

**American Contract Bridge League
District 8 Annual Board Meeting
Saturday 11/2/2024
Via Zoom**

Board and Committee Members present: Dennis Abeln, Debbie Avery, Sandy Bigg, Mark Boswell, Bill Bulfer, Marilyn Croft, Terry Goodykoontz, Bob Holdeman, Martha Leary, Lori Moore, John Pree, Josh Rich, Debbie Romero, Donna Swick, and Peter Wilke.

Board and Committee Members absent: Mary Beth Shaw, Phyllis Siegel, Grant Sterling, and Van Stone.

Debbie Romero called the November 2, 2024 District 8 Board meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

President's Report:

Debbie Romero welcomed Bob Holdeman to the board, who replaced Kadie Davis as a representative from Unit 223.

Debbie R called for the approval of the amended June 1, 2024 meeting minutes and to have a Summary of Email Voting Actions from June 1-November 2, 2024 attached to the November 2, 2024 minutes. Martha Leary moved to accept the motion, seconded by Lori Moore. The motion passed.

Debbie R announced that Sandy Bigg would be resigning as Secretary and thanked Sandy for her service. Debbie R also announced that Karen Walker was resigning both as Webmaster of the District 8 website and as Editor of the Advocate. Debbie R thanked Karen for her longtime service.

Debbie R said that everyone else agreed to continue in their current roles. This includes:

- Debbie Romero, Standing Rules and By-Laws Chair
- Peter Wilke, Tournament Coordinator
- Debbie Avery, Treasurer
- Dennis Abeln, Financial Review Chair
- Martha Leary, NAP Coordinator
- Phyllis Siegel, GNT Coordinator
- Grant Sterling, STaC Coordinator
- Lori Moore, NABC Fundraising Chair
- Mary Beth, Education Chair (though not much is happening in education)
- Donna Swick, Goodwill Pins.

These appointments were accepted by the board.

Debbie R added that she would leave open the positions of Nominating Chair and Secretary for the 2025 District 8 President to appoint.

Debbie R said that a priority of the board will be to find a replacement to manage the district website and to decide how to proceed in the future with the Advocate. Dennis Abeln reported that he had approached Unit 143's webmaster, Terry D'Amato, about helping with the District 8 website; Terry is willing to help but has not committed to being the official District 8 Webmaster.

Debbie R announced the District 8 nominations for the ACBL 2025 Goodwill Committee and congratulated the candidates Paul Hartke and Wesley Seitz. Debbie R said there were no District 8 nominations for the ACBL Charity Committee for 2025.

Debbie R concluded her President's report by encouraging everyone to promote the upcoming NAP.

Nominating Committee and Slate of Officers

Marilyn Croft announced the Nominating Committee's recommended candidates for President and Vice President of the District 8 Board, whose terms would begin January 1, 2025: Lori Moore for President and Dennis Abeln for Vice President. Marilyn noted that Dennis said he had no interest in becoming President of District 8 Board in the future but was willing to serve as Vice President for the upcoming year. Debbie Romero asked if there were any other nominations from the rest of the board. Since there were none, Martha Leary made a motion to accept the committee's nominations, seconded by Mark Boswell. The motion passed and Lori Moore was elected President and Dennis Abeln Vice President for 2025.

Treasurer's Report:

Debbie Avery presented her final, corrected income and expense report for 2023, her income and expense report thus far for 2024, along with the proposed 2025 budget. Marilyn Croft made a motion to approve a travel subsidy of \$800/winning GNT team.* Mark Boswell seconded the motion. The motion passed. Martha Leary made a motion to approve the proposed budget for 2025, and Lori Moore seconded. The motion passed. Martha L made a motion to approve the income/expense reports, and John Pree seconded. The motion passed.

- *Please note: A winning GNT team is defined as the highest-ranked team in their flight at the District 8 GNT finals who go on to compete at the NABC GNT finals and remain in the event until they win or get eliminated.*

Financial Report:

Dennis Abeln reported that he agrees with the corrected financial report for 2023.

ACBL Director's Report:

Larry Sealy could not attend the meeting due to a long-standing conflict on the first week-end of every November; Debbie Romero proposed moving the meeting date in future years to a different week-end so that Larry could attend. Debbie R reported that Larry had shared his report via email and encouraged anyone with questions to email him.

