



ACBL Educational Foundation Minutes - Draft  
Board of Trustees Spring Meeting  
March 12, 2022 - 11:30 AM EST Reno and on Zoom

1. Call to Order - Joel Kramer

Joel Kramer welcomed everyone to the hybrid meeting saying it was nice to be back in person. The meeting was called to order at 11:36 AM. Foundation members in attendance were Allison Freeland, Paul Cuneo, Barbara Heller, Mitch Dunitz, Greg Johnson, Jane Champion, Sharon Anderson, Betty Starzec, Bryan Howard, Robert Todd, Kristen Frederick, Joel Kramer and Barbara Clark. Guest members attending were Joe Jones, Peyton Dodson, Stephanie Threlkeld and John McAllister.

2. Approval of Consent Agenda

February 2022 Financials  
Board of Trustee Minutes: November 2021

Sharon Anderson moved that the November 2021 Minutes and the February 2022 Financials be approved. Bryan Howard seconded. The minutes and financials were approved unanimously.

3. New Board Member - Joel Kramer

John McAllister

John McAllister was introduced as the Executive Producer of “Double Dummy”, host of “The Setting Trick” podcast, president of ACBL’s District 6 Education Foundation and a good bridge player.

Motion: Mitch Dunitz moved and Paul Cuneo seconded the motion to appoint John McAllister to the Board. The motion was approved unanimously.

Joel asked if John wanted to have a few words. John responded that it was great to be here. He said that the Educational Foundation was taking big bets with Tricky Bridge and BridgeWhiz and he was really excited to join the group. He loves bridge and has a passion for introducing bridge to new players.

4. ACBL Report - Joe Jones



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Joe Jones was allowed to present ACBL updates at this time due to his busy schedule. He too was very happy to be back face to face. He began with good news of several years of successful finances. Last year 2.6 million was netted due to online play,

investment portfolio doing well, taking advantage of COVID tax credit for employees. Membership is down but we are resilient and he's optimistic as we get back to face to face. Club play is flat, 1,000 operating now as opposed to 2,500 before. Tournaments are struggling, 50% of pre-pandemic rates. Austin was good although we lost money. Hopes Reno will be better, we already met our room block obligation. People are enthusiastic about being back. Lots of work in marketing and research, testing ideas. Trying to get people back.

Serious issues with IT, crises mode. Replaced 90% of staff. New people are getting up to speed. Legacy Systems are a big problem that everyone knows about. Greg asked for clarification regarding the nature of issues. Systems to support online play, data issues, codes keep breaking, lots of data not cohesive. Effects ability to serve membership, master point calculations, My ACBL. No one thing, pretty pervasive. Five or six new people on staff, using some third party people. More information in the next months. Legacy AS 400 System, wants to get off. Takes time to fix and move forward.

Discipline not moving fast enough. Huge issue. Members don't want to play online if they feel they're being cheated. Lots of outstanding cases. Hopes this will turn around by summer. Lots of positive results.

Mitch Dunitz asked about tracking memberships, how are they bringing in new members and how effective are ACBL and ACBLEF programs. Joe agreed that this is important and has some data on new members. New members are 40% of pre-pandemic level and losing more. Stephanie Threlkeld is the Education liaison. Wants to work hand in hand with the Foundation. On tracking, understanding membership, results data. Mitch, important for fundraising, how are you bringing in new members; quantifying if progressing. Graphs reflect progress over the years.

Sharon Anderson wants to hear goals and tactics for marketing - Bridge Education, Teaching, Increasing the fun! It's strategic from the Foundation's perspective to work together. She suggested a task force of bridge players, teachers. Good for Joe Jones. A person has been added to the Education staff. Don't have solid marketing plans. Will be happy to share when developed. Stephanie is liaison. Task force with Stephanie and her staff.



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Robert Todd - Adding the BridgeWhiz graduates will contribute. Stephanie thinks they are already able to track them. Robert was giving time to the ACBL. ACBL memberships, lists of names, play data will be shared. Will coordinate. Good time to follow up with IT.

