

Western Section - Open Meeting
Phoenix, Arizona
May 29, 2010

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Agnes Snowden, at 9:00 a.m. VP Snowden gave the opening inspiration, and reflected on the recently deceased, 8/9/09 – present, members of the Western Section. VP Snowden asked Mr. James Lee to be Acting Parliamentarian, and asked the Secretary for the Officers roll call. Officers present: VP Agnes Snowden, Secretary Ida Simms, Financial-Secretary/Treasurer Gloria Lee Ray, Acting Parliamentarian James Lee, Acting Sgt at Arms, Ms. Gertrude Wright; Ms. Wright confirmed that more than twenty Western Section members have signed the attendance roster, so there is a quorum. VP Snowden asked for the minutes of the meeting dated November 21, 2009. Secretary Simms stated that the minutes were previously mailed to all of the Club and Unit Presidents and, without objections, unless there are corrections or additions, moved that the minutes be approved as mailed. The minutes were approved.

Financial Secretary-Treasurer's Report – Ms. Lee Ray stated that the report covers the period Feb. 2010 – May 25, 2010. Income during this period was \$1,730.00. Expense during this period was \$5,328.52. The checking account balance as 5/09/10 is \$705.39. Ms. Lee Ray asked if there were any questions concerning the report. There were no questions and Ms. Lee Ray moved that the report be accepted, subject to audit, as presented. Ms. Simms 2nd. Motion carried.

Vice President's Report –

VP Snowden reported that the ABA National President reported at the Board Meeting in Orlando, FL that the membership has been declining significantly over the past two years; there are 2000 fewer members than two years ago. The National Presidents encouraged the National Board members to increase their efforts in recruiting new members and reclaiming previous members. VP Snowden stated that Mr. Long, who had been hired by a previous ABA National President to rewrite the ACBL Scoring Program to accommodate the ABA program, is still working on a point system that will be taught to the ABA Directors so that they can enter the scores electronically and will be able to send the report directly to ABA National and the points will be created from the results shown on the report. Once this program is in place, National will send Mr. Robert Wallace, Ms. Mary Duncan, and Mr. Andrew Echols to each Section to conduct training seminars for the Directors. There were several proposals to increase revenue for the ABA National, including raising the playing fees at National. This was rejected because it was decided that this would

place an undue burden on the members who attend the National Tournaments, but not collecting revenue from those members who do not attend the National Tournaments. Therefore the decision was made to raise the National Dues from \$35.00 to \$45.00 per member per year. Members will pay National Dues, Sectional Dues, Club Dues and Unit Dues, if applicable. Annual Charter Fees will remain the same. An additional proposal to charge a \$1.00 fee for processing City points was rejected. It was also recommended that they raise the Charter Fees for Clubs that don't have Benefit Games. That recommendation was rejected and the Charter Fee will remain at \$30.00 per year. Scholarship Benefit Games are \$25.00 each but there was a recommendation to raise the fee to \$50.00, but that was rejected. Thus Clubs may still elect to send \$25.00 to National in lieu of holding an actual benefit game. Ms. Gloria Webb asked why do the Sanction Fees keep going up. VP Snowden stated that there is no increase in Sanction Fees. The Sanction Fees are listed as 25% for Modified Round Robins, and 50% for Benefit Games. It was noted that Harmony DBC, Los Angeles, CA paid 40% for a Club Benefit Game. It was also noted that the Nationwide Benefit Game went up to 60%, and this is an increase. VP Snowden reported that the ABA President has appointed a National Committee to work on a procedure to standardize election procedures. Upon completion, it will go into the Official ABA Handbook and will be applicable across the board within the ABA. Mr. Don Pedro, Midwest Section, Ms. Lilly Cleveland, Great Lakes Section, and Mr. James Pruitt, Western Section are serving on the Committee. VP Snowden reported that the ABA gives the following stipends to the Sectional Vice Presidents: \$200.00 toward the room fee for the Spring National Tournaments; \$300.00 toward the room fee for the Summer National Tournaments; \$125.00 per quarter for incidentals, \$30.00 for ground transportation at the Spring and Summer Nationals; and \$30.00 per day per diem when attending meetings at the National Tournaments. Given these parameters, if the VP attends all of the scheduled meetings at National the VP would receive a total of approximately \$672.00. Additional expenses may be covered by the Section. VP Snowden stated that her airline ticket to Orlando, FL was \$472.00 and her room charge was \$749.00. Therefore the amount she received from National did not cover her expenses, and that the Section should have paid the difference. She also stated that at one time, many years ago, National paid all of the Section VP's expenses, but they no longer do this.

