

American Cribbage Congress
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
CROWN PLAZA HOTEL – MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
SEPTEMBER 21, 2018
Approved—2/28/19

- I. **Call to order:** President David Campbell called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.
- II. **Pledge of allegiance:** Valerie Sumner led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. **Roll Call:** Jeanne Jelke read the roll call. In attendance were David Aiken, Rick Allen, Patrick Barrett, David Campbell, Willie Evans, Richard Frost, Jeff Gardner, Paul Gregson, Roland Hall, Don Hannula, Audrey Hatto, Jeanne Jelke, Pat Llewellyn, James Morrow, Valerie Nozick, Dave O’Neil, Todd Schaefer, Rick Shea, Jeff Shimp, Mark Soule, Valerie Sumner, Diane Waite, Terry Weber, Fred White, Keith Widener. All 25 Board members were present. We had a quorum.
- IV. **Approve Agenda:** David C. referred to the most recent version of the agenda which he circulated prior to the meeting. The only modification is that Item XIV. C “Review of Last Season’s Numbers” will be interjected by Paul G. as each pertinent subject comes up during the meeting. The Agenda was accepted by consensus.
- V. **Approve Minutes of March 1, 2018:** Jeanne J. presented the minutes of the March 1, 2018 BOD meeting in Reno. **Action:** Pat L. made a motion to accept the minutes as presented; seconded by Richard F. **Motion approved.**
- VI. **Election of Officers Proposal:** Jeanne J. proposed that BOD officers be elected for two-year terms to coincide with BOD member terms, starting with the 2019 Grand National. The rationale was to provide greater continuity and enable officers to oversee work on projects lasting longer than one year. Keith W. pointed out that originally the ACC Constitution/ By-laws were based on North Carolina’s non-profit incorporation laws which provided for elections in conjunction with the organization’s Annual Report and Annual meeting. However, there is no reason why this can’t be changed to two-year terms. The By-Laws must be changed to allow this. Because 30 days’ notice must be given before a vote to change the By-Laws, a change to the By-Laws must wait until the March meeting. **Action:** Mark S. made a motion that beginning with the 2019 Grand National, Board Officers will serve two-year terms, provided the BOD approves a vote to change the By-Laws accordingly at the March [February 28, 2019] meeting; seconded by Pat L. **Motion approved;** 22-for, 3- against.
- VII. **Election of Officers:** Nominating Committee Chair, Jeanne J. facilitated the election of the five officers comprising the Executive Committee for one-year terms. Each of the incumbents agreed to stand for re-election. Nominations from the floor were invited for each position, in addition to any previous nominations. Each candidate was given the opportunity to say a few words in support of their candidacy. Ballots were circulated by members of the Nominating Committee, collected, and counted. Results (successful candidates in bold) are as follows:
 - President: **David Campbell**—unopposed; 23 votes

- Executive and Marketing VP: **Paul Gregson**—unopposed; 18 votes
- VP Policy & Ethics: Valerie Sumner—incumbent; 4 votes
Keith Widener—nominee; 21 votes
- VP Operations: **Terry Weber**—unopposed; 20 votes
- VP Competition: **David Aiken**—unopposed; 18 votes

While ballots were being counted, Pat B. announced that he had received a framed article about Joe Wergin from Joe’s daughter. It will be displayed at the Grand National and will be given to Fred W. for the archives. Jeanne J. commented that when the two-year terms are implemented, we put some thought into who we select for these positions. When you nominate someone, you should include in your nomination your reasons why you think that person is qualified. We should be voting on people’s skills and what they bring to the table, not whether they are well known or popular.

