



THE WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION

**MINUTES OF THE 5th MEETING
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Orlando, Florida
Wednesday, 26th September at 09:45**

In Attendance

Mr Gianarrigo Rona, President in the Chair
Mr José Damiani, President Emeritus
Mr John Wignall, 1st Vice President
Mr Al Levy, Executive Vice President
Mr Patrick Choy, Vice President
Mr Mazhar Jafri, Vice President
Mr Marc De Pauw, Treasurer
Ms Georgia Heth, Hon. Secretary
Mr Marcelo Caracci, Member
Mrs Chen Zelan, Member
Mr Paul Janicki, Member
Mr Jan Kamras, Member
Mr Eric Laurant, Member
Mr Eitan Levy, Member
Mrs Kari-Anne Opsal, Member
Mr Bernard Pascal, Member
Mrs Sheena Rayner, Member
Mrs Janice Seamon-Molson, Member
Mr Merlin Vilhauer, Member
Mr Howard Weinstein, Member
Mr David Harris, General Counsel

Also in Attendance

Mr Simon Fellus, WBF Secretary
Ms Carol von Linstow, Secretary to the Executive Council

By invitation of the President

Mr Panos Gerontopoulos, Honour and Advisory Committee Member
Mr Dan Morse, former Executive Council Member
Mr George Retek, Honour and Advisory Committee Member
Mrs Esther Sophonpanich, President of Zone 6
Mrs Suzi Subeck, ACBL
Mrs Lilian Sun, interpreter

Excused

Mr Giorgio Duboin, Member

The President called the meeting to order at 09:45. He declared that there was a quorum, and the meeting proceeded as follows.

1. 15th World Bridge Series, Orlando – agenda item 6

1.1 Organization – agenda item 6.1

Mr Al Levy reported on the on-going organization of these championships.

1.2 Financial – agenda item 6.3

Due to a series of factors, ow which the hotel itself is mostly responsible, the 75% occupancy rate on the contractually agreed number of hotel nights will most probably not be achieved. A negotiation with the Marriott management will need to be conducted.

On the positive side, the participation is above the initial budget.

1.3 Credentials Committee – agenda item 6.4

Mrs Heth reported that there have been no problems here in Orlando.

There followed a long discussion about what we would do if a cheater tries to get an invitation to play. The matter was left until later in the Agenda.

1.4 Surveillance System – agenda item 6.5

A room has been set up here in Orlando where this new equipment is being used for 36 tables. To date there have been no problems.

1.5 Dealing Protocol – PPIR – agenda item 6.6

Mr Maurizio Di Sacco's report was accepted.

2. Treasurer's Report – agenda item 4

The Treasurer's report covers 3 years including the 2017 accounts which have been submitted to the Swiss authorities.

The Treasurer explains why the current year will not be a "Grand cru" version. Important elements are:

- a. The drop in dues income (as expressed in €), producing a deficit on the fixed side of the budget.
- b. The possibility of the Orlando Championships not bringing a substantial positive result. A lot will depend on the settlement for the unoccupied hotel rooms.
- c. The replacement of Ourgame by another Chinese Sponsor (not paying the 100k\$ flat fee foreseen in the Ourgame contract) for the WWBC final and, finally, the postponement of the IMSA Elite Mind Games, are some other factors which will influence the year 2018 financial result.

When preparing the budget for 2019, it became clear that the Fixed Income would not cover the Fixed Expenses, largely because of a drop in the membership and the unfavourable exchange rate between US\$/€. In order to maintain the breakeven target for the fixed side of the budget, various measures (among which ways to obtain a significant yield on the WBF financial reserves) will be examined.

Our current auditors EY (Belgium) have advised they cannot continue to audit the accounts of an international body with headquarters in Switzerland. We are looking for a successor. By mail, the consent of the Executive Council on the appointment of the new auditors will be solicited.

The Executive Council congratulated the Treasurer on an excellent job once again and the President thanked him.

The updates on the 2018 budget were noted and the year 2019 budget was approved.

Insurance – The WBF as well as the Executive Councillors and the Officers are covered by Liability Insurance and also by Travel Insurance. The only exception is that for full Travel cover, anyone over the age of 80 must declare their current health is good.

Re-imbursement – The current practice of reimbursing the Executive Council members will be revisited. Potentially a “forfeit” system will be put in place. The Treasurer will prepare this dossier for the Management Committee Meeting in May 2019.

3. Membership – agenda item 5

The Treasurer presented the membership figures, including the payment of the membership dues. In recent years NBOs are losing 10% of their members and in addition most of them don't register youth and kids. This is very alarming.

Concerning the Dues: in Zone 1, Belarus has to pay the dues 2017 & 2018. In Zone 3 Bolivia and Peru have to pay and Mr. Caracci said that they will pay before the end of the year. In Zone 4 Bahrain has to pay the dues 2017 & 2018, while Syria is still frozen. In Zone 5 Haiti has still not paid, Jamaica needs to pay for this year, but Mrs. Rayner said that both the NBOs will pay before the end of the year. In Zone 6 Timor Leste did not pay any dues since its affiliation and Mrs. Sophonpanich confirmed that this Federation does not exist and its affiliation has to be cancelled. In Zone 8, Kenya and Madagascar have to pay the dues 2017 & 2018 and Mr. Pascal said that Kenya will pay before the end of the year, while from Madagascar there is no info.

The Treasurer reported that the above mentioned NBOs did not reply to its communications.

The Executive Council, according to the BY Laws, unanimously approved to suspend Belarus, Bahrain and Madagascar giving them the opportunity to regularize their position or to be heard in person or in writing until 31st December 2018, before such suspension comes into force. The President will inform the NBOs about the decision.

The Executive Council on the proposal of Mrs. Sophonpanich unanimously approved the cancellation of the affiliation of Timor Leste.

The President informed that together with Simon Fellus has met the Deputy Secretary General of the Mongolian National Olympic Committee, Mr. Undral Amarsaikhan. Mr. Amarsaikhan reported that the Mongolian NOC President, Dr Demchigjav Zagdsuren, in Jakarta in occasion of the Asian Games, was impressed by the Bridge organisation and competition and wanted to try to promote the constitution of the Mongolian Bridge Federation recognised by the

Mongolian NOC. Mr. Amarsaikhan will contact Mrs Sophonpanich. Mrs. Sophonpanich said that as soon as she has news she will inform the President.

4. Zonal President Report – agenda item 29/2

The President introduced Mrs Suzi Subeck, former ACBL President who reported on behalf of the ACBL in the absence of Mr Jay Whipple III.

The meeting was adjourned at 13:00 to be reconvened at 15:00 on Thursday, 27th September.