

## BRISTOL BRIDGE CLUB

### MINUTES OF THE 52ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

30TH JUNE 2011.

The Chairman welcomed all those present and announced that Mike Davies and Joe Buxton have been appointed tellers. Following the initial publication of the Agenda there were no further proposals or nominations nor any requests for postal/proxy votes. Maureen Dickens will be taking the Minutes and Steve Royal will be organising the bridge play after the meeting.

**Apologies:** Were received from 18 Members and 55 members attended.

**Minutes:** The Minutes of the AGM held on 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2010 were read approved and signed.

**Matters Arising:** There is no change in the car parking arrangements, an unsuccessful application had been made to the Council requesting we be allowed sole use in the evenings when play is taking place. They appear to have other plans for the other spot under the bridge and will not allow any changes to the current usage.

**Chairman's Address:** The Club has been enjoying the benefits for the last year of the installation of the new toilets and director's area following all the disruptions involved. After all the hard work by the previous Chairman involved with the changes it has been very pleasant to receive all the favourable comments by visitors and members alike regarding the new look, even if there have been a few teething problems; long may it continue!

Renovations continue to occupy the thoughts of the Committee. The kitchen area is still in need of redesign and replacement. We decided last year to put this topic on hold due to finance and the uncertainty that has been facing the Club in these difficult economic times. The other continuing problem is the air-conditioning. I have attempted to stabilise the air-conditioning as per the engineer's instructions and in general this has been achieved. However whatever the settings there will always be some members who are too hot and some too cold. I will continue to monitor the situation and see if we can improve the system.

As you will be aware we have had to increase the table money which has been on hold for a long time while "the EBU pay to play" system was clarified but we have managed to maintain the annual subscriptions at their current level. The bar prices will need to be revised as increases in vat and food prices have taken their toll. The main financial details are in the Treasurer's report.

One of the highlights of my year has been the enthusiastic way the members participated in the Tutorial sessions we organised to improve members play and skills. My personal thanks to all the tutors, who volunteered their time to give these and also to the members who attended and completed my feedback forms. These did help us to make a number of improvements and I thank you. We will schedule a few more in the

autumn either on Wednesday evening or Saturday mornings so that we can follow the tutorial with some practice play. There will be more in the spring.

Continuing the bridge theme, we introduced a new competition this year "The Premier Pairs Silver Cup" for those that came near the top of the Tuesday competition over the last two years. We congratulate Steve Tomlinson and Mike Huggins on their win. The Chairman then listed and congratulated all the Club, County and National events in which our members did well.

Membership continues to be buoyant, renewals have been sent out and most have been paid with some members on holiday still to pay. We have 450 with membership expected to increase to 500 by the end of the holiday season.

The growth in the membership is reflected in the EBU statistics which shows us as the most popular Club outside the South East and London areas.

In the Autumn we start our new beginners' lessons to encourage people from outside the Club to achieve the enjoyment we all get from the game. If you know of anyone interested please take the leaflets available and encourage them to come along.

Along with the new members we also see a number of members who are no longer with us and I ask you to stand and observe a few moments silence to remember past friends.

Finally let me thank the Secretary, bar staff and play Directors, the officers and committee, Sheila Da Silva who has retired as match maker, together with many others who contribute their help and all of whom come together to make the Club the success that it undoubtedly is – to ALL OF YOU I SAY THANK YOU ON BEHALF OF THE MEMBERSHIP.

**Secretary's Report:** The Club is thriving, with an increasing number of members. In the recent EBU magazine, the Club was the 5<sup>th</sup> busiest in the country. Visitors are impressed by the facilities we now offer. The EBU now use the Club for 3 of their regional qualifying events. The numbers in the classes are adequate to be self-financing but we would like to attract more – at £35.00 for 10 beginners are a bargain. Most new recruits come from word of mouth, we hope you will continue to encourage your friends. There is a leaflet available to give to interested people.

There has been a change in the monthly competitions. An option of teams as well as pairs has been offered on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month with the handicapped pairs moving to the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday. I am grateful to Mick Brown for the work he has put in with the Club handicaps so that a post-handicap result can be produced by the computer at the end of the evening. The prize of wine can be given immediately.

There is no table money for the bridge after the AGM. The winners are awarded the Bernard Shannon Trophy. There will be a draw for partners mixing strong players with weaker as per Bernard Shannon's wishes to mix the players and play simple systems only.