- VIII. GN XXXVII Milwaukee, WI update:** Terry W. reported that things are going well. He thanked everyone for coming. He said that due to a Facebook contest, he couldn’t give the exact number of attendees for the Grand National tournament, but there will be right around 400. It will be cut for deal, with 22 games against 22 players. There were 180 players in the Midweek. There was discussion about the 22 games against 11 opponents format. Terry suggested that we celebrate regional differences. Others suggested that the format be stated on the flyer so that players know going in. This may be further discussed in Reno. 145 are signed up for the Awards Banquet. He provided information about the place and program for the Awards Banquet.
- IX. GN XXXVIII North Conway, NH update:** David C. reported on the preparation for the 2019 Grand National in North Conway, N.H. It will be October 22 to 27, 2019. The flyer will be finalized and available by the end of October as soon as prices are finalized. There will be a Midweek on Wednesday and Thursday. Rooms are \$110 per night, and there should be a lot of houses for rent. There are many attractions and places to go nearby. If it is a late “leaf season,” it will be an even greater deal. The number of satellite and pre-Grand National tournaments will be determined later.
- X. GN XXXIX Sacramento, CA:** Jeanne J. reported that the organizing committee is already meeting in preparation for the GN in 2020. The dates are September 22 through September 27, 2020, at the Doubletree by Hilton in Sacramento. The Doubletree is about 12 miles from the Sacramento Airport, and rooms are \$119 plus tax double occupancy. In addition, there is free parking, free wi-fi, and a free shuttle in a 3-mile radius. There will be a midweek on Wednesday and Thursday, and a weekend-style tournament in Antioch (about an hour away) the weekend before. Sacramento is a great destination, with Old Sacramento, river cruises, wine country nearby. Tours will be offered for spouses and guests. The Doubletree is wonderful—over 400 rooms, a beautiful Grand Ballroom where we will play, and a Banquet Hall adjacent to a garden. The BOD meeting room overlooks the garden. There is no charge for the rooms we are using for the 6 days of tournaments, banquet, BOD meeting, and two administrative rooms. However, there is a large food and beverage budget in lieu of rent. Fundraising efforts are already underway to ensure more money for the prize fund.
- XI. GN XL Central Region vote/discussion:** Paul G. referred to the proposal from Scott Kooistra to host the 2021 Grand National at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Omaha, Nebraska. It is the same hotel where the 2015 Midweek was held. The ballroom is spacious enough to hold the GN. Co-Director Don Thienel spoke about the proposal. The dates are September 14 – 19, 2021, with the Midweek on Wednesday and

Thursday, and the Grand National on Saturday and Sunday. Rooms are \$89 for standard double or king, and \$99 for King suites. **Action:** David A. made a motion to accept proposal for the 2021 GN in Omaha; seconded by Pat L. **Motion approved;** 24- for, 1-abstention. David C. noted that since the cribbage year ends July 31st, Grand Nationals that are held early makes it a challenge to prepare awards in time for the Awards Banquet. He urged those contemplating hosting a future Grand National to schedule them later.

XII. Old Business:

- A. ACC e-mail addresses/email marketing:** Paul G. described reasons to utilize mass email marketing to ACC members. He sent a test email several weeks ago to 3,500 ACC members with emails on file and got a positive response, with 65% of the emails opened by members. He noted that there are only 1,400 members on Facebook, and mass emails will improve marketing and communications with members. Additionally, mass emails can distribute supplemental info in addition to monthly Cribbage World mailings. An “opt out” feature will appear at the bottom of emails. He is proposing that the ACC sign up for “Mail Chimp” mass email management service. The estimated cost will be around \$600 annually, depending on the number of emails, and will come from the \$5,000 market-ing budget. He suggested allowing non-ACC members to sign up for the emails through the ACC website. Paul G. offered to do the first few mass emails [if approved] and recruit a volunteer to do it after that. Fred W. asked about updating the email list, and Paul G. said that he will update the list from Larry H.’s [membership] files as new members join. Diane W. noted that a benefit of Mail Chimp is that it avoids the “spam screen” that can block group emails. **Action:** Paul G. made a motion to use Mail Chimp for email communication and marketing to ACC members, with an expenditure up to \$1,000 annually; seconded by Keith Widener. **Motion approved. Action:** Paul G. made a motion to start the mailing list from the ACC membership data base; seconded by Valerie N. **Motion approved.**
- B. ACC website update:** Diane W. reported that the new design of the ACC website has been launched, and it went smoothly. All links work, including Internet Cribbage. She has received good feedback. It does require a little more scrolling than the old site, and it doesn’t work well for older computers, but it looks good. There is still a little work to do, including results from tournaments, relocating the Sands logo, and a site map to do a search.
- C. Consy Lite:** Paul G. stated that the “Consy Lite” format approved in Reno was tried for the first time in Vacaville in August. It went fairly well; 75% of the non-qualifiers stayed for a total of 36 players. The biggest challenge was cross-checking all 60 cards in order to rank the non-qualifiers for the consolation. The bottom 8 scores played in the 1st round, and the rest in the 2nd round. Paul G. suggested modifying placement in the Consy Lite by random draw instead of crosschecking all the cards. Jeanne J. pointed out that the BOD approved the Consy Lite on a one-year trial basis, so that it would be OK to try things out and see what works. It was noted that Consy Lite was only applicable for one day tournaments, and it must be on the flyer. The consensus was for commissioners to allow TD’s to use the Consy Lite format up through March 2019. We will vote in March to make it permanent or discontinue it if doesn’t work out or becomes unpopular.
- D. 28/29 pin update:** Marlene Lazachek reported that the retroactive awarding of 28 and 29 pins has been completed for previous recipients. Supplies of pins for recipients at ongoing tournaments have been distributed by regions, and the system appears to be working okay. The tournament report will be modified to indicate that any 28 or 29 hand recipients received their pins.

