

AGM Minutes 6TH June 2021 @ 10.00 by Zoom

Present: Approximately 45 people attended the AGM

- 1. Apologies:** Morag and Mike Clare, Phillip Moody, Gabriel Mullally, Irene Delahunty
- 2. Minutes of Last meeting** – accepted as a true record.
- 3. Treasurers Report - Fiona Noyce**

The Accounts examined and signed off on 18th May 2021. The year was opened with a balance of £118,827.

Income	£23,933
Expenditure	£33,753
Reserves	£109,007
Overall Loss	£9,817

Rita Lawrence has done an inventory at Cross Gates for which she was thanked by Fiona.

In explanation of the figures, the following points were noted:

BBO loyalties collected and distributed – there is difference of approx £72 which is accounted for by miscellaneous Tournament Directors' costs, and online costs.

The overseas receipts are from the EBU and is from previous years.

Affiliation fees for the EBL and WBF are not shown as they were not paid during the financial year due to unknown membership numbers this year.

Competition Entries shown was due to cancelled hotel fees.

The Independent Examiner retiring and a replacement is required. If anyone knows a suitable person, please contact Fiona.

Questions from the floor:

Surprise was expressed that National Competition Income is zero. This was clarified as in fact being international income.

Clarity was sought regarding the Patrick Jordain bequest and what the long term aims are. There is no specific use specified for it. Ideas are welcome to be put forward which are in the spirit of Patrick.

The Crossgates equipment was discussed as there is lots of equipment in Porthcawl from the Porthcawl Congress which is considered joint property of West Wales the WBU. There is a need to establish the true ownership of these assets, although in practice all this equipment is available for all WBU members. Gilly Clench also has a lot of bidding boxes in her shed, should they be required.

- 4. Independent Examiner** - not appointed – the post is vacant at present.

- 5. NTO Report – Jean Hand**

The past year has inevitably seen a rise in online bridge and congratulations go to the winners of the National Open and Mixed Pairs.

As the result of the experience of holding events on-line, the WBU has decided that robots are no longer permitted in national events.

The Teams of Eight will go ahead on Realbridge with an even number of teams.

Thanks were made by Jean to the Management Committee and Area Tournament Organisers for their support throughout the year.

6. Presidents Report – Marie Topp

It has been a strange year indeed. Stepbridge is running at four sessions per week and has been very popular. It is anticipated that in the future there will be both live and online bridge operating.

Big thanks to Laura for producing the newsletter.

Ceri Piece was appointed as CEO and worked alongside Neville Richards during the handover period. It was an honour to bestow Neville with Honorary Life Membership at the recent Council meeting in recognition of his service to the WBU over many years.

Thanks also go to the webmaster.

7. Membership and Masterpoints Report – Steve Webb

Membership

The most recent figures show that just under half the clubs' members – 1,008 in total, have renewed to-date, giving us an income of just over £10,000.

Please note that if membership is not renewed before end of June, membership will have lapsed.

Masterpoints

Eight clubs are currently issuing Masterpoints. Income has reduced this year from £500 to £100 per month.

It was noted by a member that there is concern that that membership numbers will not climb back up (Aberystwyth).

Another noted that Newtown plays on-line only and all have renewed their membership.

Another noted that at Castle bridge club, 50% have renewed.

Steve reported that no returns have been received from the West yet and lots of smaller clubs don't know what the situation is. The WBU will accommodate anyone who joins late.

9. Investiture of President

The President for 2021-22, Marie Topp was invested and she called upon the CEOs to make a report.

Ceri Pierce thanked the Management Committee and the various other committees for their support over the last 8 months, especially Neville Richards for during the transition period. Thanks were also given to Mike Tedd who is retiring from the Laws and Ethics committee.

Noted that there are challenging times ahead – the bridge population is dwindling and we need as many people as possible to help promote the game. Anyone with advertising or marketing skills would be particularly welcome to help the WBU make our events more inviting and exciting.

It is hoped we can get back to face-to-face bridge soon and meet in real life.

Neville Richards gave thanks to everyone for good wishes and for the honour of life membership. He has enjoyed his time working with Welsh bridge and hopes to be involved locally in his new area.

Several points were made from the floor:

Suggested that there may be a way for the WBU to encourage players back to clubs e.g. - use funds for members to play at a subsidised level for the 1st four or five games.

Agreed that this would be placed on the Management Committee agenda.

It was queried whether national / area competitions would be online or face to face. Whilst it is hoped that we will return to face-to-face bridge as the default, one or two events may benefit from being online with regards to travel.

It was suggested that we should watch carefully what the EBU do. We could have hybrid events in the future but it needs careful thought.

It was suggested that the WBU gets poster material professionally produced for Clubs to use to announce the re-opening of clubs.

10. Election of Officers

The following nominations were made and voted into office:

Treasurer	Fiona Noyce
Membership and Masterpoints Secretary	Steve Webb
National Tournament Organiser	Jean Hand
Laws and Ethics Committee	Alan Screen. Paddy Murphy, Tony Disley
Selectors Committee	Simon Richards, Simon Gottschalk, Paul Denning, Jean Hand, Paddy Murphy, Paul Gagne
Bridge Great Britain delegate	Ceri Pierce

Concern was raised that the selectors consist of players who want to play. Last year, there were only two who did not.

In response, it was pointed out that the President is an ex-officio member and that they can co-opt additional committee members when they want.

It was noted that a mass resignation of selectors a few years ago had contributed to this situation and that a selector needs experience of international bridge.

The work done by the selectors this year has ensured a thorough selection process was in place that removed bias, and they were thanked for their work.

It was reported by the Chair of Selectors that whilst the Selectors Bulletin had advertised that the EBL are holding a qualifying event for the World Bridge Teams Championship, that there had been a very limited response. There is a Selectors meeting on Friday 11th June and it would be helpful to have any nominations before then.

11. AOB

It was pointed out that as no matters had been submitted for consideration and that any other items for discussion should be discussed outside the AGM.

The President thanked all for attending and requested that anyone who wishes to be involved with the running of the WBU should get in touch with Ceri or their Area Representative.