



# American Contract Bridge League Educational Foundation

*BUILDING THE FUTURE OF BRIDGE:  
SHAPING TOMORROW, SHARPENING MINDS, SHARING LOVE OF THE GAME*

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## Board of Trustees Meeting July 29, 2025 – Philadelphia, PA, 7:00 PM

*\*most notes captured from ZOOM AI*

**Meeting Agenda & Supporting documents:** [ACBLEF\\_BoardAgenda\\_July2025 with Links updated.docx](#)

**In attendance:**

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### Quick recap

The meeting began with discussions about audiovisual equipment setup for an upcoming event and addressed various administrative matters including merchandise sales and attendance logistics. The group reviewed several bridge-related initiatives including teaching programs, merchandise sales, and a new card game called Bridge War, while also exploring opportunities for promotional partnerships and event planning. The conversation ended with financial discussions about program expenses, a potential bridge-themed movie project, and new scholarship programs, with the board approving investments in both a film project and educational initiatives.

### Summary

#### Logistics

Betty inquired about the cost of the Spring Teacher Breakfast, which ACBLEF agreed to follow up on. The group discussed attendance, with several members expected to arrive late. They also briefly touched on recent bridge games and personal updates.

#### Merchandise and Bridge War Updates

The meeting covered updates on merchandise sales, with T-shirts being more popular than expected, and plans to switch to a print-on-demand model. Stephanie discussed the success of Bridge War, a card game, at a recent conference and its potential for expansion, including a new version targeting an older demographic. The group also explored opportunities to promote Bridge War at Alzheimer's Association walk events, leveraging new sponsor-level privileges. Jane shared positive feedback on teaching Bridge War to children at a summer camp.

The conversation ended with a discussion on the need for a secretary, with Andrea volunteering to test an AI-based system for taking meeting minutes.

## Nonprofit Revenue and Cost Management

The finance committee discussed revenue challenges, noting a decline in donations and club-related income due to the current economic climate affecting nonprofits. They explored options to reduce board meeting expenses, such as holding one meeting virtually and others in person, and considered alternative venues and technology to lower costs. The committee also reviewed the Spark auction results, which were lower than previous years, and discussed feedback on the event's organization and marketing strategy. They decided to continue with Tracy as the auction manager for now but agreed to have a separate discussion on improving the auction's effectiveness.

## Spark Bridge Event Review

The group discussed the success of their Spark bridge event and plans for future fundraising initiatives. They agreed to form a review committee to evaluate the event's effectiveness and consider marketing strategies to increase participation. Betty proposed organizing a silent auction at the Houston Regional event to benefit both the unit and the Educational Foundation. Michael suggested using the event as a branding opportunity to raise awareness about the Educational Foundation. The group also reviewed various grants and donations made to bridge-related organizations and youth programs.

## Jumpstart Program Review and Updates

The meeting focused on reviewing the updated Jumpstart program report, which includes detailed data on teacher and student outreach, financial expenditures, and program impact. Craig explained the new tracking methods for measuring growth and change in numbers over time, as well as the financial breakdown of expenses funded by the foundation. Patty and Craig projected total program expenses for the year to be around \$231,925, with ACBL funding approximately 50-60% of the program. The group discussed the challenges of tracking teacher and student renewals due to varying program start dates, and Betty highlighted supply shortages affecting program implementation in Texas. Joel Kramer inquired about data on student outcomes after participating in the program, which Craig noted is an area they are beginning to address, although it is difficult to do so. The conversation ended with a suggestion from ACBLEF to create a summary flyer highlighting key program data for promotional use.

## Youth Bridge Program Expansion Strategies

The group discussed strategies to support and track youth bridge programs, including creating scholarships, funding tournaments, and encouraging club formations. They explored ideas like quarterly youth tournaments, bridgeways sign-ups, and data collection methods, while considering teacher workload and confidentiality

concerns. Updates were shared on successful programs, including a 10-week lesson initiative and increased participation in collegiate and youth events, with plans for further expansion and engagement.

### Tricky Bridge's Young Player Strategy

The meeting discussed the success of Tricky Bridge, which has had 360,000 downloads and taught 6.1 million bridge lessons, with 50 million deals played. They are exploring gamification features like avatars and customizable outfits to attract and retain young players. A young player advisory committee has been established to provide insights from players aged up to 30. The group discussed the challenge of retaining interest in bridge after initial learning, particularly for college students, and the potential of online platforms like Real Bridge to facilitate regular play. They agreed to explore funding weekly online tournaments for young players and to build on existing junior programs.

### Bridge Movie Project Funding Discussion

The board discussed a potential bridge-themed movie project with a \$6-8 million budget, where the ACBL would contribute \$40,000-\$60,000. While some board members expressed concerns about the high risk and lack of guaranteed return, Joel and others supported the project as a potential high-impact way to promote bridge, similar to the success of "The Queen's Gambit" for chess. The board agreed to consider making a smaller contribution, potentially matched by other bridge community donations, and requested more detailed information about the production company's success rate and specific budget breakdown.

### Board Approves Film Investment, Scholarships

The board approved a \$20,000 investment in a film project, contingent on Ladonna raising the remaining funds needed. They also discussed a new scholarship program offering up to \$2,500 for graduating high school students, with applications due in March for fall 2024. The board reviewed a corporate engagement model for bridge training and team building, which Ladonna is exploring with potential partners. They considered expanding their board with a professional fundraiser to strengthen their fundraising efforts. The conversation ended with a brief executive session to discuss concerns about the film project's feasibility and potential fundraising opportunities it could bring.

*\*Approved 12/2/25*