

NEWCASTLE BRIDGE CLUB INC
2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Agenda

Notice is hereby given that there will be a General Meeting of the Newcastle Bridge Club Incorporated in accordance with the following details. Items for inclusion in General Business may be submitted to the Secretary no later than 14 days before the proposed date. Note, items of general business shall only be considered if submitted in accordance with Rule 24 (2) of the Constitution. That rule states that not less than 5% of the total number of members shall sign the request for inclusion of any such item. Current club membership stands at 280 members.

DATE/TIME OF MEETING:

Saturday 5th September, 2015 to commence at 11:00am

AGENDA ITEMS

1. APOLOGIES:
2. PROXIES
3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:
4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE 2014 AGM MINUTES
 1. Transition of newer members to regular sessions;
 2. Review of property security; and
 3. Life membership regulations.
5. TREASURER'S REPORT
6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM TREASURER'S REPORT
7. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS
8. SECRETARY'S REPORT
9. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE SECRETARY'S REPORT
10. PRESIDENT'S REPORT
11. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT
12. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS
13. GENERAL BUSINESS:
14. NEXT MEETING:
15. CLOSE:

Newcastle Bridge Club Inc

Date: 5th September 2015

Time: 11:00am

Location: Club premises

AGM 2015

Facilitator: T Wagstaff

Note taker: G Rummey

Tony noted that sufficient members were present to declare the meeting open. He welcomed and thanked all members for making the effort to attend.

Attendees: See attached schedule *Attendees, Apologies and Proxies*

Apologies: See attached schedule *Attendees, Apologies and Proxies*

Proxies: Proxies not acknowledged as these would not be required.

Minutes

Agenda item: 2014 AGM minutes

Presenter: T Wagstaff

Discussion: Graham Rummey proposed that the minutes be taken as read. The proposal was seconded by Pam Robinson and passed unanimously.

Conclusions: Tony signed the minutes as a true record of the 2014 AGM.

Agenda item: Business arising from the 2014 AGM minutes. **Presenter:** T Wagstaff

Discussion: Tony provided the following responses to issues carried over from the 2014 AGM:

1. Transition of newer members.

Supervised play sessions introduced on Wednesday evenings were well attended and the benefit of those sessions was supported by Wayne Morgan. Jo Marzato cited her experience from Port Macquarie Bridge Club where Intermediate Sessions were also part of that club's programme. Margaret Thorn added that the issue of players moving freely to more competitive play was still an issue.

2. Property security.

Having a security contract in place had not proven to be worthwhile. Consequently the Club had cancelled that agreement.

3. Life Membership.

Guidelines for awarding life membership within the Club had been accepted by committee and successfully utilised when granting that status during the year to Ken Wilks.

Conclusions:

Agenda item: Treasurer's report **Presenter:** J Biddlecombe
Discussion: Jeff acknowledged that it had been a steep learning curve for him to be managing the Club's finances for the year. However, with help from Tony he had been able to put together and could table a Financial Report for the year ended 30th June 2015 – copy attached. He noted that the Club had made a profit despite expenditure being greater than the previous year's figure.
A forecast budget for the coming year would include a substantial amount for planned maintenance. However, he still anticipated a surplus budget and with the Club in that healthy situation members might wish to identify projects they thought committee should develop.
Jeff moved acceptance of the report. The proposal was seconded by Lorraine Forward.
Conclusions: The report was accepted unanimously.

Agenda item: Business arising from the Treasurer's report **Presenter:** J Biddlecombe
Discussion: Paul McGrath noted two discrepancies within the Report.

1. Expenditure on Congresses Item double last year's figure. Eileen Sellers volunteered information regarding the cost of the Newcastle Bridge Club Congress was higher due to an overrun on budget of catering costs.
2. Expenditure on Competitions Item was significantly lower than last year. That variation was not fully explained and would need to be investigated further.

Peter Goodwin was of the opinion that congress prize money should be reconsidered and adjusted to encourage greater attendance.
Conclusions: Review costs attributed to Competitions and review Congress prize money.