- E. **Online Payments Testing:** David C. stated that he, Marlene L. and Larry Hassett are proceeding with “Freedom Merchants” to take membership dues online. One issue is that Freedom Merchants can only accept a one-year membership payment because refunds can only be given in 3 or 6-month increments, thereby making it impossible to take 3-year payments online. Additional issues to resolve include the inability to purchase a rule book online. David C. said they are continuing to test the process and are closer than ever to online payment capability. It will only be available [initially] for membership dues. The cost is \$150 to set up, and the maximum cost per transaction is \$.82 per \$20 charge. He will report back in March, and if it is working before then it will be put on the website.
- F. **Consolation Bad Beat Update:** David A. said that there wasn’t much to report at this point. A couple of TD’s have sent in their high non-qualifier scores.

XIII. Reports

- A. **Membership Secretary:** David C. passed out the Membership Secretary’s report to those who didn’t have it. It was noted that Larry H. has lots of rule books in inventory. In July 2018, the ACC membership was 6,122, down from 6,184 the same time last year. It appears that we have a membership retention issue. Peggy Scalley and Pat L. are conducting phone calls to lapsed members asking why they aren’t renewing and trying to get them to come back. The good news is that youth members are up from 27 in 2016-17 to 78 in 2017-18. In response to a question as to why Larry H. was not present to personally give his report, the ACC Policy & Procedures Manual states that the Membership Secretary is only required to attend one BOD meeting per year. David C. said that if anyone desires the Membership Secretary to attend every BOD meeting to propose an agenda item on this topic for the March meeting.
- B. **Treasurer:** Marlene L. reported briefly, referring to her written report. She indicated that the investment account is doing well, with a current balance of \$52,093. If it gets to \$53,000, she will take another \$3,000 out to add to the general fund. There were no further questions or discussion.
- C. **Grass Roots:** Joan Rein said that she didn’t have much to report. Numbers are up a bit. There were 206 awards reached last season, and all but about 10 responded. 98 players participated (most as visitors) in the Grass Roots tournament on Wednesday. Paul G. noted that 4,290 Grass Roots members comprise about 70% of the ACC membership. There were 200 active clubs at the end of last year. Also, there are 17 GR lite clubs (6 game format), up from 7 the previous year. GR lite clubs seem to be a good way to form a new club—you only need to get four people. In response to a question, Joan R. said that a 9-game club could not change to a GR lite club mid-season.
- D. **Internet:** Tammy Gibbons reported that Internet Cribbage is going well. There will be a mini-meeting of the committee later to look at some changes to the internet program. She noted that income from Game Colony has fizzled. In the long term, however, the income from Game Colony has exceeded what has been spent. The committee is open to charging a fee to participate in Internet Cribbage. It would not make sense to charge for tournaments, but like Grass Roots, it would help to have membership dues to offset expenses. Expenses include paying \$34 membership dues for e-cribbage TD’s. They have stopped giving physical awards, while allowing for self-funded awards. It was noted that Internet Cribbage was started by Paul Barnes to attract new members to the ACC, but there is little evidence that this has been

effective. Paul G. said that perhaps 6 internet cribbage players became new ACC members last year. David C. requested that ways to gain more members through Internet Cribbage be explored.