Standing Committee Reports:

Standing Rules:

Debbie Romero presented five motions for the board to discuss and vote on. All five motions were passed and will be added to the District 8 Standing Rules.

Motion 1:

There must be at least 3 weeks between the end of the August St. Louis Regional and the start of the September Collinsville Regional since they are only 25 miles apart and draw from the same player population.

Debbie Romero made the motion, seconded by Lori Moore. The motion passed.

(Note: Current tournament sanctions for both tournaments comply with this Rule through 2028.)

Motion 2:

District 8 will lower the 2025 NAP Entry Fees—for Flight C only—from \$15 per session to \$10 per Session.

Debbie Romero made the motion, seconded by Dennis Abeln. The motion passed.

Motion 3:

Unit payments to District 8 for hosting a District 8 Regional are due to the District 8 Treasurer no later than 2 months from the last planned or scheduled day of the Regional as specified on the ACBL tournament website.

Debbie Romero made the motion, and Bob Holdeman seconded. The motion passed.

Motion 4:

If a Unit within District 8 wants to keep their currently assigned District 8 Regional allocation for the following calendar year, the Unit must commit no later than 3 months after the last scheduled day of their assigned Regional for the current year. This commitment must be communicated via email from the Unit President to the District President and CC'd to all other District voting board members. Once a Unit commits to a District 8 Regional allocation for the following year, they must still pay District 8 the minimum Regional payment of \$900 even if they do not actually run the Regional, except in extreme circumstances beyond their control. To be excused from this \$900 payment requires a 2/3 vote of the District 8 board members present at a District 8 board meeting, assuming quorum requirements have been met. If the Unit does not commit by the deadline, District 8 may reallocate the Regional to another Unit within District 8. If the Unit actually hosts a Regional, they must pay the District as specified in District 8 Standing Rules Section 2 Open Regional Tournament Fees to the District. For 2025 Regional allocations only, Units 143, 208, and 239 must commit to their District Regional allocations by December 1, 2024, and Unit 223 must commit to its District Regional allocation by January 1, 2025.

Debbie Romero made the motion, and Bob Holdeman seconded. The motion passed.

Motion 5:

If a Unit accepts a District 8 Regional allocation and pays the \$900 minimum fee each year, but fails to actually run the Regional for 2 years in a row, the District may reallocate the Regional to another Unit within District 8 for the benefit of District 8 players.

Debbie Romero made the motion, and Bob Holdeman seconded. The motion passed.

NABC Fundraising: Lori Moore reported that District 8 held promotional games that were run at 13 clubs and collected \$822. She will move fundraiser games in September a week earlier so they do not conflict with the Collinsville Regional.

Debbie Romero reported that she and Mark Boswell had approached Mike Carmen to see if he would be willing to take on the role of Tournament Chair for the 2026 NABC. So far, Mike has said he might do it but has not committed. Debbie R notified the ACBL to say we haven't found a TC at this point and that they may need to run the NABC. The event will take place because the ACBL has hotel contracts.

Charity: No report.

Education: Mary Beth Shaw was not present but reported to Debbie Romero that Youth Bridge is now defunct in our district. Bill Bulfer reported on the Jump Start Bridge program that promotes bridge in schools (5th grade through high school) and encouraged everyone to learn about it on the web.

Tournament Coordinator:

Peter Wilke asked everyone to send him an email if the sectional they are running is downgraded. Peter explained that sanctioning for STaC games is handled by Rob Maier.

STaC Report: Grant Sterling was unable to attend and had no report; he was running a STaC this week. Marilyn Croft raised the issue about changing the current strats, saying they were currently too low and should reflect the strats used at the NAP and GNT tournaments: C: 0-750, B: 750- 3000, and A: above 3000. Debbie R asked the board if anyone had a problem with changing the strats to what Marilyn recommended, and no one opposed it. So, the board will implement this change for 2025. The board took an informal poll and agreed that the minimum table requirement for running a STaC game should continue to be 2.5 tables. A director and partner are allowed to compete in the event.

NAP: Martha Leary reported that early registrations are substantially lower this year. The board discussed ways to promote the game, including showing point awards that a pair could earn. The board agreed that having 24 board sessions was acceptable, assuming there were no sit outs. Martha arranged fill-in pairs to avoid sit-outs for this year's event.

