



American Contract  
Bridge League

# Board Member Welcome Packet

*Disclaimer: This pamphlet is provided for information purposes only, and does not create new, nor change existing policy.*

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the ACBL Board of Directors. As a new District Director you probably have many questions. We hope this pamphlet will help answer most of them.

## **General Information**

You will receive:

- Board Member Duties and Responsibilities
- Board Member Skills Assessment form
- Board Member Protocol
- Letterhead stationery and business cards.
- A synopsis of the Directors & Officers liability insurance policy, which covers all Board Members for claims arising from alleged wrongful acts.
- A badge showing your directorship and district. Badges are worn at all social functions and when playing bridge at NABCs.

## **Web Board**

The ACBL Board of Directors has a dedicated website. There you will be able to find any motions approved for the agenda for the upcoming meeting with discussion and comments from other board members and staff. Notice of these motions are also sent to the Board members via email.

You will receive your sign in name and password from ACBL.

## **Headquarters Orientation**

You will be invited to come to the ACBL Headquarters in Horn Lake, Mississippi, sometime in the first few months of your first term of office. You will be given a tour of the Headquarters building.

You will be given the opportunity to meet the Horn Lake staff and ask any questions you may have. Each department contributes to a packet containing materials relevant to the departments and a description of the department's function and a list of current employees.

## **Legal Orientation**

You will be invited to attend a lunch during the Spring Board Meeting with the in house counsel and ACBL Recorder to acquaint you with ACBL regulations, disciplinary procedures and legal aspects of the Board meetings.

## **Board Meetings**

Board meetings are currently scheduled immediately before each NABC. Meetings are generally four days and start on Monday morning with a short general meeting and approval of non-agenda items. Committee meetings are held for the remainder of Monday and Tuesday.

Wednesday and Thursday the Board convenes in general session to consider Agenda items from the committees.

At various times the committee meetings and general sessions are interrupted for executive sessions, emergency matters, outside presentations, and for the Board to hold meetings for the Charity Foundation and/or Educational Foundation.

Attire at Board Meetings is casual unless otherwise specifically indicated.

## **The Journal**

The Journal serves as the origination point of Agenda items for each board meeting and as a means of communication between board members. This Journal also includes background material on items to appear on the Agenda. Items are placed in the Journal by board members, the Board of Governors or by management.

Management will notify you of the last date that Agenda items can be submitted, placed in the Journal, and considered by committees and the board without the board's accepting them as Non-Agenda/emergency items. Items must be received by management at least 30 days before commencement of the meeting in order to be included in that meeting's Journal. Some Appeals and Charges matters and some Finance items do not receive Journal discussion before action is taken.

The committee chairman is responsible for approving any item submitted before it can be placed in the Journal or on the agenda. He may suggest changes to your motion. Occasionally he may ask you to withdraw your motion because it is inappropriate or is not needed.

## **Motions**

Items should be submitted with the date, your name, a subject heading (title), the motion, effective date, effective cost/saving, and your discussion or backup material. If you need assistance with the heading and/or wording of the motion or motion title, contact the Committee Chair or management staff person assigned to this subject matter. Material is not edited but will be retyped to format if necessary. Management (and occasionally other board members) may add information and/or comments. All items are subject to approval by the Committee chair and the ACBL President.

When the Agenda is prepared, each item is assigned a number, which follows the item through committee, approval, or non-approval by the Board and into the final Minutes of the meeting. The first two digits are the last two digits of the year; the next digit tells you it is the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd meeting of the year; and the item number follows the hyphen. As an example, 151-21 would be item 21 for the spring (1st) meeting of 2015.

If you are making a motion on a subject that already has been addressed by the board, please indicate past references if available. Management staff will assist in any necessary research.

## **Agenda**

The Agenda for the meetings is determined by items submitted in advance for the Journal by board members, by management or the Board of Governors.

