

## AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE FEDERATION LTD

### 2021 Mid-Term GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Virtual meeting: 25 October, 2021

The President declared the meeting open at 1.05pm.

#### 1. Roll call

ACT:	Ian Thomson (Treasurer), Stephen Fischer
NSW:	Rob Ward (MC Member)
QLD:	Richard Ward
SA:	Adel Abdelhamid (MC Member), Barbara Travis
TAS:	Dallas Cooper, Julie Rhodes (Deputy Councillor)
VIC:	Kim Frazer (Secretary), Christopher Leach
WA:	Allison Stralow (President), Nigel Dutton (Deputy Councillor)
Supplemental Councillors:	Peter Reynolds; Peter Cox; Laurie Kelso
Executive Secretary:	Jane Rasmussen

Apologies have been received from Robina McConnell (WA); Sue Falkingham (Tas); Neil Williams (NT), Mairead Kelly (NT) and Michael Bryan (Acting Legal Counsel). The President noted that Nigel Dutton has been appointed as Deputy for Robina McConnell and Julie Rhodes as Deputy for Sue Falkingham.

#### 2. Confirmation of the 2021 AGM Minutes

The minutes of the 2021 AGM were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

#### 3. Serve

##### a. President's Report (A. Stralow)

The President spoke to the pre-circulated report which highlighted some of the challenges the Board and ABF have faced in the past six months since the AGM. There were no questions for the President.

##### b. Treasurer's Report (I. Thomson)

The Treasurer had provided Council with several papers and discussed key points from these:

- i. Profit and Loss, Budget variance and Previous Year Comparison for the period 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2021

The Treasurer noted that the financial report to end September had only been finalised recently due to difficulties with the Masterpoint Centre outages. He noted that:

- the financials are performing better than budget;
- the key factors which have influenced masterpoint income, namely increased green/red points and reduced gold points.
- the reduction in expenditure which has been influenced by the WBF fees which are yet to be paid, the reduction in newsletter costs and the reduction in operational expenses due to lack of some activities throughout the COVID pandemic.

There were no questions on the report.

ii. Draft Budget 2022 and Forecast for 2022-2023

The proposed Budget for 2022 was discussed. There were several questions:

Q. What is the expectation for MyABF operational expenses & where is this being included?

A. Operational expenses currently low and are incorporated in the technology line item.

Q. Is the expense proposed on the MPC upgrade new funding?

A. No – this was in budget for 2023 and has been brought forward.

Q. What is the long-term plan for budget deficit management given past performance and projections?

A. Deficit is driven primarily by capital expenditure on the technology project. Once this expenditure is sunk the cost base will reduce, and other cost reductions are anticipated.

Q. We are eliminating most of the GNOT costs, but still taking significant income. Why is this fair?

A. The GNOT had incurred some costs prior to moving online with further operational costs to be incurred. It is difficult to determine the likely profitability of the event until afterwards at which time a decision can be made on GNOT entry fees for 2022.

iii. Fees for 2022

At the 2021 AGM a proposal was put forward to return to a \$16.10 capitation fee and return the masterpoint fees to the previous rate and increases. The meeting confirmed capitation fees would remain unchanged and agreed to waive a CPI fee increase for 2022 on the masterpoint fees.

iv. Proposal for licence fee reductions for national events.

The meeting noted that some states have run licenced events continuously with minimal disruption, while others have moved online or run a reduced event. The meeting agreed that the license fee would remain consistent across all events, however if a particular state or territory requests a waiver of the licence fee, this will be considered on a case by case basis.

The particular request from SA would be considered by the Board once a report on the financial results from the ANOT was received.

c. Risk Management (K. Frazer)

The meeting was updated on progress of the Risk Management project for the organisation which has been finalised following input at the AGM and further work by the Board. The Board will continue to monitor organisational risks and review the register once the strategic review is completed.

#### 4. Connect

##### Status Reports

##### i. Technology Project Update (J. Foster)

Julian Foster presented an update on the progress of the technology project. The meeting discussed the following questions:

Q: Does the management of the liability on our books for the Bridge Credit system in MyABF present any concerns for the organisation given the likelihood that this will run into the millions once the system is fully rolled out?

A: The project is increasing its stakeholder/user base slowly to enable appropriate process and reconciliation management to be put in place.

Q: Has there been any comparison between the benefits offered by Pianola vs MyABF to enable 'selling' the system to clubs.

A: Not at this time, although selling the benefits of MyABF to clubs is clearly an area that needs to be managed.

Q: Will the ABF HQ administrative costs increase to support MyABF.

A: While some costs will increase, we expect other efficiencies to result from the move to MyABF.

Q: Could the scoring module be contracted out to another developer.

A: This has been considered, but we have not agreed to progress this path at present.

The President also noted that an external person was conducting a review on MyABF and that the Board would consider any recommendations resulting from that review.

Q: Could a waiting list facility be added and could a differentiated administrator/director role be considered.

A: Yes. Both these items are on the development list. The development list is a continuously evolving activity and all suggestions for improvements will be considered by the Steering Committee.