Stephanie, building back. Some universities have bridge classes. Robert - Regional Tournaments for college kids. Needs to reach out to tournaments in advance.

Betty Starzec mentioned a pamphlet called Adventures in Duplicate by Edith McMullin. Helped transition. Place to start. Nice graphics, explained process. Could be updated. Nothing on bidding. How much fun duplicate is, master point rankings. ABTA members asked where it was. Joel said can be updated digitally.

Joel thanked Joe and wished him luck in all that he is doing.

5. Executive Director's Report - Kristen Frederick

Kristen shared her report with board members as a pre-read. She's reporting what we accomplished. Raised 161,000 this year as opposed to 70 year before. 101 Major Gifts vs 53. Exceeded Major Donor goal. Picked up 76 new members. BridgeWhiz parents becoming part of the program, giving honorary gifts to their kids. Expecting to graduate 400 kids from BridgeWhiz class of 2021 with some additional ones from winter class. Plans to increase the number of middle schools, including home schooled, charter schools.

Social Bridge had 13,000 visitors to the site. Five thousand went on to play on Trickster. Kristen thanked the ACBL Museum for articles. Increase in donors giving \$500 or more. Most important was to thank Mitch Dunitz for his gift of \$100,000 working with the Educational Foundation. Mitch was thanked for his work and his donation in honor of Stan Druckenmiller. Annual Report being sent to proof for accuracy. Kristen shared Mini Brochures - grants, assets, BridgeWhiz, Social Bridge Online. Please distribute. Please also distribute BridgeWhiz note cards, BridgeWhiz donor response self sealing envelopes.

Thanks to ACBL for support during Educational Foundation month and a full digital day. Paul Cuneo was thanked for being instrumental again in making this happen.

The Military Initiative is back on track. Patty Tucker will be traveling to Alaska with Colonel Lon Sunshine in June to teach bridge to service personnel and their families.



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Very proud to announce hiring of new part-time administrative assistant, Craig Ascher. Craig has outstanding credentials and works well with Kristen. His experiment will be performed on the International Space Station this spring.

Sharon Anderson commented on Joel and Kristen visiting regional and sectional tournaments. Suggested having a task force of volunteers to think through ways to put the Foundation in their attention. Clubs are a good environment. Have you had conversations with BBO?

Kristen - Just creating a digital format. Can provide to all regional directors. Could run north and south Regional Tournaments for BridgeWhiz. Youth Bridge Association will have tournaments.

Joel - Had a Marketing Committee. Can get it going again. Purpose of regional visits is for fundraising, meeting with donors, many who do not attend nationals.

Mitch suggested supporting Hall of Fame, two this year. We would be sponsors. Let's talk to Joe to organize. Speeches, posters, hand outs, captive audience, make immediate impact. Stephanie Threlkeld mentioned in reference to possible sponsorships of the Hall of Fame banquet, some have sponsored the cash bar or the bar for a certain time frame. Joel asked Stephanie and Kristen to follow up. We will do the sponsorship at the Hall of Fame.

There will be a major donor reception in Providence.

6. Treasurer's Report - Paul Cuneo

Financial reports were included in Board pre-reads. Looking at 2021, you can see we had a good year. In 2022, Equity investments are down about \$150,000. The Foundation will not need to sell any equity investments to fund programs. The Finance Committee met. Our strategy is to hold and ride out the current volatility. The committee recommended to sale our bond funds. Interest rates will rise due to inflation and loses in bond funds will significantly increase. We have maintained a balance between equity and fixed income at 50/50. After selling our bond funds, we will build a bond ladder using US Agency and Treasury Bills yielding about 2% in the short term.