Occasionally there is a desire to place on the Agenda an item that was not submitted for the Journal in a timely manner. This is done the first morning by request of a board member and requires a majority vote of board members present representing a quorum to place Non-Agenda/emergency items on the Agenda. The president assigns Journal/Agenda items to committee. Sometimes an item is referred to more than one committee; especially when finance and budgeting will be impacted. A notice of meeting times and places will be provided with your Agenda.

## **Reference Materials**

As you start out, you will want to know board actions and policies in many areas. In addition to the Journal and Agenda, the following reference materials are available on the ACB website at [www.acbl.org](http://www.acbl.org).

**Minutes of the Board of Directors**: Minutes of the Board of Directors for several years previous to your going on the Board.

**ACBL Codification**: This document contains the up-to-date Board regulations.

**Bylaws**: A complete copy of the ACBL Bylaws.

**ACBL Handbook**: A complete copy of the ACBL Handbook of Rules and Regulations.

**Laws of Duplicate Bridge**

**Code of Disciplinary Regulations**

**Other minutes and management reports**: Board of Governors Minutes, Annual Membership Meeting Minutes, Charity Foundation Trustees and Membership Meeting Minutes, Educational Foundation Trustees and Membership Meeting Minutes, Executive Committee Minutes, and Management Reports are sent as issued.

Information from past meetings will be provided on request. Financial reports and other special reports are sent to board members periodically.

### **Robert's Rules of Order**

Unless the board adopts Special Rules, board proceedings are conducted as prescribed by Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

A motion to reconsider must be offered by a person who previously voted on the prevailing side and such votes must receive a two-thirds vote of board members present representing a quorum. (Special Rule)

It takes a two-thirds vote of Board Members present representing a quorum to amend Bylaw Special Rules. (Special Rule)

### **Committees**

There are standing, permanent, special, and management committees. Board members serve on more than one committee. The president assigns each board member to serve on committees; where possible those requested by the member.

Each committee will be assigned a chair and assistant chair by the president. Management will assign a staff member of management to work with each committee. A board member who submits an agenda item is customarily asked to participate in committee discussion for that item.

Only committee members may vote on matters before a board committee. The president and Chairman of the Board (if they are elected Board members) are voting members of all committees.

Committees consider agenda items and other reports and make recommendations to the Board. Committees accept or reject reports. The committee recommends that the Board adopt as modified, take no action, or defer an item indefinitely or to a definite date.

### **Voting**

Committee votes and board votes on agenda items require a simple majority to pass unless there are Special Rules to the contrary. Each board member's vote on full board actions will be recorded and published except for elections or executive session votes on personnel or sensitive items.

### **Goodwill and Charity Committee Appointments**

In the fall of each year, management will send you directions for the appointment of Goodwill and Charity committee members. Goodwill and Charity Committee appointments are for life. Members of the Board of Directors comprise the membership

of the ACBL Charity Foundation. A Charity pin will be sent to you. Members of the Board of Directors are permanent members of the ACBL Goodwill Committee. If you are not currently a member of the Goodwill Committee, a pin will be sent to you.

## **Board Reimbursement**

*Please see Chapter IV, Section B2 of the Codification for complete details for travel, hotel and per diem.*

**Travel:** Actual ticket price using advance non-refundable ticketing reflecting the lowest direct service fare available for travel at reasonable times for the travel dates. Travelers may upgrade to business/first class so long as no additional expense is incurred by ACBL. On an individual basis, when authorized by the President, spouse/companion airfare to a meeting will be paid when needed.

Board members will be reimbursed at the applicable United States IRS rate for automobile travel. Tolls and ferries en route and parking at the meeting site for the number of days calculated for per diem reimbursement will also be reimbursed by the ACBL. No meals or rooms en route will be reimbursed. The ACBL will reimburse the cost of automobile mileage or train fare not to exceed the cost of equivalent airfare.