Agenda item: Appointment of auditors. **Presenter:** T Wagstaff
Discussion: Jim Fallance proposed that Lambourne & Partners be re-appointed to act as the Club's Accountants for the purpose of reviewing and completing the annual accounts. Jill Blenkey seconded the proposal which was unanimously supported.
Conclusions: Re-engage Lambourne & Partners for review of the Club's accounts.

Agenda item: Secretary's report **Presenter:** G Rummey
Discussion: Graham presented his report for the year – copy attached. Eileen Sellers proposed acceptance of the report. Alison Morris seconded the proposal.
Conclusions: The report was accepted.

Agenda item: Business arising from the Secretary's report **Presenter:** G Rummey
Discussion: Eileen Sellers queried the future role of Ken Wilks. Ken's duties would remain at as those he was currently undertaking.
Conclusions:

Agenda item: President's report **Presenter:** T Wagstaff
Discussion: Tony presented his report for the year – copy attached.
Kay Rich proposed acceptance of the report. Jim Fallance seconded the proposal.
Conclusions: The report was accepted.

Agenda item: Business arising from the President's report **Presenter:** T Wagstaff
Discussion: Roy Hardy questioned whether any consideration had been given to teaching lessons being conducted during the day. Alison Morris confirmed that an attempt at introducing such lessons had not met with sufficient response despite being well advertised. The exercise was not put into action.
Conclusions:

Agenda item: Election of office bearers for the coming year **Presenter:** T Wagstaff
Discussion: Graham noted that he had received completed nominations for all positions on committee and that as no positions were being contested a vote would not be required.
The nominations were:
Executive Committee Ordinary members
President R Hardy R Broughton
Vice President J Biddlecombe K Rich
Treasurer T Wagstaff P Robinson
Secretary G Rummey
Conclusions: Tony declared all positions filled and vacated the chair for Roy to take over.

Agenda item: General Business **Presenter:** R Hardy
Before calling for any items of general business, Roy acknowledged Tony's contribution over the period of his presidency and congratulated him for a job well done. That comment met with acclaim from the floor.
Roy noted that the Club was in a sound position but for the coming year he would be calling upon a greater contribution from volunteers towards carrying out club activities.

Item: Installation of fans. **Presenter:** P Haydon
Discussion: Prue proposed that the Club install overhead fans in the main room to improve the comfort of members during play. Roy explained that provided the a/c unit was set to operate as designed then fans were not required to circulate air through the room.
Conclusions: The proposal was not supported.

Item: Event prize money. **Presenter:** J Blenkey
Discussion: Jill proposed that prize money offered to winners of events should at least be better than the table fees for that event. Peter Goodwin supported this proposal to the point that he felt it should not be considered poor practice to run an event at a loss. Money accumulated in the Club's account should be put to use.
Conclusions: Both points would be placed on committee's agenda for review.

Item: Competitive levels of bridge. **Presenter:** E Sellers
Discussion: Eileen voiced her opinion about the perceived levels of bridge being played at club sessions. Whilst that was a perception of certain members, their selection of which session they chose to play at was a personal decision.
Paul McGrath added the comment that some members were just not happy to play at evening sessions.
Conclusions: Noted.

Agenda item: Next meeting **Presenter:** R Hardy
Discussion: The next meeting would be held in approximately 12 months' time. The date would be determined by events in the general bridge calendar at that time and, where possible, scheduled to avoid clashing with other social events.
Conclusions: Noted.

The meeting closed at 11:45am.

Signed as a true record of proceedings;

Roy Hardy
24th September 2016

Attendees, Apologies & Proxies

Attendees – 32 total

G Rummey	J Davidson	P Haydon	J Biddlecombe
M Thorn	A Anlezark	T Wagstaff	R Hardy
J Neale	J Ritchie	J Bale	P Goodwin
J Blenkey	S Roach	R Broughton	P Robinson
J Fallance	B Olding	J Thatcher	C Seymour
J Macansh	P McGrath	A Morris	P Morris
L Forward	W Morgan	K Rich	J Marzato
P Peterson	A Charlesworth	D Miller	E Sellers