Mr. Tony Lawson discussed the Scoring Program changes that VP Snowden mentioned above. He stated that Ms. Gloria Christler and Mr. Long are working on this project, that Mr. Long had asked Mr. Lawson to evaluate the program at one of our sectionals. Mr. Lawson stated that after he evaluated the program, he had recommended to the National Board that they not go forward with the change to the scoring program. However, Ms. Christler, a National Board Member, and Mr. Christler, Chairman of NTC, are pushing to move forward with

the change. He further stated that the program ignores all of the progress that has been made in making the original program work, i.e. putting the points into the program, the only problem that still exists is that the Sectional awards are a little off, but this is easy to correct on site. There was much discussion regarding this subject, however it was decided that the only thing that this body can do is to make recommendations to Ms. Christler regarding the proposed change.

VP Snowden stated that the Tournament Committee recommended that the Sectional and Regional Knock-Out events be limited to three rounds, however the Board decided that this should be decided by the Sections as to how they want to run their Knock-out events.

VP Snowden reported that the net worth of the ABA, based on the print-out that she received from Ms. Harriette Motley, ABA Treasurer, is as follows: Total assets \$373,628.94, which includes the National Office building, as of April 2010. The total value of the ABA National Office building is approximately \$103,255.23; the checking account balance is approximately \$98,553.36; and a CD balance of approximately \$90,035.00.

VP Snowden reported that the 2010 Summer National will be held in Norfolk, VA, July 29, 2010 thru August 7, 2010. The room rate is \$85.00 per night, single/double. Shuttle service from the airport will be provided by Mr. Leon Ragland, Tournament Chairperson. The 2011 Spring National will be held in either Indianapolis, IN or Morristown, NJ. It will probably be held in Morristown, NJ. The 2011 Summer National will be held in Scottsdale, AZ at the Talking Stick Casino, however no dates have been selected. In that this tournament will be held in Arizona, a part of the Western Section, the Western Section has been offered an opportunity to host the tournament. The Sectional Committee discussed this offer at the Sectional Committee meeting, and voted to recommend to the membership to not host this tournament. There was much discussion regarding this issue. One of the issues discussed, was that the closest Western Section Club, Valley of the Sun, in Phoenix has only 18 members and they have already stated that they will not work. After the discussion regarding the pros and cons regarding hosting the 2011 Summer National, Ms. Shirley Lee made a motion that Western Section not host the 2011 Summer National to be held in Scottsdale, AZ. Ms. Andreda Pruitt 2nd. All but two members attending this meeting raised their hand to vote in favor of the motion. Two members raised their hands to vote for the motion. The motion carried.

VP Snowden will notify the ABA National of vote. The National will host the Summer National. We will be given an assignment to help with the tournament, as will all of the other Sections, i.e. selling T-Shirts, or getting ads for the souvenir journal, etc. VP Snowden concluded her report and moved that it be received. Ms. Gloria Brown Cook 2nd. Motion carried.

