any care taken will be complete unnecessary since there is so little corona virus amongst the demographics who attend our events the odds are infinitesimal that anyone who comes along will actually have the Corona Virus.

Financial Implications

Last year the event charged £12 per player, took in £720 and paid out £730. The prizes were very generous (£100, £80 and £60 to top 3 places, plus wine to various people).

We paid £186 to MBC and paid £45 for duplimation. £80 to the director 133 in wine and refreshment prizes.

Venue - 186

Director - 80

Boards - 45

Prizes - 240

Refreshment - 133

and wine prizes

EBU license - 22

Flyers - - 23

There are a few points to discuss about financial implications. The first is that if we held it at a local club the venue cost would go down significantly. B&CHBC would hire us the room for around the £50 mark, the larger room downstairs would be a bit more but that would only be needed if we got a large number of tables (unlikely).

Stretford can cope with 16 tables in two different rooms and they would charge us very little. They also have their own kitchen and enough space for people to eat.

Directors fee would be fixed, duplimation costs would go up, but not fatally so. (The best way would be to do duplimation ourselves)

We can lower prize money and reduce the number of prizes (presumably we will get a much lower number of entrants.

Assuming we managed to get 6 tables that is 24 x £12 = £288

If we were to use Stretford BC then we could pay £20 - £40 in venue charge, £80 to the director, allow £60 - £80 for duplimation (last year we paid £45 for 3 sets of 24) and have a little left over for prizes.

MGB was asked about wearing masks. He does not think it practical. JB raised the possibility of clear visors and showed one that she used.

AM asked about the insurance position. DT reported on the SBC insurance. He offered to speak to their insurers. They expect people to “take reasonable precautions”. DT offered to duplimate some boards.

ID asked about the context of Manchester. Can we hold it with a local lockdown (AM thinks no)?

What about the Gazette Trophy? Seems highly unlikely it will be possible.

JB feels that it is unlikely many people will come out before vaccine.

It is a decision we will need to make much nearer the time.

It was agreed that we would poll members as to whether they would attend a F2F event in December or later.

**Action:** AW to email members about whether they would attend a F2F Ben Franks in December.

* 1. Re 7: **Action:** DT to organize a Tournament Committee meeting

DT has convened a meeting of the Tournament committee for next Sunday morning just to meet the organisers of each of the tournaments and so we can update on each and look at the future, although DT rather suspects that it is probably going to be the same response for most. DT may need to reschedule if he has to work.

Joan Lewis has emailed me and advised DT as follows:

*Just to confirm our quick chat last night, the caretaker is now getting enquiries about booking the hall for weddings, parties etc, so he has put in our tournaments as provisional bookings on the equivalent dates to those we had in this year. Rhona, being so organised, has actually given him the dates for the two GP events.*

*They are:*

* *Gazette Cup - 7th Feb (1st Sun in Feb)*
* *GP Swiss Pairs - 6th Mar*
* *Int Swiss Pairs - 28th Mar*
* *Summer Int Pairs - 20th Jun*
* *GP Swiss Teams - 1st Aug*
* *Autumn Int Pairs - 31st Oct*

*Feel free to change any of them.*

*Sadly, the caretaker, who is now 70, has been trying to retire for quite some time, but the church doesn't want to lose him. He is such a good friend to us, knows how we want the tables set out, has learnt that noisy birthday parties in one hall with bridge in the other just don't mix, so he finds excuses not to let the other out when we have a booking and so on. We'll miss him a lot when he persuades them to let him go.*

Thanks to Joan and Rhona (and the caretaker!) for their work

Can I suggest we keep an eye on the last part and arrange a small gift for him if it does happen?

DT suggested we plan that we have venues booked and have a rolling cycle of review. The meeting agreed

ID has cancelled the V&A for January.

1. **Treasurer’s Report**

In the 5 months since we started our monthly **Charity Wednesday** events, we have raised **£5,750.** The beneficiaries have been St. Ann's Hospice, Francis House Children's Hospice, Centrepoint Manchester, Manchester Mind and The Seashell Trust. Of the £5,750, the County made a contribution of £450 (£200 went to St. Ann's Hospice who had looked after Michael Newman so caringly and in memory of Michelle Brunner who also had 'end of life care' there ) (the balance £250 was donated by the county to round-up the figures for the other beneficiaries). Under the **slogan 'Manchester County Cares** ....' we have received many letters of thanks and I think we can be very proud of doing a great job in supporting local charities. The addition of having an auction to play with a legend has kept the momentum going.

