

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the South African Bridge Federation
held via Zoom on 25 March 2021**

Present

James Grant (President)

Jocelyn Ashberg (Vice-President)

Philip Feinstein (Treasurer)

Kit Gilmour (Secretary)

Annie Allen (Member)

Roz Bernstein (Member)

Helen Kruger (Member)

Neil MacLeod (KZN) Andrew Cruise (WP) Di Penlington (E Cape) B Donde (Gauteng) Eckard Bohlke (WP) Etká Mustafa(Gauteng) Noah Apteker (Gauteng) Ann Sturrock (WP) Di Klette (SC) Delene Spencer (NGauteng) Lorraine Weers (WP) Lotte Sorensen (Gauteng)

Apologies

Arie Ridderhoff and Jill Rabie

Welcome

James welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Previous Minutes

The 2020 minutes, having been circulated, were taken as read, and adopted.

Proposed by Jocelyn Ashberg and seconded by Helen Kruger.

President's Report

Let me begin by thanking the members of this committee for their continued support and hard work carried out in a year that has been sad, depressing and challenging for us all. I would like to especially thank Ann Sturrock who is standing down from this committee having served on it since 2009. Ann has been the custodian of our masterpoints and websites since 2004 and as such has devoted more time on bridge related matters than anyone I know, in fact now that I think about it, probably more than the rest of us put together. Ann invented the Performance Index, a measurement perhaps unique to South Africa, but a far better way of grading the relative ability of players than masterpoints where you had a good chance of becoming a grandmaster despite a general lack of ability if you managed to live to 110. She was also instrumental in the design and implementation of our sabfonline database. So once again thank you Ann on behalf of all of us.

I would like to dwell of some of the good things that happened over the last year, the most important of these being the introduction of virtual clubs. As bridge players we have been extremely lucky in that we were able to continue enjoying this game online when all our clubs closed down. For this our thanks go to all the men and women out there who made this possible by opening virtual clubs around the country – we now have more than 20 of these.

Furthermore, as a cosmopolitan rather than parochial group of bridge players we are free with certain restrictions, to play where we like, which means should we so wish we could play all day every day. Our virtual clubs have also attracted from around the country individuals and players from non-affiliated clubs, so we have had the opportunity to make new friends who we hope will stay with us long after this pandemic has passed. COVID-19 has caused a revolution in the bridge world where over a very short period of time we have been forced to learn how to play bridge on a virtual platform, and to our surprise have found that we like it. Virtual clubs will never replace our real clubs, but in offering an alternative way of enjoying this game they are here to stay.

In 2019 we had over 2700 paid up members, this year that number has dwindled to 1900. In 2019 I suspect that the number of our members who played on BBO was well below 100. This indicates the herculean effort many of us have made in educating our members to become technically competent, and again a big thank you to them. It also shows us that many of our members were unable to make this transition and are waiting patiently for our clubs to re-open. Life without bridge and the social contact it brings must be very sad and lonely indeed, so once again I extol you all wherever and however you can, be it through emails, WhatsApp or simply phone calls, to reach out to our less fortunate members and reassure them that they haven't been forgotten.

Let's finish on a happy note. Once again our congratulations to Helen Kruger for her election to the WBF executive, the first South African to achieve this honour, where she will no doubt do much to enhance the profile of bridge here in South Africa and the African continent in general.

Proposed by Helen Kruger and seconded by Roz Bernstein.

Treasurer's Report

Income and Expenditure.

Income

Net Income increase from R 230 882 to R 448 330 in 2020. The material changes to last year were:

1. Interest and unit trust income increased by R129 658
2. No overseas and travel subsidies done due to Covid – savings of R233 834
3. Sponsorships to the unions as Covid relief = R110 200
4. New tables and cards purchased = R72 360

During the year the federation earned income from 3 sources:

1. Tournaments
2. Subscriptions
3. Interest on Investments

1. Tournaments:

Three tournaments were held during 2020.

- a. Interclub 19 teams entered (2019:24 teams) – A loss of R11 650.
- b. Inter-provincials were held on BBO – Only cost was to pay the operator R6000

- c. Congress was held in Cape Town. (44 teams (2019: 28 teams) and 103 pairs (2019: 80 pairs) entered. A profit of R4 237 incurred.
- d. Trials – a profit of R25 456 incurred

2. Subscriptions

Subs remained R200 per player with net revenue from subs decreasing from R516 100 to R488 715.

3. Interest on Investments

Bank account interest and interest on unit trusts amounted to R259 269 (2019:R 129 611)

Expenditure

Expenses decreased from R718 989 to R 664 633.

Significant changes in expenses were as follows:

1. No overseas travel Subsidies and entry fees for zonals and Venice Cup in 2020 – savings of R233 834
2. New tables and cards purchased = R72 360
3. Sponsorships to the unions as Covid relief = R110 200

Balance Sheet

Cash in the Bank and the Nedbank Unit Trust Investment increased from R 2 561 563 at the start of 2020 to R 2 619 734 at 31 December 2020.

Proposed by Roz Bernstein and seconded by Annie Allen.

Election of members

Since Ann Sturrock had resigned as a representative of Western Cape, that Province had proposed Andrew Cruise in her stead. He was proposed by James Grant and seconded by Jocelyn Ashberg. The meeting elected him unanimously.

General

Andrew Cruise proposed, following Bernard Donde's suggestion, that a permanent disciplinary committee be appointed by the SABF. James felt that much of that work should be handled at provincial level. However, the matter would be discussed further in committee.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 18h20