

Board of Directors Minutes
Tennessee Bridge Association, Unit 144
November 14, 2011

BOARD MEMBERS Present

President – Tom Dixon	Cecile Skaggs
Vice President – Larry Alexander	Al Stone
Treasurer- Jody Couch	Henry Francis
Secretary -Judy Knox	Pat Papachristou

The meeting was called to order by Tom Dixon at the M.A. Lightman Bridge Club at 6:30 pm. This is a special emergency meeting called to discuss the Annual Meeting and Election procedures regarding the ballots for election of Board members for the 2012 year.

Unit 144 Annual Membership Meeting

Tom will chair the Annual Meeting on December 3rd. Jody will give a Treasurer's Report. Russell Strauss will do the Deceased Members list. Judy will get the list from ACBL. The minutes from the last Annual Meeting need to be approved and will be available to be read by Judy in case someone wants it read. Tom's son will cook 40 to 50 pounds of beef brisket, Terry and Janice will make a big salad, Donna Touliatos will make scalloped potatoes and may need others to make a batch or two. Tom will make green beans with ham hocks. We will get volunteers to bring desserts. No one gets a free dinner for bringing food or desserts. Hospitality will start at 5pm. Al Stone will bring wine and beer.

Absentee Ballots

A suggested change in how ballots are distributed and collected has been made. How much control do we want or need on blank pieces of paper that anyone can print and copy? Anyone can make a copy and use them. They are not numbered. Since we have very little control, and some people are going to possibly make copies and we cannot control it why not open it up and say everybody can make copies and say there is a chain of custody on the envelopes. We will call the people named on the envelopes to verify they are legitimate. No one wanted to agree to this procedure since it would take us a very, very long time to count all the absentee ballots if we had to call 2 or 3 people to confirm every one of them. This suggestion was not accepted.

In the past, Directors in Area I pass out the ballots and the directors themselves present the ballots to the president or secretary to be counted. Should we stick to that procedure or should we require a control factor and call to verify they are legitimate? Everyone agreed that it would take too long to make a phone call for every ballot and you probably would not be able to even reach everyone when you called. This procedure is not acceptable.

Al Stone presented ballots that Joyce Stone gave out at her game and he gave Tom the envelopes. Joyce did not ask anyone to vote for Al. She simply put the ballots out and people completed them and put them in the envelopes. A motion was made to accept the absentee ballots that Al Stone brought to the meeting. The motion passed unanimously and they will be locked in the safe at MAL club.

Should we allow a candidate to go to someone's house that doesn't play bridge anymore and take them a ballot and ask for their vote? Cecile does not think it is ethical for someone running for the board to give someone a ballot and ask for their vote. We are trying to keep this election fair. If one person gets a bunch of absentee ballots, then all candidates should get a bunch of ballots. Al said if I walk up to someone with a ballot, then I am coercing them to vote for me.

A proposal was made by Tom. Tom said if anyone really wants to be on the board, he doesn't want to hinder them. Candidates are encouraged to get people to come to the meeting. If a candidate approaches someone who cannot come to the meeting they can ask them if they want an absentee ballot. They can contact Judy or Tom and we will mail them the ballot with a self addressed envelope. They can mail them back to MAL Bridge club and we will put them in the safe. Candidates are encouraged to campaign. If someone requests an absentee ballot, give their name and address to Judy or Tom we will mail them an absentee ballot that they may mail back at their expense. The only other absentee ballots that are legal will be at all the other clubs in Memphis. The director will take the ballots to the MAL Club and it will be locked in the safe.

There was much discussion regarding ways we can make the election process fairer and have more definitive laws to follow regarding the absentee ballots. Tom said we cannot use the notification letter as a ballot since anyone who is not on the official slate, has a chance to run with a list of 10 signatures by Unit 144 Members.

The Board has decided that if someone wants an absentee ballot and can't go to a club, they have to request one from Tom or Judy. Any candidate should contact Tom or Judy and give the name and address and we will send them a ballot. Everyone agreed that this is what we should do.

Judy Knox will print all ballots and bring them to the club on Monday. Tom and Judy will distribute ballots to all Memphis clubs. Nobody on the slate can pick up a handful of ballots and go out to distribute them. They must contact Tom or Judy and have them sent out by mail.

We have to have a membership meeting to amend the bylaws. The board cannot amend the bylaws. We will call a special meeting of the Unit 144 members to amend the by laws regarding better procedures for the next election. This should be done by July or August next year. We do have an awards banquet in May. We will bring this up at the awards banquet in May. The next board meeting will be November 19 at 10:30 am.

There being no other Unit business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned by Tom Dixon at 7:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Judy Knox
Secretary Unit 144**