- E. Marketing:** Valerie N. apologized for a hiatus in marketing activity due to a serious accident and a job change. She noted that Paul G. talked about retention as an important focus for marketing. She listed several marketing initiatives: 1) "Bring a Friend to Cribbage" month; 2) Listing of important ACC tournaments in "What's Happening" in Game World magazine; 3) Freshening the ACC logo; 4) Going to non-ACC cribbage tournaments and clubs, bringing flyers. She personally tested this approach at a charity tournament in Bellingham, WA. It seems to have worked, as there are now 6 new people at the local GR clubs; 5) Establishing an "Instagram" presence, with 64 followers (that include lots of people, not just younger people;) 6) Empowering our members with more marketing materials available through the ACC website. In addition, Valerie N. said that there will be live video of the GN main and consolation finals on Facebook. Paul G. indicated that more "content" writers are needed for the ACC website.
- F. Rules:** Dave O. circulated a handout and reported that the Rules Committee was proposing three recommendations for BOD action. The first was the creation of a new [reworded] Rule 8.5.b: "If a player removes both pegs when there is a score to be recorded, players shall determine where the front peg should have been placed. If the players cannot agree on the placement of the front peg, judges shall be summoned to decide the matter. Once the judges have determined placement of the front peg, the score of the hand may be pegged without penalty." **Action:** Dave O. made a motion to approve this new wording; seconded by Keith W. 24-for, 1-abstention. **Motion approved.** The second recommendation was to eliminate Rule 8.7, since it was incorporated in the new rule 8.5.b., and renumber the remaining items in Rule 8. **Action:** Dave O. made a motion to remove Rule 8.7 from the Rule Book; seconded by James Morrow. 23-for, 2 against. **Motion approved.** The third recommendation was to create [reword] a new rule 9.2.d. Following discussion, the proposed rule was "Finally, the dealer exposes the crib, counts it, announces the score, and pegs it. Absent any verbal or other action of disapproval of the count by the pone, dealer shall place the crib and remaining cards on pone's side of the board face up for shuffling and subsequent deal." Dave O. made a motion to accept the new rule 9.2.d.; seconded by Roland H. **Motion approved;** 24-for, 1-against. These changes will be announced in Cribbage World. Dave O. further reported that the committee is working on a new "Judge Protocols" section to be added to the rule book. Hopefully, the proposed new section will be put before the BOD at the March meeting in Reno. There have been so many changes to and printing mistakes in the current Rules Book that a new Rule Book will be needed sooner rather than later. There was some discussion as to whether the Rule Book should be called "rules" or "guidelines." The purpose of rules is to prevent cheaters, not to mandate procedures. Furthermore, "guidelines" suggest judges have discretion, whereas "rules" are standards that apply across the organization. Jeanne Hofbauer suggested a judging seminar for judges [to renew their judging certificate.] Dave O. invited members to share any items with the committee. When the Rule Book is updated, it will be looked at section by section to make sure if [its format and order] makes sense before printing.
- G. Ethics:** Valerie S. reported that the Ethics Committee issued one 6-month suspension and one official warning letter.
- H. Judges:** Jeff S. stated that there has been a lot of controversy about the quality of the judging program. He said that we need to find ways to fix this problem. Several suggestions include getting rid of incompetent judges, re-testing judges, and/or "continuing education" for judges. Jeff S. reported that there has been improvement since introducing the new online testing process overseen by Sally

Henderson, with 30 new judges. There was discussion on ways to give new judges opportunities for respond to judging calls. Suggestions included having more experienced judges “mentor” new judges, with senior judges facilitating this process. The proposed “Judges Protocol” addition to the rule book will also help address concerns about judges, including requiring two judges at each call, and reading aloud the appropriate section from the rule book.