Committee Report

Tournament Committee Chairperson Report – Ms. Thelma Lee reported that the

tournament is not what we anticipated and this poses a problem with regard to our revenue for the tournament. We need to propose a budget, however our budget was to be based on the revenue from this tournament. We had been given a report by the hotel that we had about 42 rooms. With that, and based on two people per room, we anticipated eighty-four people or approximately 22 tables per game. However we have been averaging only 14 to 15 tables per game since we have been here. So far we have taken in approximately \$1,904.00, and of that we have had to pay about \$427.00 in Sanction fees alone. The Phoenix ACBL group is letting us use some of their supplies, but we still have to pay \$200.00 for the delivery and set up fee. Normally the contract with the hotel includes complementary rooms for the key personnel in the organization. The key people are the Vice President, the Secretary, and the Financial-Secretary/Treasurer, and the Tournament Chairperson. However, what we got at this hotel, was two (2) comp rooms and two (2) staff rated rooms; additionally, Scrip is very costly; and we have to pay for transportation. A benefit that we have is that one of Our officer's is also a director, so we don't have to pay for another room. Ms. Lee stated that since our table count is very low, she asked everyone to sign up to play in every game rather than going out on tours so that we will be able to meet our obligations of what it is going to cost us to hold this tournament. Ms. Lee concluded her report and moved that the body accept it. Ms. Pruitt 2nd. Mr. Reginald Williams asked if the local ACBL Clubs had been notified of this tournament. Ms. Harriette Motley stated that this tournament was advertised at the ACBL Clubs locally. No further discussion. The motion carried. VP Snowden added that she did rough calculation of our income and expenses for this tournament. Her projections thus far indicates our income from playing fees to be approximately \$4,200.00; our expenses, \$1,136.00 for Directors pay, \$1,500.00 for the hotel \$1,500.00, Sanction fees of \$947.00, transportation of \$320.00, portage and supplies, \$200.00, for a total of \$4,192.00. Therefore, based on her projections, we will have a net profit of \$8.00, provided that our projected expenses do not change.

Staff Development – Ms. Gloria Webb – No Report

Constitution & By Laws Report – Given by Secretary Ida Simms. The Sectional Committee recommends the following change to the Western Section By-Laws, Section 6, Duties of Officers, Paragraph C. That section currently reads: issue checks necessary to pay such expenses as have been approved by the Vice President and his/her designated representative”. The recommendation is to change that paragraph to read, “Issue checks necessary to pay such expenses as have been approved by the Vice President and his/her designated representative. Two signatures shall be required on all checks issued on behalf of the Western Section”. Ms. Gloria Webb moved that the members approve the proposed change and amend the By-laws to reflect the change. Ms. Gertrude Wright 2nd. There was discussion regarding signatories living in different cities and whether it will pose a problem to

get two signatures. It was noted that although the Officers of the ABA National live in different areas of the country, getting two signatures does pose a problem for them. The body decided that it should not pose a problem for the Western Section. After more discussion, the body voted in favor of the motion. There was one (1) no vote. The motion carried.

Life Membership and Merit Award Committee – Ms. Shirley Lee reported that she was late in getting the information packets to each of the Clubs in the Section, therefore there are no nominees for the Western Section for either the Life Membership Award that the Western Section membership may vote for, at this time. She stated further that upon realization that she had missed the deadline for submitting the information packets to the Club Presidents for nominee selections to be voted at this meeting, she telephoned all of the Club Presidents and sent the information packets to them with a request to have the necessary information back

to her by June 15th so that the Committee can meet the deadline for submitting the names of the nominees to the National Committee by July 15th. Ms. Harley Wyatt stated that the vote for the nominees should be held at this meeting by the general membership. Ms. Lee stated since she does not have names to submit to the general membership for a vote, we can have a Committee vote for the nominees. She further stated that after she receives the documentation from the Clubs, she will distribute it to the committee members for review and vote; the names of the nominees selected, based on the documentation reviewed, will be submitted to National. After much prolonged discussion by the membership regarding whether the vote should be made by the general membership or by a committee, VP Snowden stated that since we do not have names of nominees to vote on at this time, one person from each club will

be appointed to serve on the committee to review the documentation that Ms. Lee will receive from the Clubs and vote for the Western Section nominees for the Life Membership and Merit Award. The names of those nominees will be submitted to National before July 15th. There was more discussion; it was noted that the process proposed is in accord with the Official ABA Handbook. It was agreed that the Club Presidents or a designee will serve on the committee; the Club Presidents will submit to Ms. Lee, the name of the person who will work with her. There was more discussion, and the body agreed that the Clubs will submit the names of proposed nominees, along with the rationale for submitting those names to Ms. Lee who will distribute the documentation to the committee members for review and vote. There was no further discussion or comments. Ms. Lee concluded her report and moved that it be accepted. Ms. Helen Wood 2nd. Motion carried.