It takes a lot of work to keep a Club like this running, most of which is done by a small number of people who work very hard on your behalf. I would like to take this opportunity to ask all members to help, even if only in a small way. Leave your table tidy with the boards, Bridgemate box and bidding boxes on the table. Especially during

daytime when Sarah is not on duty, please don't leave it to the Director to do everything. Emptying the dishwasher at the end of the cycle and taking your mugs and glasses back to the bar would be very helpful. There has been an improvement in this recently.

**Treasurer's Report and Adoption of the Accounts:** I hope you have all had time to look at the accounts and see that we have made a profit this year despite the extra expenses incurred associated with the refurbishment. Once again many thanks are due to the generosity of the Members' donations and loans.

We are currently in a position of building up our reserves in order to repay the loans and also to provide for repairs and improvements already in the pipeline.

As you can see the table money has increased and the attendance figures reflect this position. Pay to play, which has been free to members previously, this year shows a significant increase, hence the need to raise the table money this year. Prizes have decreased as a result of changing the Friday evening session.

As a result of the refurbishment the water bill has decreased significantly, the upheaval in the Club brought several other problems to light which have been addressed.

Finally during the course of this accounting year there have been two VAT changes along with a period of nine months when the Revenue did not match the adjustment figure on the Flat Rate Scheme that calculates the amount of VAT liable. Happily this has now been reverted to the previous allowance.

All in all a good result and a greatly enhanced Club.

The Chairman responding to a question concerning the reduced rates charge stated the Council's revaluation says the Club's usable space is now smaller so the business rates are down and currently we receive a 50% reduction as we are a Community Club. The water rates are significantly down due to the leaks being abolished during the refurbishment.

Derek Fey raised a question as to why we are not a Charity – the EBU are investigating this as one Club is now a Charity. Oli Noel will make enquiries as to the current position with the EBU.

John Doran asked what accruals carried forward were - these are bills paid in arrears such as the cleaners and P2P.

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Oli Noel and seconded by Phil Bradshaw supported unanimously by members present.

David Gregory asked if there was a membership ceiling – The Chairman responded that we currently have 460 paid up members and a limit only be introduced when our secondary playing room started to become full.

**Election of Officers:** There being no other proposals the following were elected: Vice Chairman Sue O'Hara proposed by Phil Seymour and seconded by Oli Noel, Treasurer Judy Hall, proposed by Phil Seymour and seconded by Oli Noel. Membership Secretary Nelson Stephens proposed by Phil Seymour and seconded by Oli Noel. Election of Committee Members;

Oli Noel, proposed by Delia Stephens and seconded by Hilda Ball

Maureen Dickens, proposed by Delia Stephens and seconded by Hilda Ball, David Beecham proposed by Hilda Ball and seconded by Phil Seymour.

## **Proposed Changes to the Bristol Bridge Club Rules.**

Rule 5 (iii) a. There shall be a standing Disciplinary sub-committee to deal with complaints regarding alleged misconduct of members or officials as quickly and fairly as possible.

b. The Disciplinary sub-committee shall comprise the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Membership Secretary and the Club Secretary, it may also include any additional members agreed in committee or co-opted by the sub-committee. No member of the sub-committee shall participate when they are involved in the incident concerned.

c. Three members of the sub-committee one of whom must be the Chairman or Vice-Chairman shall be regarded as a quorum.

d. The complaint should be raised in writing by the Club member including details of witnesses with the Secretary of the Club or in his absence with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Membership Secretary and recorded in the 'Incident Book'.

e. The Secretary or in his absence the Officer shall attempt to get the two parties to resolve the issue amicably. If these attempts fail the complaint shall be reported to the Chairman for consideration by the Disciplinary sub-committee.

f. The Disciplinary sub-committee shall meet to consider the complaint in accordance with the procedures established by the Club Committee.

g. When the formal complaint is upheld the following order of penalties will normally be applied

- Verbal warning (recorded on file for one year).
- Written warning
- Suspension for a period to be determined but not less than three months.
- Incidents regarded by the sub-committee as being gross misconduct will always incur immediate suspension.

Existing rule 5.(iii).a and subsequent rules in section 5 will be renumbered.

Daisy Bickley asked that a formal vote be taken on the Rule changes this was done and passed unanimously.

### **Any Other Business:**

Mike Davies asked about the site valuation – this is difficult because of usage and situation and the only information we have been able to get is the rebuild cost. There was considerable discussion on this matter and as a result the Chairman will investigate further as to whether more clarification can be found.

Sandra Cooper asked that it be recorded that the Sue Lowe who cleans the silver be complimented.

Oli Noel thanked the Chairman for his hard work improving the Club during the last year and Sue O'Hara for standing as Vice Chairman and he looked forward to her term in the Chair.

There being no other business the Meeting was closed at 7.15pm.