- I. **Youth Program:** Don “Grumpy” Howard was intending to give a report, but he went home early. The youth report will be emailed in due course. David C. noted that the youth program leaders are doing a great job.
- J. **Tourney Commissioners:** Pat B. reported that the biggest change is the new Tournament Directors [TD] Administrative online portal that Paul G. put together and has been up for about 6 weeks. TD’s can submit flyers and tournament requests for approval, and once approved they will go directly to Diane W. for posting on the website, and David A. to include in Cribbage World. As more TD’s become familiar with the process, it will become less frustrating and involve less paperwork. Pat B. also indicated that he has new scorecards available for distribution.

XIV. **New Business:**

- A. **Cross-Checking Satellite Events:** Rick S. proposed that satellite events at weekend tournaments be cross-checked. There is often a lot of money at stake, and it is important to ensure that scorecards are accurate—for instance, it is far too easy to put a skunk [when no one is cross-checking.] Cross-checking should be easy for small tournaments, and there is too much money to not do it at large tournaments. Late finishes may necessitate delayed payouts until the cross-checking is completed.
Action: Rick S. made a motion that all satellites be cross-checked, effective immediately; seconded by Roland H. **Motion approved;** 24-for, 1 abstention. The Tournament Commissioners will get hold of respective TD’s for upcoming tournaments to advise them of this new requirement.
- B. **Tourney Guidelines Manual Finalization:** David C. indicated that there are still some issues with the Tourney Guidelines Manual, and he doesn’t want to make it official until it is right. When finalized it will be available in printed form as well as online. The deadline for finalization is October 1st for the online version. David C. will give hard copies in March.
- C. **Review of Last Season’s Numbers:** Paul G. had previously reported on most of the metrics. He reviewed the metrics for weekend tournaments. 61% of tournaments were run in the Western Division (118), with 32 tournaments in the Central Division, and 36 in the Eastern Division. Attendance overall was up 1,000 players. 25% of ACC members earned master points last year.
- D. **Membership Form Suggestions:** Paul G. presented a handout suggesting three demographic additions to the ACC membership form that will be useful for retention and marketing strategies: 1) gender; 2) year of birth; 3) “How did you hear about the ACC?” He also wanted the word “optional” deleted from phone # and email address. He proposed the changes to the form be made before January 1, 2019. He also suggested a “welcome email” be sent to each new member as standard procedure. **Action:** Valerie N. made a motion to go ahead with the suggested changes to the membership form; seconded by Jeff G. **Motion approved;** 24-for, 1-abstention.

- E. HOF Appointment/ACC Trademark Update:** David C. announced that Jason Hofbauer is appointed as the Hall of Fame (HOF) chair. He is charged with streamlining the nominating process using electronic means. At this stage, voting will still be done by paper ballots that are sent by mail. **Action:** David C. made a motion to approve the appointment of Jason H. as HOF chair, seconded by James M. **Motion Approved;** 23-for, 2-abstentions. David C. also noted that our trademarks are all up to date.
- F. Grand National Funding Clarification:** David C. clarified that as of the last BOD meeting, the ACC budget includes \$1,000 for the BOD meeting meals, and \$2,500 towards expenses in running the Grand National. It was pointed out that the ACC Policy & Procedures manual needs to be updated to reflect the increased subsidy for expenses.
- G. BOD Scope of Responsibility:** Paul G., referring to his handout, prefaced his statement that he is raising this subject for discussion purposes only. He expressed confusion about what proposals such as Consy Lite can come directly to the Board, and what should go through committees first. There are also apparent inconsistencies between decisions made by committees and those by the Board. He specifically referenced the decision by the Grass Roots Committee to raise dues without getting BOD approval first. Joan R. stated that she had raised the prospect with the BOD prior to the committee meeting. There was some discussion on what things should be referred to committees and what can come directly to the BOD for approval. Fred W. suggested that it depends on the complexity of the issue when it should go to a committee first. No consensus was reached during this discussion, and it was left that committee deliberation and direct BOD decisions will be on an issue by issue basis.
- H. New ACC logo:** David A. proposed the use of a new logo, which he displayed, in a number of situations side by side the old one. He stated that the proposed new logo is not replacing the old one, rather, it provides another option. It will cost \$275 - \$400 to trademark the new logo. Valerie N. explained further that the new logo is more modern and designed with “modern sensibilities” in mind. Materials with the old logo, such as banners and awards, will continue to be used. The new logo can be used in situations requiring a “Vector” image, such as the website, whereas the old logo is not a Vector image. Willie E. stated that he didn’t want us to spend any money on a new logo and didn’t think the new logo will recruit any new members. Jeanne H. asked for clarification on the contest run on Facebook to choose the new logo. Jeanne J. expressed concern that the brand recognition of the old logo not be lost. Valerie N. pointed out that major companies modify their logos over time without loss of branding. Jeff S. said that our marketing and publicity efforts have fallen short, and we should support recommendations like a fresh logo put forward by the marketing committee. **Action:** Fred W. made a motion to adopt the new logo for use as an additional option to the old logo, depending on the situation; seconded by Valerie S. **Motion approved;** 14-for, 9-against, 2 abstentions.
- I. National Open Format 3 Regions:** Fred W. requested that TD’s in the West and Central Divisions consider doing the same type of [‘match play’] as the National Open in Raleigh, NC., and then possibly having the top eight from each region have a playoff to get a true “National Open” champion. It was noted that this would be a huge undertaking. The idea was suggested, and if someone wants to take it on, it will be considered.