Apologies – 55 total

A Struik	N Riszko	S Donohue	H Johnson
M O'Donoghue	J Maddern	A Lea	Jack Fowler
Jenny Fowler	K Cruise	S Harrison	S Marton
R Bell	L Robertson	K Staniford	A Hemmingway
B Webster	A Torrance	D Armitage	J Cattell
K Wilks	B Adcock	J Hill	P Dibb
D Corney	M Corney	C Bowen-Thomas	L Bowen-Thomas
J Bartlett	M Carter	A Stiller	C Wilson
J Achurch	S Morris	J Stuart	D Stuart
B Atkins	J Atkins	K Chapman	D Chapman
K Forrester	J Dwyer	J Burns	J Halliday
M Sylow	I Walker	D Miller	J Nicol
J Wansey	C Williams	J Hewson	E Roach
S McConnell	T Thatcher	C Pletz	

Proxies – 2 total

K Wilks	H Johnson		
---------	-----------	--	--

Newcastle Bridge Club

2015 Annual General Meeting

Secretary's Report

Good morning everyone and thank you for coming. What is there to report about happenings during the past year?

Your committee has had a full year of meetings, 11 in total. I am grateful for the support Eileen has provided to my secretarial duties in times of absence and as a back-up for recording meeting minutes. Eileen, thank you. Ken has agreed to continue next year as masterpoint secretary and Peter Peterson as the Tournament Director. Jan O'Connor continues her very supportive role of sending out the Club's grievance condolences when they are required. The contribution from all three is appreciated.

Club membership as at the end of August stood at 282. Membership continues to remain at or about that figure. Table numbers are variable. I am not here to report on them but to seek support for encouraging newer members. That way the healthy membership is reflected by healthier attendance to our regular sessions. The supervised sessions are better attended than our normal evening sessions. Hopefully the effort being put into those sessions will be rewarded by those newer players eventually coming over to regular sessions. The Club's objective to retain the interest of beginners must be supported.

Mentoring of newer players has been an item discussed in committee as a means of retaining new player's interest. I support that concept and would hope over the coming year that committee can develop a working format that with the support of members can establish that practice. It may mean that members for a short time do not play with their regular partners but if the Club is to grow and the standard of bridge to improve then the sacrifice will have been worthwhile. It follows for this to work smoothly, that all players need to be singing from the same song sheet. With that in mind and to complement Wayne's lessons, those who participate would be expected to play the Newcastle Bridge Club Standard American System. I do not think it will ever be recorded in the annals of bridge but it is there and Ken has put together a very simple crib sheet for the system.

In a similar vein to mentoring, I also would support Janet in her move to establish a system whereby the Club provides sessions at which players could turn up without a partner, and still be assured of a game. Saturday bridge sessions operated that way when they first started so the concept is not new to members. Single players could be newer players who have not yet formed a regular partnership or they could be players whose regular partner is suddenly unavailable for whatever reason. In support of improving bridge attendance, I hope committee can also look at offering sessions for single players in the calendar.

A comment raised at the AGM in 2010 implied that because the Club was becoming a small business it was time the Club should be considering employment of an office manager. I am sure those that were there all remember the comment, and significantly how it was answered. I can see the blank looks so let me remind you. The answer was to the effect that at that time a manager could not be justified and that the Club would continue as an organisation managed by volunteers. Well, that time has come and has passed.

With Ken's appointment to act as the office secretary he has in effect become the Office Manager. The Committee has taken a massive step in following this path as the Club has effectively been committed to using an office manager ad infinitum. Ken's shoes will be hard to fill and I for one do not want to be

developing the Job and Person Specification when this position needs to be advertised. I know I can blow his trumpet without causing embarrassment as he is not here.

The Club is still an organisation managed by volunteers and members should not forget that. However, the service Ken now provides members has become more than the duties of the secretary. He manages the webpage, he continues as the masterpoint secretary, he assists with supervised sessions and he acts as a non-playing director. I mention his contribution as his input has been of significant benefit to my club secretary responsibilities.