**Hotel:** Board members will be reimbursed at the ACBL host hotel negotiated room rate incurred beginning with the night before their first officially scheduled meeting and continuing through the night the Board meetings conclude; however, if the board member attends the Board of Governors meeting, the reimbursement will extend through the first Saturday night of the NABC. In order to qualify for reimbursement, the attendees must have paid the ACBL host hotel for the appropriate number of room nights. Board members who share a room with another board member will only receive reimbursement at the ACBL host hotel negotiated room rate for one room, not two. Board members may not charge a fee for use (or sharing) of their room for which they are receiving ACBL reimbursement.

**Per diem:** Reimbursement for meals will be paid on the basis of the applicable IRS meals-only per diem rate for travel within the 48 continental United States (including the District of Columbia) (“CONUS”.) For travel outside CONUS meals-only per diem will be paid at State Department standards accepted by the IRS for the destination city. Per diem will be paid beginning with the day before the first officially scheduled meeting through either the day of departure or the Sunday of the Board of Governors meeting, whichever is earlier. Board member per diem will not be affected by the presence or absence of concierge privileges. Board member per diem will not be reduced for lunches provided by ACBL except when lunches are for the entire board and have been announced before a meeting. On the day of the annual President’s dinner, one-half of the per diem will be deducted from each board member who attends the dinner. Board

members and their spouse/companion are welcome to attend the volunteer's dinner at each NABC. Attendance is not required. One-half of the per diem for that day will be deducted from each board member who attends the dinner. The balance will be paid for by the ACBL. Seating assignments will be encouraged.

Board members are also expected, though not required, to attend all social functions held for the benefit of ACBL members during NABCs (see below). Board members should wear their badges at these functions and while playing bridge in order to make themselves available to ACBL members. The primary obligation of a board member during an NABC is to serve the members. Although hotel and per diem expenses will not be reimbursed beyond the day of the Board of Governors meeting, board members will receive complimentary entry fees for all events at an NABC except on the first day of the NABC (usually Thursday) when proceeds from the games are designated for the International Fund, Educational Foundation or Charity Foundation.

Board members receive an expense reimbursement of \$1,000 three times per year to reflect travel to district and unit events, phone calls, mailing and other miscellaneous expenses connected with the office of district director. You will be furnished a Form 1099 at the end of the year showing this \$3,000.00 as non-employee compensation. If expenses are incurred while working on a board committee, these are reimbursed separately.

For each of the three yearly Board meetings, management will send a \$500 advance, or less if requested. Management will send a reminder to individuals who have not submitted an expense voucher by the 14th calendar day following the board meeting. If a properly prepared voucher is not submitted to Headquarters by the 21st calendar day following the board meeting, then an advance will not be sent for the next board meeting. It will be the individual's responsibility to insure that their voucher is received by the deadline.

Between Board Meetings, any ACBL business contact by a board member with ACBL in house counsel must be pre-approved by the ACBL CEO or President.

### **Social Functions**

Social functions often are scheduled during the Board meetings. The president may have a dinner at one or more of the NABCs during his term and sometimes the local unit or district hosts a social function. One such function is the ACBL dinner for the host district and unit officers and volunteers, at which time you will have an opportunity to meet them. You will receive notification or invitations to these events. Your spouse or guest is included.

The host organization schedules activities during some mornings/afternoons of the Board meetings for spouses or significant others. A schedule of available activities is provided prior to the Board meetings.

There are other functions to which board members are invited, but attendance is optional. These include, but are not limited to, the Goodwill Committee meeting, reception for Juniors, and other receptions or parties that may be held such as Novice Party, Workers Party, Patron Membership Reception, etc.

### **President's Suite**

The president's suite is usually open to board members and their spouses/guests between the afternoon and evening sessions and after the evening session. During the tournament board members may invite a few of their constituents to the suite after an evening session, unless the president is entertaining a special group or the suite is not "open." The president issues a list of special parties, but board members and spouses/guests are always invited.