XV. Committee Reports:

Social Media – David C. said that 1,431 are on the ACC Facebook page, and discussion ideas will be added that include some BOD members. There are on average 15 – 20 people who look at it per week, but there is no way to tell if any join the ACC. Test advertising on Facebook hasn't been working as well as desired, so it has been discontinued. Valerie will try some other marketing ideas.

Nominating – Jeanne J. said that in addition to what had already been discussed, the committee will be discussing having more formalized guidelines and procedures for the next officer election in October 2019. She reiterated that guidelines for nominations of officer candidates will include more emphasis on describing qualifications and reasons for nominating them, including skills, experience, and reliability.

IT/Technology – Paul G. reported that Diane W. has finished getting the new website up, and all the links are working. It is good to have all ACC affiliated programs in one place. He further reported that the new TD system is working out, with 30 – 40 TD accounts functioning with the ability to sanction new tournaments and upload flyers. The new Master Point system is in transition, with Marlene entering results in both the old and new system in parallel, in a testing and bug-fixing mode. He predicted that by the end of 2018 they will have comfort with the new system and transfer completely to it. In the interim, there is a kind of mixed-match Paul G. also reported that further development with the cross-checking app is on hold while Chris Bailey is preoccupied with family issues, so he will make progress when he can. Regarding documentation [technology user's guide], Janice Johnson doing a great job on the GR side. Bob Milk stepped down to document the weekend tournament side. We need a technical writer to assist Paul G. with this.

Awards – David C. said that the committee had a meeting yesterday. Mark S. is now head of the committee. Mark S. referred to a handout he circulated listing prizes and costs for various ACC awards. He thanked Jeanne H. for her help. He noted two items: 1) Large HOF portraits will be housed at the Sands, and small framed portraits will be presented to recipients. Jeanne H. will oversee this. 2) There were 21 Masters, 14 Grand Masters, 10 Life Masters and 2 Rookie of the Year awards boards this year. Masters boards were made by Bill O'Malley at \$35 each, and the Grand Masters and Life Masters boards were crafted by Rick Pierce at \$30 each. A globe statue and a jacket have been added as an award option for the 1* and above.

XVI. Executive Committee Reports:

President – David C. reported that the Executive Committee approved \$2,500 for a new computer for the Membership Secretary.

VP Marketing – Paul G. had nothing additional to report.

VP Ethics/Policy – Valerie S. had nothing additional to report.

VP Operations – Terry W. said that he had been busy with the Grand National and doesn't have anything else to report.

VP Competition – David A. didn't have much else to report other than mentioning that Tournament Commissioners are always dealing with problems.

XVII. Adjournment: President David C. declared the meeting adjourned at 2:27 pm.

Next meeting date: February 28, 2019 in Reno