Between us, Ken and I compile the year's club calendar and with help from Alison, we compose articles for publishing to the webpage. Christo deserves a mention here as he feeds me details of webpages from which the success of club members at bridge congresses can be monitored and reported. Committee has accepted that only the successful performances be reported. To Ken, Alison and Christo, I look forward to continuing that working relationship.

One item we have not quite come to grips with is making better use of the large television screen. Wayne uses it for his lessons and Ken has become proficient at displaying progress during a teams event. Jeff and Eileen put up the occasional flyer but sadly that is the sum usage of this facility. I undertook the task of setting up presentations for screening during sessions but have not performed. My performance is dependent on some input from members. If members feel they have a worthwhile message to display, then please provide me with details of that message and I will prepare a show.

And another item not agreed upon is how best to, or even whether to put photos onto the webpage. I am not referring here to family or holiday snapshots but to photos that record significant events reflecting achievements within the Club. Again asking for your help, if any member has some positive ideas as to how this could be implemented then please discuss them with Ken or myself.

I no longer produce the club newsletter *What's Trumps*. Instead, a summary committee report following each committee meeting is posted to the webpage. That summary report is provided to keep members aware of items being discussed in committee. Please note, minutes from those meetings are still placed on the notice board for further reading.

The Club has two maintenance contracts in place and both are operating successfully. Ecosmart continue to keep the Club clean and tidy, and, when reminded, Fernair continue to service the air conditioning units. An additional maintenance agreement has recently been established with Jimmy the Chippy. That service was set up to avoid the Club needing to chase tradesmen seeking quotes for small jobs. Over the coming year I will monitor whether this arrangement has been worthwhile.

I am pleased to be able to report that the long awaited and eagerly anticipated history of the Club has been completed and has been published to the webpage. I have received some favourable feedback for the effort and am still open to preparing revised editions should members be aware of additional details they feel would enhance the article. My thanks to those who have helped so far in its preparation.

OK, that is enough. Please accept this as the Secretary's report for the past twelve months.

Graham Rummey

Newcastle Bridge Club Annual General Meeting 2015 Presidents Report

We have continued to run seven sessions each week, although attendances are rather out of balance with large, and growing, attendances at the Tuesday morning sessions offset by other sessions - numbers for which were at best static. Night time bridge attendances continue to be lower than we would like to see, and the sessions are barely justified. However we believe these must be continued if at all feasible, to allow for those unable to attend our daytime sessions.

Wayne Morgan conducted two learners courses during the year, getting good attendance at these. We are still looking for the right way to move these people into our mainstream. A relatively recent innovation has been to refine the supervised play session to replicate a session of duplicate bridge with a proper movement, result input and scoring. These sessions have been well attended and we are hopeful this will contribute usefully to our retention of new players. Thanks to our group of volunteers that are managing this program.

Improvement initiatives undertaken over the year include:

- Installation of a large screen for general use, but particularly for the teaching program and to assist in running teams events
- A new, more prominent, sign was put up at the front of our premises, embracing our logo
- Nibbles and drinks are now available at the completion of each three-week event to facilitate socialization among the participants
- The use of a non-playing director, Ken Wilks, was introduced later in the year, for two reasons. The most immediate of these was to resolve roster difficulties we were experiencing for the Tuesday & Friday sessions. We are also hopeful that, particularly for Friday, Ken will become a 'familiar face' for beginners and they will gravitate to that session – this is a longer term objective.

During this year a protocol was developed for consideration of life membership nominations. Following this protocol, committee confirmed the appointment of Ken Wilks as a Life Member of the Club, recognizing his many contributions to our Club and to Bridge generally in the region.

Our Treasurer has presented our financial results for the year. You will note that the Club remains in a sound financial position, despite a somewhat lower surplus for the year. A higher level of maintenance expenditure is expected to be incurred in the current year which may not produce a surplus at all.

On behalf of our members, I thank all of those that have carried out tasks voluntarily within our Club, with particular mention for our scorers, dealers and kitchen volunteers. You are vital to our continued success. Thank you also to my committee this year. We have a number of persons retiring from positions this year – Janet Hill, Anita Stiller, Eileen Sellers & Alison Morris, and I thank each of you for the particular contribution you have made.

Tony Wagstaff
President