##### ii. International Teams, Selection and PQP's (P. Reynolds)

Peter Reynolds (Chair of TC) spoke to the TC report and its recommendations:

##### **Australian Team Playoffs for 2023 Open, Women's, Seniors, and Mixed Teams Playoff**

##### **Recommendation:**

There should only be one objective of any selection method for Australian Teams. To choose the best representative team.

The TC makes the following recommendations for choosing representative Teams for 2023.

##### 1. Open Playoff for 2023 Open Team

8 Team Playoff based on PQPs earned in 2022 with the same format as the Playoff for the 2020 Team (held November 2019). Suggested timing mid November 2022.

##### 2. Mixed Playoff for 2023 Mixed Team

8 Team Playoff based on Mixed PQPs earned in 2022 with a format similar to the Open Playoff. Suggested timing early December 2022.

### 3. Women's Playoff for the 2023 Women's Team

Playoff to be open entry (to eligible Women) to be held in conjunction with the National Women's Teams in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of the 2023 Summer Festival. The format to be determined by the TC, including rules relating to eligible and "poisoned teams".

### 4. Seniors Playoff for the 2023 Seniors Team

Playoff to be open entry (to eligible Women) to be held in conjunction with the National Women's Teams in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of the 2023 Summer Festival. The format to be determined by the TC, including rules relating to eligible and "poisoned teams".

The order of selection events will be Open, Mixed then Women/Seniors together

Playoffs for Open/Mixed will be in December

Playoffs for Women/Seniors to be run as pairs event (open entry) in conjunction with SFOB

**This recommendation was accepted.**

### **Mixed Playoff March 2022 for 2022 Mixed Team**

#### **Recommendation**

The TC recommends that the Mixed Playoff remains as a 12 pair playoff concurrent with the Seniors Playoff to be conducted from 3 to 8 March 2022.

The TC propose that, after the open and women's playoffs have been conducted, interested eligible Mixed Pairs submit their credentials, as a pair, to a five-person qualifying committee who will choose 12 pairs to go into the 2022 playoff. The qualifying committee's choice will be based on the ability of the pair to finish 1st to 3rd in the playoff.

Barbara Travis has agreed to chair the qualifying committee and will appoint other members considering the gender and geographic diversity required.

**This recommendation was accepted.**

### **2023 Grand National Open Teams (GNOT)**

#### **Recommendation**

The ABF consider the aims and objectives of this event and modify entry criteria to better reflect these aims and objectives.

It is suggested that teams entering be limited to 6000 Master Points, thereby changing the focus to 'emerging' players.

The GNOTs gold point status should be retained with a similar club and state qualifying system to a national final.

The aim is to give more back to 'club' players and not see the final dominated by a few players/teams that have already achieved substantial success in ABF National Tournaments.

**This recommendation was not accepted.**

The President suggested there has been insufficient consultation to make a decision on this topic at this time. She put forward to the Council that a sub-committee be formed to consider the matter and prepare a recommendation and Council supported this view.

Names of people who nominated to participate on the sub-committee from which the sub-committee will be formed are:

Peter Reynolds; (Tournament Committee Chair)  
Allison Stralow; (ABF President)  
Ray Ellaway; (National GNOT Co-ordinator)  
Richard Ward: (Councillor – QLD)  
Laurie Kelso/Matthew McManus; (National Event Co-ordinators)  
Charles Page; (Councillor – QLD)  
Barbara Travis (Councillor – SA)  
Peter Cox (ABF Marketing)

The Chair of the TC will chair the sub-committee and select from the above group.

iii. Management of Newsletter Printing & Marketing Report (Peter Cox)

Peter Cox highlighted the key points in his report with respect to newsletter printing. He noted the reduction in costs in producing an online version are significant. Provision of some limited support for newsletter printing for clubs who request it can be considered.

The funds saved through reduced printing costs could be redeployed into developing the online presence further with teaching, promotion and other marketing and support videos.

Consideration of furthering this media strategy will be undertaken by the Board.

## 5. Innovate

### 2022 – 2024 Strategic Review (Rob Ward)

The meeting agreed to hold a separate session to allow more time to discuss this topic. Rob Ward will incorporate any insights from this meeting into the strategic review documents.

## 6. General Business

i. Succession Planning & Board/Council Elections for 2022

The President noted that 2022 is an election year for the Board positions. She advised council that:

- Legal Counsel has resigned and requires a new appointment.
- The ABF Secretary is stepping down.
- The ABF President will stay on until 2024 if required as changing two key positions (Secretary and President) at the same time may place undue strain on the organisation's management. She encouraged council to consider with their state/territory constituents appropriate nominees for the above positions.

ii. Possible strategic planning session at the SFOB or Gold Coast events

A strategic planning session is proposed for Friday 18th February at the Gold Coast

7. Next Meetings:

ABF LTD Strategic Planning Meeting – February 18, 2022 Gold Coast.

ABF Ltd Annual General Meeting – May 3-4 2022 Adelaide.

Meeting Closed 4pm

Kim Frazer

Secretary, ABF