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John McAllister had questions, what's the mandate, how is money spent? Paul explained that the Program Committee recommends programs for funding. The Board approves an annual budget based upon recommendations. Paul shared names of the Finance Committee and said John was welcome to join. He asked what are our current assets and if there's a maximum amount that can be spent. We have about 2 million in assets. The Program Committee determines what is spent. The Board votes on the budget. Paul explained the role of the ACBL in distributing and tracking funds. The Finance Committee manages transactions, cash flow, paper trail. We have always had a clean audit. He's happy to discuss further if John would like.

7. Program Committee Report - Robert Todd

BridgeWhiz Update - Robert

Digital Summer Camp Program - Kristen

2022 Grants Presentation - Robert

2021 Grants Awarded - Kristen

Collegiate Initiative/Digital Teacher Training - Stephanie Threlkeld

Three Year Plan - Robert & Joel

Robert provided an overview of the Foundation for the last couple of years. Program Committee agreed to significant increases in program planning and spending. Projected around \$250,000 for year two of BridgeWhiz including infrastructure building, costs related to software and administrative, personnel costs, administrator, was donated free year one, head teacher, part-time administrative assistant. Goal to grow programs, approximately \$440,000 in spending for 2022. \$400,000 already in pre-funded programs, College Bowl, Military, ABTA Teacher Grant. Not too many grants but wants to make decisions on grants not one time basis. Will need to continue fundraising.

BridgeWhiz - Introductory 20 week class. Introduce play events after first eight lessons. Improver class reinforces what was learned in first class. Summer camps - virtual only teachers already approved for kids. Supervised play for beginner level, \$125 per week.

What do we do for intermediate and advanced kids? Have teachers develop paid classes. Teachers developing sustainable classes, volunteers. Plans to work with ABTA - connect kids to teachers. Trying to get them more engaged and into more bridge.

Future Goals - Planning to graduate 400 to 500 kids. Classes started in October with a January class for those whose emails went to SPAM. Kids play on Shark Bridge. Took seed curriculum, teachers improving and working on finished product. Creating open



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sourced curriculum to teach online. Planning to do more surveys, primarily surveyed to determine why kids didn't show up. Getting feed back regarding structure for next year.

Had to move quickly, expected 1,000 kids, over 2,000 registered. Needed more trained teachers, classes. Problems with kids changing schedules. More robust registration process developed. Held first tournament, very successful, 50 tables, over 200 kids.

Goal to increase marketing, 1,000 middle schools first year. Year two, 1,500 to 2,000 kids including charter schools, private schools and camps. Partnering with districts that want all of their middle schools included. Partnering with other youth organizations such as Bridge for Youth, manning rooms for play. Shark Bridge - turn classrooms into a way kids can play tournaments. Safe space.

Digital Summer Camp Program - Kristen

Summer camps - Exciting. All different levels of teaching for kids. Non-competitive, entrepreneurial. Uses BridgeWhiz coaches this year, approved teachers in program. Supervised play. Pilot program, if successful will open up to other teachers wishing to hold an online camp in 2023. Offers at least one virtual camp per week in July and August, \$125 per class.

Collegiate Initiative - Stephanie Threlkeld

College programs took big hit with pandemic. Lost half of the programs. Close to fifty programs previously now around twenty. Will have a college Bridge Bowl in Providence. Normally offers 16 travel packages and twelve pair packages. Tournament in Providence not a qualifier, if you can get there, you can play. Reese suggested doing something for schools in close proximity, help with trains. First initial tournament, sixteen teams from nine schools. Stephanie was happy with progress. Another one on April 3rd, another three packages.

Educational Foundation sponsors Scholarships, \$32,000 and twelve pairs, \$12,000. The Program Committee authorized that all of the 2020 winners who were unable to compete in 2020 or 2021 would be honored in 2022 if they were representing their original school. If they were unable to make a team they could play as pairs.

Summer schedule very exciting, 10:00 and 3:00, no more night games. Stephanie plans to run Individual games for them every night. Any college kid can play. Should be fun for the kids, opportunity for them to socialize.



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BBO offers access for college kids to play free, 12 boards, twice per month. Pre-pandemic, about 100 kids played. Master points and gift cards. However, afterwards it dropped off to around 20 kids. Kids were online all day for school. It shows the role bridge plays in their lives, social connections.