Budget and Finance Report – Ms. Charlene Carodine reported that the Western Section is still having financial problems. She further reported that the Sectional Committee discussed, at the Committee meeting in San Diego the best ways of

raising funds for the Section. The following suggestions were discussed: 1.) each Club make a donation; 2.) individual donations; 3.) cruise fund raiser; 4.) clubs hold a special game once a month and give the proceeds to the Western Section. She stated that several of the Clubs gave donations during the meeting held in San Diego.

Ms. Carodine concluded her report and moved that it be accepted. Ms. Wright 2nd. The motion carried. Ms. Shirley Lee asked if the Clubs had received this information previously. Secretary Simms stated that it was in the February 13, 2010 minutes and the Club Presidents received a copy of those minutes. VP Snowden stated that she sent a letter to the Club Presidents advising them of our financial condition and requested donations to help defray Sectional expenses.

VP Snowden stated that the Executive Committee voted to bring a recommendation to the general membership to hold a cruise fund raiser. She asked the Secretary to read the motion which resulted in the Board's recommendation to the general membership. The motion is as follows: Ms. Shirley Lee moved that we have a fund raiser in lieu of a Spring Sectional next year. Ms. Annie Thomas 2nd. The motion was amended to read that we have a cruise fund raiser in lieu of a Spring Sectional next year. Ms. Willa Johnson 2nd. The motion carried. Ms. Charlene Carodine moved that the membership accept the recommendation. Ms. Gloria Brown Cook 2nd. There was Discussion regarding the pros and cons of having a "regular" cruise fund raiser or a "Sectional" cruise fund raiser because of the cost of sanction fees. Mr. Lawson stated that we should not give up our Spring Sectional; that we should continue to hold our Sectional and we should add a cruise fund raiser in addition to the Sectional. There was more discussion. Ms. Charlene Carodine called the question, "to hold a cruise fund raiser in lieu of a Spring Sectional next year", and a vote was taken. There were eleven (11) votes in favor of the motion and seventeen (17) votes against the motion. The motion failed.

Mr. Tony Lawson moved that the Western Section hold a cruise Spring Sectional in 2011. Mr. James Lee 2nd. There was a short discussion. The question was called and a vote was taken. The motion carried.

VP Snowden stated that she will investigate the cost of Ports of Call in areas other than Los Angeles in an effort to accommodate members from both the north and the south. VP Snowden also advised the membership that we cannot charge money on the cruise, therefore playing fees will have to be paid prior to the cruise. Club Presidents will have to collect the playing fees prior to the cruise and turn the money over to the Section's Secretary who will keep a record of those who have paid. There was discussion regarding refunds. The membership agreed that there will be no refunds should someone decide he/she does not want to play in a game.

Ms. Andreda Pruitt, Ways & Means Committee Chairperson, stated that she and her committee will work up a ticket/voucher system for people to pay their playing fees. Her committee members are: Ms. Ruby Luke, Ms. Charlene Carodine, and Ms. Doris Ayers. Ms. Clara Harris volunteered to work on that committee. VP Snowden stated

that if anyone else wanted to serve on the committee, they should contact Ms. Pruitt. There was discussion regarding whether people other than bridge players may sign up for the Sectional cruise. VP Snowden encouraged members to invite other friends, relatives, etc. to sign up for the cruise.