**BBO and the EBU**

Whilst there is no available breakdown to date, we have received payments from the EBU via BBO and UMS for **June** (when we started charging) and **July** totaling £3,921.91 which looks to be about right. There are currency fluctuations between the dollar and the pound which make it more difficult to be 100% accurate. NB -since writing the breakdown now received for June which seems to add up correctly.

I have paid to the EBU the license fee for the GP Swiss Pairs in March £384, part payment of the F2F league UMS (£550) and part payment of the **online league Season 1** £210) plus June UMS of £535 and UMS for the Virtual Simultaneous Pairs of £40 in total £1300+/- . As table numbers have declined in August, I am not expecting much revenue for that month. As the files were unable to be completed by Adam for the end of the F2F league and div 1 of the lockdown league I am expecting that we will owe a further £5-600 for the period to bring us up to date. That will also not include the approx. £250 for the online league season 2.

Directors' fees for the months June, July and August totaled £2,760.

Therefore, at the moment, I am expecting us to just about break even with expenses over income with regard to online bridge. It should be remembered that we have subsidised the UMS by not charging entry for the first two online league seasons £440). I also expect that after payments for outstanding UMS for June, July and August when all the leagues have been tidied up we will still have a healthy current account credit balance of between £7,500 - £8,000. It should be remembered that a large part of our annual income in normal times came from league and cup entries which we have not received this year.

The Cantor Cup Fund and Building Society accounts remain unchanged.

We have received the repayment for our entry to the NBL of £375 from Stuart Davies and £404 repaid from St. Peter's for room hire booking cancellations for 2020.

JB thinks that £16 per team per season would be an appropriate registration fee for on-line league which would cover the costs to BBO and UMS.

If we do not get back to around 15 tables per duplicate during September, we may need to consider increasing from 3BBO$ to 4BBO$ to cover expenses.

1. **MCBA Online Bridge**
   1. Update on Pairs games (AW)

2 new games being introduced from today in response to the survey. Event tonight and in a fortnight at 7:30. Also run an event at 8:30am on Monday, 6 minutes per board. We do not know whether these events will be successful or not. The numbers in the pairs events have been dropping consistently. As the nights get longer and colder we get a recovery. People are also playing elsewhere. Table numbers have dropped to 7-8 tables usually now. 10 is ideally the number we would not like to go below. The online committee is discussing opening our events up to M&CBA players. The meeting agreed that we would open the events to M&CBA players

* 1. Payments and Charges for the MCBA Online League (AW)

Discussed in 3.2 above.

AW raised the matter of RealBridge. He is running another trial this week and so is Alec Smalley. All the people shown it have been very impressed – vastly superior to BBO. May run the inter-county match against London on it.

1. **Membership Campaign (ID)**

Have been slow around this. Huge potential to do something and teach bridge. AW, ID, ST and Gordon Bickley got together to discuss the way forward. Contacted 35 teachers and mentors in the area. 15 have said yes to some degree, 5 have said no and 15 have not replied. EBED have organized their own platform on google suite. MCBA is looking at working collaboratively. Still cannot easily teach more than 4 at a time. ID is not 100% sure of what is going to come out of it. There are about 6 people using zoom and BBO to each, but not beginners.

**Action:** ID to convene a meeting of interested of interested teachers and mentors to consider the next steps.

DT commented that he has run a Thursday am on Warrington for a group of 30 or so U3A players who are about halfway through lessons. Now playing 10 high events. It is difficult to teach on BBO.

AW commented that RealBridge seems much more suited to running supervised sessions, as the supervisor can hop around the tables easily.

1. **Feedback from EBU County Chairs Meeting on 02/09/2020 (ID/AM)**

Finances – not as dire as thought. Only £40,000 down up to now, but are still predicting £100,000 by Christmas. 230 EBU virtual clubs online.

16 counties voted for playing the Tolle online, but it was not a proper vote using zoom voting which seemed odd.

Discussion on strategy and mission statements.

Giorgio Provenza, the new head of EBED, spoke on developments in EBED, including the “TrickyBridge” app and the materials on google suite.

1. **A.O.B.**

Should we invite other people to the meetings? Suggested Susan Triggs, Alec Smalley, Rodney Lighton. They will not have votes.

**Action:** AM to invite ST, AS and RL.

1. Date and Time of next meeting

Sunday 18th October, 11:00am via Zoom.

Meeting ended at 12:59