It costs about \$1,000 bucks per kid, \$6,000. A little less for pairs because they come in a day later. The ACBL subsidizes six teams, \$36,000.

Mitch Dunitz said we should double the number of teams. He will write a check for \$6,000 if we can add another team. He also recommended a Speedball Swiss event where kids played with the top players. He said that he could arrange for these players to play. Stephanie mentioned a possible Thursday night reception for the kids.

#### Teacher Grant - Betty Starzec

Teacher Breakfast designed to compliment what's happening in best practices. Impetus for getting it started, historically, teachers meeting at every NABC. Teachers coming on board and not knowing what to teach. New teacher's venue at every NABC. ACBL has OTC, online element. Mojo Jones (Morris) will do demonstration of online teaching in Reno. Free incentives, teaching materials and gifts to the first 20 teachers who signed up. Free Teacher Breakfast. Feeding ground for new teachers. Will be spending more money on new teachers. How to get teachers engaged? Connecting to new virtual players. Continued participation in ACBL Best Practices and the OTC courses to get the startup kits.

#### Three Year Plan - Robert Todd

Robert shared his screen. Estimates 1.2 million over four year time period. Goal is to maintain BridgeWhiz four years. Details of Foundation Budget Options 2021-2025. Spreadsheet outlined spending for BridgeWhiz, New Programs, Grants: Youth, College, Young Adult, 55+, Teacher, Military, Research/Technology, Other. Costs - Taxes, Administrative.

John McAllister asked where numbers came from. Took all grants, what people are asking for historically. Ours - pre-funded programs: About \$50,000, College Bowl, approximately \$100,000 Military, Teacher Grant. Social Bridge. Levels where we are and grew them. Growing every year. New programs.





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Development Report - Sharon Anderson/Mitch Dunitz

Sharon - What would we like to do above the 1.2 million? Appreciates document shared by Robert. Outlines what we want to do. Donors care about the future of bridge, sustaining it, want to see it grow. Outlining tactics for keeping bridge alive. Working on strategic partnerships. Mentioned potential donors. Working on how to make ask letter. Will meet with them personally if necessary. Suggested four year Legacy for the Foundation, matching gifts.

Sharon thanked Mitch. He deserves a great deal of credit for the \$100,000 given to the Foundation.

Joel said that we will have a menu of big ideas to discuss with donors. Major donors, ideal gifts no priority.

Robert asked Board members for wish lists, pie in the sky ideas if we had money.

Joel: Social Bridge, large community. Boys and Girls Clubs, national organizations, can't work with all the school districts. Expansion of the Military Program. Paul: Social Bridge worthy investment, communications, things they can download and use. Long term dream program, fund some research that can prove that bridge effects critical thinking skills, can get bridge into schools for competitions. Standardize experience, now have some tools, data from BridgeWhiz and Tricky Bridge, two huge enablers. How are they doing vs control group? Mich: Expansion of College Program.

Robert: Youth Budget - small seed money, \$100,000 to do it right.

Sharon - Historically Educational Foundation has given lots of funds in Teaching Bridge programs. Should focus some of our communications in the future. Encourage people to apply for grants for innovative programs. Grant opportunities. Begin to build those areas.

Betty - Networking, teachers and bridge clubs. New teachers, what has been successful. Targeting specific age groups.

Paul - to build a program well, measure success. Have to hire someone. Newsletters. Develop platform.





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Email ideas to Robert.

8. New Business

A. Proposed Slate of Officers - Joel Kramer

Board members serve a term of three years. Slate of officers discussed with the Executive Committee shared. Notification in 60 days for vote in Providence.

B. Kristen's Evaluation Update - Joel Kramer

Same committee as last year, Reese and Greg. Kristen's Self Evaluation will be shared with questionnaire from committee.

9. Adjournment - Joel adjourned the meeting at 1:44 PM.

Executive Session