Appeals & Ethics Committee – Chairperson Robert J. Friend was unable to attend this tournament, therefore Mr. Tony Lawson is Acting Chairperson. He stated that there is not Appeal & Ethics Report, however since Mr. Friend is also the Western Section Representative on the National Tournament Committee, and he, Mr. Lawson is sitting in for Mr. Friend he would give the NTC Report. He reported that there is a change on the Schedule for the Summer National in Norfolk, VA. The old Schedule indicates that the ABA/ACBL day is Thursday, August 5, 2010, however the date has been changed and the new Schedule indicates that ABA/ACBL day is Wednesday, August 4, 2010. There are several recommendations that the NTC will Make to the National Board, including one previously mentioned by VP Snowden, that Sectional and Regional Knock-Out events should be limited to three (3) rounds; that a championship flight be developed to include all players with 5,000 Master Points; there are several other recommendations, that the National Board may or may not consider. Mr. Lawson concluded the report and moved that it be accepted. Ms. Wright 2nd. The motion carried.

Scholarship Committee - Ms. Andreda Pruitt, Chairperson, reported that the Scholarship Application Form is on our web site. She stated that she three (3) applications for consideration. One new initial request from a young man who is a baseball player, and will be receiving a full scholarship from NCAA. He was eligible last time, but did not submit an application because of his status with the NCAA. She stated that her committee will meet during this tournament to determine the merits of this application. The National gives three \$1,000.00 scholarships each year to each Section. We have two that are certain and we may have three. Her committee members are: Ms. Julia Lee, Ms. Odessia Love, and Ms. Shirley Lee. Ms. Pruitt concluded her report and moved that it be accepted. Ms. Annie Thomas 2nd. The motion carried.

ABA/ACBL Liaison Report – Ms. Doris Ayers, Liaison – No Report, however Ms. Ayers stated that there will be an ABA/ACBL Liaison meeting at the Summer National and she plans to attend.

Web Master Report – Ms. Patricia Banks reported that some of the Clubs have sent articles to be put on the web site. She continues to put current events on the web site so that members can see what folks are doing in other areas. She will put the Western Que on the web site as soon as it ready. She stated that the Directors in Los Angeles send their game results to her after each game, and as soon as she receives

them she puts them on the web site. She reminded the membership that the web

site is for everyone in the Section, however if you don't send her the information, she cannot put it on the web site. Ms. Banks concluded her report and moved that it be accepted. Ms. Pruitt 2nd. The motion carried. Ms. Shirley stated that Ms. Banks has done a great job with the Western Section web site.

Ms. Ruby Luke, Co-Chairperson, Ways & Means Committee stated that the committee will be selling tickets for a 50/50 raffle today. 50% will go to the Section and the remaining 50% will be distributed to the 1st 2nd and 3rd place winners. She also reported that the Harmony DBC will hold a fund raiser for the Western Section. They will not play for points, but for cash. 70% of the proceeds will go to the Section and the remaining 30% will be prize money. She suggested that each of the Clubs in the Section do the same thing to bring in money to the Section.

VP Snowden again encouraged the Club Presidents to get their members to fully support the Western Section Tournaments.

Ms. Harriette Motley stated that ABA National is also hurting financially. She also Stated that there was a suggestion that instead of doing the "Kits" or "Souvenir Journals", to bring in money to defray the expense of the tournament, that the National Board consider charging a registration fee. She reiterated that it was merely a suggestion, it is nothing specific however she would like to know the thinking of the members in attendance here, and asked if anyone had any comments about this suggestion to contact her later.

Vice President Snowden thanked Ms. Gayle Dennis, Hospitality Chairperson, for the taking care of hospitality for the tournament. The Section did not have to spend any money for hospitality because Ms. Dennis recycles newspapers, and uses the money to buy candies for the tournaments.

Ms. Arline Toney suggested that we give an incentive to persons who bring in new Members. Mr. Reginald Williams suggested that the New Players have their own game. Ms. Shirley acknowledged two new players, Ms. Clara Harris and Ms. Kathy Carter., who recently completed her class.

Ms. Gloria Webb moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Wright 2nd. VP Snowden adjourned the meeting at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

IDA E. SIMMS
Secretary,
Western Section - ABA