GNT: no report from Phyllis Siegel. Debbie R reported that the 2025 Conditions of Contest have been updated to incorporate recent changes by the ACBL. These changes were submitted and approved by Brian Weikle at the ACBL.

Open Regional Reports:

Crystal Lake: Marilyn Croft reported that their 5-day June Regional had a slight increase in table count (424) and paid the district \$1357.76, compared to the prior year's table count (382.5) and paid district fees of \$1288. They plan to run a Regional again June 16-20, 2025 in the same location. They will have more flighted pair events, but otherwise the schedule will be largely the same.

Collinsville: Bob Holdeman reported that the September Regional lost around \$7500 and that he was renegotiating contract terms for 2025 to reduce the charge from the convention center where they

would like to hold the event again. Survey results were favorable, and they hope to run it again but need a better quote from the convention center.

Next year, District 8 needs to communicate with all local bridge clubs within 25 miles of the Collinsville Regional site to ensure that the clubs understand that they can still run regular games but not upgraded games during Collinsville's event. Because the Collinsville Regional was new in 2024, clubs may not have realized that upgraded games were not allowed.

St. Louis: Dennis Abeln reported the table count, 817, was down 2% from the prior year. I/N attendance was down 4% despite reduced fees. The tournament netted \$388. Next year, they plan to drop Mini Soloways in favor of Bracketed Swiss. The schedule will come soon.

Champaign: Lori Moore reported that the Champaign Regional maintained participation but lost about \$850. They paid the district \$1000.

NLM Regional Reports:

Rockford: Marilyn Croft reported that they had 8 more tables than last year. The tournament made some money and are planning it for September 7-9, 2025.

Bloomington: Lori Moore said that their NLM Regional only lost \$100 this year and participation was way up; that included reduced sectional fees. They intend to run it again.

St. Louis: Dennis Abeln reported that the Oct 2023 and Jan 2024 NLM Regionals both ran with a loss, but the October 2024 event made about \$200, due to the fact that they charged a \$10 entry free compared to earlier events when the entry was free or substantially reduced. I/N attendance has dropped from 92 tables in Oct. '23, when the event was free, to 65 tables in Oct. '24, when entries were \$10. Dennis expects to come close to breaking even in 2025.

During a discussion, Peter Wilke explained that point awards for NLM Regionals are set by the ACBL at 1/3 gold and 2/3 red. Peter also noted that because NLM Regionals are limited events, the points earned at NLM's are lower compared to points earned at Open Regionals.

Old Business:

Debbie Romero shared that the updated GNT Conditions of Contest state if there are only 2 teams competing in a flight they must still play in two sessions.

Marilyn Croft inquired about the ACBL's charitable donations made on behalf of District 8, and Debbie Romero said she would follow up to find out if those donations had gone out and whether the recipients were aware the money came from District 8.

New Business:

Dennis Abeln asked about the future of the District 8 Advocate. The board discussed the need to have a means for sharing unit news and information about upcoming district tournaments. Some elements in the Advocate, such as the problem-solver forum, could be dropped.

Marilyn Croft thanked Debbie Romero for a tremendous two years serving as the District 8 President, echoed by other board members.

The meeting adjourned at 11:04 AM.

Next meeting: June 7, 2025 from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

Submitted by: Sandy Bigg, Secretary District 8

Appendix A to November 2, 2024 District 8 Board Meeting Minutes

Summary of District 8 Email Voting Actions

(Period June 1, 2024 through November 1, 2024)

| Date Requested | Date Approved (Unless otherwise indicated) | Email Proposal | Submitted By |
|-----------------------|---|--|---------------------|
| 8/21/24 | 8/21/24 | District 8 will lower the 2025 District 8 Online GNT Entry Fee--for Flight C players only--from \$15 per session to \$10 per session in light of recent changes by the ACBL in the National GNT Conditions of Contest passed at the Toronto ACBL BOD meeting. This reduction would be a one-year change only until we can see and assess its effect. | Debbie Romero |
| 10/12/24 | 10/15/24 | Approval of the June 2025 Crystal Lake Regional Flyer from Unit 239. | Marilyn Croft |